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# Head teachers' facet-specific job satisfaction and effect of school size at elementary level

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## ABSTRACT

This study was designed with the objectives to assess the facet-specific job satisfaction levels of the head teachers of elementary school in context of their school size and to determine significant differences between head teachers of smaller and bigger schools for their job satisfaction levels for each of the twenty dimensions of the job as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. The study was descriptive and survey type in nature. The relevant data were collected from the head teachers using Urdu version of the MSQ. The collected data was computed using mean, and t-test statistics. It was concluded that overall, the head teachers were found satisfied with their jobs. Compensation, school policies and practices, social status, and working conditions were found least contributors of their job satisfaction. Among these factors compensation and social status were contributing less satisfaction to the head teachers of bigger schools as compare to the smaller schools. Recommendations were made focusing on the factors which were contributing least satisfaction for the head teachers. There is need to improve the compensation package and social status of the head teachers, and working conditions and policies and practices in these schools.

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## Introduction

Job satisfaction is defined as the positive emotional response to a job situation resulting from attaining what the employee wants and values from the job (Locke, 1976, Locke et al., 1983, and Olsen, 1993). There is no one agreed definition, however, Wanous and Lawler (1972) list nine different operational definitions, each based on a different theoretical orientation and each resulting in different measures. The major difference between definitions is in terms of the different ways in which aspects of job satisfaction are combined. When the relationship between job satisfaction for different aspects of the job and overall job satisfaction is analyzed, considerable differences in the extent of the correlation are found. This implies that job satisfaction can be captured by either a one-dimensional concept of global job satisfaction, or a multidimensional, faceted, construct of job satisfaction capturing different aspects of a job situation that can vary independently and should be measured separately. The facet-specific job satisfaction might include aspects like inner rewards, conflict-balance dimensions, recognition, support, and economic compensation, and likewise unit or organization related characteristics, e.g. size of an organization.

In educational organizations context, one of the controversies surrounding school size is that school size affects the quality of interpersonal relationships one experiences in the school setting. Specifically, Barker (1986) summarized one of the advantages of small schools is that relationships between students, teachers, administrators, and school board members tend to be closer. In as much as the factor interpersonal relations is identified by Herzberg and the authors of the MSQ as being a

measure of satisfaction, school size needs to be examined for a possible influence on principal job satisfaction.

School size was one of the three variables having a greater predictor of overall satisfaction for secondary female principals in the United States as measured by the MDI. Additionally school size was one of three determinants of job satisfaction in the sub-area promotion (Fansher and Buxton, 1984). Sparkes and McIntire (1987) reported evidence to support the notion that organizational factors are an important determinant of job satisfaction. After surveying 416 principals in Newfoundland and Labrador, they stated that principals of small schools in small communities have both physical and psychological needs that are not being met. They also stated that principals in smaller schools reported lower levels of overall and facet satisfaction. Their findings suggest that there are external or organizational factors that greatly influence the principal's job satisfaction.

Middle school principals in Indiana were studied by comparing the overall level of job satisfaction of principals from small and large schools as measured by the MSQ (Lehman, 1991). Lehman concluded that variations did exist between small and large schools among the facets identified as least satisfying. Principals in small schools cited compensation as the least satisfying factor. In large schools, principals most often categorized independence as the least satisfying factor. Although there were variations between specific factors and job satisfaction of principals from small and large schools, the author found no evidence to suggest that a significant difference existed. In contrast, Hayat (1998) in the light of his study results states that college size was found to have contribution towards job satisfaction across the climate.

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Newby, (1999) research results showed that satisfaction increases significantly with school size; the larger the school, the greater the satisfaction level. Therefore, a positive linear association occurred between school size and satisfaction. Similar results were found by Finley (1991), who in his study noted that Tennessee's high school principals expressed significant difference in total satisfaction scores and student enrollment. The Scheffe post-hoc procedure revealed that principals with 1,301 or more students and principals with 1,001-1,300 students had significantly higher scores than principals with 401-700 students. Therefore, inconsistent results were found in different studies for the effect of school size on head teachers' job satisfaction in the literature.

