

The Correlation between Personality Factors, Emotional Intelligence, and Job satisfaction of Iranian EFL teachers

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between personality factors, emotional and job satisfaction of Iranian EFL teachers. To this end, 80 EFL high school teachers were selected through convenience sampling. Bar-On Emotional Quotient inventory, Townend Personality Factors Questionnaire, and Karavas Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire, were used to collect the data. The data were analyzed through standard multiple regression and an independent sample T-test. The results of the study indicated that both personality factors and emotional intelligence are good predictors for job satisfaction; however, the results of the study showed that personality factors are better predictors for Job satisfaction than emotional intelligence. Independent sample t-test couldn't show any significant difference between males and females with regard to job satisfaction. The results of the study are discussed and suggestions for further studies are made.

Keywords: personality factors, emotional intelligence, teacher job satisfaction

Introduction

Nowadays, academic work in every field of study is extensively linked to real world professional experience and teaching is not considered as an exception in this case. Thus, if we want to have well-prepared EFL teachers, we should provide real life training program for them. Concentrating on the issue of learning, a teacher is always influenced by many factors throughout his or her learning. It does not matter how old the learner is. The teacher learns his/her learning through the environment.

The studies on individual and personality differences are a central theme in psychology as well as other areas of social and behavior sciences (Saklofske & Eysneck, 1998). According to Pervin and John (1995), personality is defined as a unique expression of individual differences in behavior and experience which must out of necessity, be reflected in personal attributes. In other words, psychologically, it is a truism that people are different in many fundamental ways and individuals are characterized by a unique pattern of factors. It could also be defined as “the relatively enduring style of thinking, feeling, and acting that characterizes an individual” (Costa, McCrae & Kay, 1995, p.124). Moreover, Mc Martin (1995) also defined personality as “the developing system of distinctive emotional, cognitive and spiritual attributes that manifest themselves in the individual’s characteristic behavior at any point in the life course” (p.5). There are many different views regarding the issue of the definition of personality and personality factors like any other abstract concepts, as what is meant by personality or personality factors are not usually tangible or measurable directly however, the main theme is identical.

It is believed that personality factors are important in learning development in general and the improvement of linguistic abilities specifically (Ellis, 1985). Horwitz (1999) pointed out “language