### **Background of the problem**

It is clear that high satisfaction and morale on the part of school personnel are generally viewed as desirable goals for school organizations. A basic tenet of personnel work has long been that a satisfied employee, one with high morale, is likely to get along better than other employees, will be more accepting of management's directives, will be more committed to achieving organizational goals, and, consequently will be more productive. The interested and important studies have attracted the researcher to explore the area in depth. Presently, the area of schools has been chosen as the focus of the study. It will be desirable to conduct such studies at other levels of education to explore the concept of job satisfaction, which will be necessarily resulting in an improvement in our present education system. Another main reason to measure the job satisfaction of the head teachers in context of school size was that the researcher who himself has been a head teacher in a smaller elementary school for a number of years; observed that his counter parts of bigger schools in the district were seemed to be dissatisfied with different aspects of their jobs and especially claiming to work stressors which they have to face in a bigger schools as compare to the head teachers of smaller schools. Moreover, considering educational institutions simple organizations the researcher attracted to those aspects of job which were playing an important role for head teachers' dissatisfaction. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire was found most suitable instrument to cover these factors of job. Therefore, as an attempt to assess the job satisfaction level of head teachers of government elementary schools (Toba Tek Singh) in the Punjab, Pakistan this study was conducted in context of school size using MSQ as a research tool.

### **Statement of the problem**

This study sought to investigate two areas of job satisfaction. First, the study investigated the facet-specific job satisfaction levels of government elementary school head teachers (Toba Tek Singh) in the Punjab, Pakistan in context of their school size as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). Second, the researcher sought to determine which of the twenty dimensions of the job assessed on the MSQ, the head teachers of smaller and bigger schools identified significant differences for their job satisfaction levels.

### **Objectives of the study**

The study was designed with the following objectives:

1. To assess the facet-specific job satisfaction levels of the elementary school head teachers in context of their school size working in district Toba Tek Singh, Punjab, Pakistan;
2. To determine significant differences between head teachers of smaller and bigger schools for their job satisfaction levels for

each of the twenty dimensions of the job as measured by the MSQ; and

3. To suggest recommendations to enhance the satisfaction level of the head teachers for dissatisfying factors, and for further research in this area.

### **Research guiding questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the satisfaction level of the head teachers of smaller and bigger schools for the selected twenty dimensions of their job?
2. Is there a significant difference between smaller and bigger school head teachers' level of job satisfaction for the selected twenty dimensions of job?
3. What are the suggestive measures to enhance the job satisfaction level of the head teachers of smaller and bigger schools?
4. What are the suggested further studies to explore the area of job satisfaction in more depth in respect of this study?

### **Procedure of the study**

This study was descriptive and survey type in nature. The relevant data were collected from government elementary school head teachers using MSQ. For this study adopted procedure, in brief is as follows:

### **Population for the Study:**

The population of this study consisted of all male and female government elementary school head teachers located in urban and rural areas of district Toba Tek Singh in the Punjab, Pakistan.

### **Sample for the Study:**

Hundred percent sampling was made for this study, and 207 teachers of all categories who were working as head teachers in government elementary schools in district Toba Tek Singh of the Punjab, Pakistan were asked to fill in the questionnaire. One hundred and eighty surveys were found usable after the administration of the tool to the sampled head teachers.

### **Development of Research Instrument:**

One of the most popular measures of job satisfaction, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) with one demographic variable; school size (with two subcategories; as smaller schools with 400 or less students and as bigger schools more than 400 students) was used as a research instrument. It is a standardized questionnaire. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was developed by Weiss, Dawis, English, and Lofquist (1967) to measure the individual's satisfaction with twenty different aspects of the work environment. Keeping in view the sampled population characteristics, some necessary and minor changes were made in the questionnaire and then it was translated into Urdu. A pilot study was also conducted for the reliability and validation of the Urdu version of the questionnaire.

### **Administration of the Instrument:**

To get a high response rate, personally and by mail, using both means relevant data were collected. Data of one hundred and eighty head teachers were found usable for the research.

### **Statistical Treatment:**

The collected data was entered in SPSS and was computed in accordance with the objectives of the study using mean, and t test as statistical technique. The relevant and significant information from the SPSS output tables were presented in an own created tabulation form keeping in view the objectives of the study.

### Data analysis:

Data were generated in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to assess the frequencies of response for each of the 5 response options on the MSQ Likert Scale. The assigned weight and scale applied to find descriptive results for 5 options of job satisfaction of MSQ for each were as under:

Weight	Scale applied	Option
1	1.00-1.50	Not Satisfied
2	1.51-2.50	Slightly Satisfied
3	2.51-3.50	Satisfied
4	3.51-4.50	Very Satisfied
5	4.51-5.00	Extremely Satisfied

Each of the 20 job dimensions was reported and the computed frequencies of responses for each scale option were tallied and tabulated with mean, t-test and p value in the following table and followed by table interpretation.

Table 1 predicts the following seven explanations:

1. There is no mean difference between the head teachers of smaller and bigger schools for two dimensions of job; ability utilization and recognition.
2. The head teachers of bigger schools shows more mean than head teachers of smaller schools for four dimensions of job; achievement, advancement, school policies and practices, and working conditions.
3. The head teachers of smaller schools shows more mean than head teachers of bigger schools for fourteen dimensions of job; activity, authority, colleagues, compensation, creativity, independence, moral values, responsibility, security, social service, social status, supervision human relations, supervision technical, and variety.
4. The head teachers of both categories of schools smaller and bigger are "very satisfied" (mean scores ranged from 3.51 to 4.50) for two dimensions of job; activity with mean scores 3.57 and 3.51, and for moral values with a mean scores 3.64 and 3.51 respectively.
5. The head teachers of both categories of schools (smaller and bigger) are "satisfied" (mean scores ranged from 2.51 to 3.50) for fourteen dimensions of job; ability utilization with mean scores 3.01 and 3.01, achievement with mean scores 2.99 and 3.00, advancement with mean scores 2.51 and 2.53, authority with mean scores 2.87 and 2.82, colleagues with mean scores 2.87 and 2.73, creativity with mean scores 2.61 and 2.59, independence with mean scores 2.79 and 2.77, recognition with mean scores 2.61 and 2.61, responsibility with mean scores 2.97 and 2.93, security with mean scores 2.76 and 2.72, social service with mean scores 2.53 and 2.51, supervision human relations with mean scores 2.78 and 2.69, supervision technical with mean scores 2.86 and 2.77, and variety with mean scores 3.50 and 3.39 respectively.
6. The head teachers of both categories of schools (smaller and bigger) are "slightly satisfied" (mean scores ranged from 1.51 to 2.50) for four dimensions of job; compensation with mean scores 2.07 and 1.91, school policies and practices with mean scores 2.46 and 2.50, social status with mean scores 2.30 and 2.12, working conditions with mean scores 2.14 and 2.20 respectively.
7. There is a significant difference between the job satisfaction level of the head teachers of smaller and bigger schools for two dimensions of job; compensation with mean scores 2.07 and 1.91, and social status with mean scores 2.30 and 2.12 respectively at 0.05 level of significance.

### Conclusions

On the basis of above interpretation it can be concluded:

1. Overall, the head teachers were found satisfied with their jobs.
2. The head teachers were very satisfied with the aspects of their job to be active and do not go against their consciences on their jobs.
3. The head teachers of smaller schools seemed to be more satisfied than head teachers of bigger schools.
4. The head teachers were found least satisfied with their compensation, school policies and practices, social status, and working conditions.
5. The head teachers of smaller schools were significantly more satisfied than the head teachers of bigger schools for the aspects of their job; compensation and social status.

### Discussion

The head teachers of government elementary schools found to be least satisfied for four dimensions of job. In this regard, general judgments and facts and figures in the governmental (Govt. of Pakistan, 2006, 2009a, 2009b, 2010) and research studies (Jaffer, 2010; Khan, n.d) documents also support these results.

Results of this study show that head teachers from smaller schools scored more on almost all the dimensions of job satisfaction as compared to head teachers of bigger schools.

But no significant differences were observed between head teachers of smaller schools and head teachers of larger schools for 18 dimensions out of 20 dimensions of their job. These results are contrary to the conclusions of Finely (1991) and Newby (1999). Compensation and Social Status were two areas where significant differences were found between head teachers of smaller schools and bigger schools.

The reason for the low satisfaction of head teachers of bigger schools was not explored in this study; however, head teachers of bigger schools may be feeling that they are not being highly respected in the community as they expect being a head of a big institution.

Moreover, they may feel that their compensation is low as compare to their work in a big institution. It can be assumed that it is a difficult task to manage bigger schools. In bigger schools, there are so many and big problems which head teachers have to face occasionally. On the other hand the head teachers of these schools have to do a lot of work as compared to head teachers working in smaller schools while the compensation package is equal for both.

Therefore this situation may be resulted in bigger school head teachers' low satisfaction with their job as compare to the head teachers of smaller schools.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations can be made on the basis of the results of this study. It is hoped that the Federal and Punjab Governments, Pay and Pension Committee, Policy Makers, and other authorities will take initiative steps in this regard. The results of this study may be very useful for district Toba Tek Singh as the hundred percent sampling was made from the district. Especially, the hierarchy of district government in educational setup of Toba Tek Singh and generally in Punjab; District Coordinate Officer, Executive District Officer (Education), District Education Officers, Deputy District Education Officers, and Assistant Education Officers can initiate actions that would enhance the satisfaction of government elementary school head teachers.

1. Generally, the head teachers were found satisfied with their jobs, especially, for activity and moral values aspects of their job they showed maximum satisfaction. Therefore steps should be

taken to maintain this minimum standard or for the enhancement of job satisfaction in future.

2. There is need to enhance the satisfaction level of the head teachers for four dimensions of their job:

The level of head teachers' job satisfaction can be increased for their compensation with a big rise in their pay and allowances keeping in view the present wave of inflation in the country.

School system policies and practices need to be made more favorable for the head teachers especially, with a review of promotion and transfer policies. Promotion should be performance based and there should be no political interference in the transfer of the head teachers.

The head teachers' social status can be improved while giving them some representations in the society and providing them more opportunities to play their active role in the society with a collaboration of high personalities.

In the light of the education statistics and policies as they show the sparsely availability of the facilities in the government elementary schools in the district; attention should be given to this issue seriously to improve the working conditions in the schools.

3. As far as head teachers working in bigger schools are concerned, steps should be taken to enhance the job satisfaction level of these head teachers focusing on two aspects of job; compensation and social status.

On the basis of the results of this study, further studies can be recommended in two main areas:

1. Studies should be conducted to find out more predictors of job satisfaction to explore the area in more depth.

2. The results of this study also demands for a follow up research to find out the answer why head teachers of bigger government elementary schools are less satisfied than the head teachers working in smaller government elementary schools of the district Toba Tek Singh.

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**Table 1: Comparison between School Size for Twenty Dimensions of Job (Small Schools=116 + Bigger Schools =64,N=180)**

S.No	Job Dimension	Mean		t	P
		400 Students or Less	Greater than 400 Students		
1	Ability Utilization	3.01	3.01	.00	.99
2	Achievement	2.99	3.00	.00	.94
3	Activity	3.57	3.48	1.16	.28
4	Advancement	2.50	2.53	.08	.77
5	Authority	2.87	2.82	.31	.57
6	Colleagues	2.87	2.73	2.38	.12
7	Compensation	2.07	1.91	4.27	.04*
8	Creativity	2.61	2.59	.03	.84
9	Independence	2.79	2.77	.04	.83
10	Moral values	3.64	3.51	2.09	.15
11	Recognition	2.61	2.61	.00	.98
12	Responsibility	2.97	2.93	.25	.61
13	School Policies and Practices	2.46	2.51	.28	.59
14	Security	2.76	2.72	.08	.77
15	Social Service	2.53	2.50	.06	.80
16	Social Status	2.30	2.12	3.81	.05*
17	Supervision Human Relations	2.78	2.69	1.02	.31
18	Supervision Technical	2.86	2.77	1.10	.29
19	Variety	3.51	3.39	1.58	.20
20	Working Conditions	2.14	2.20	.56	.45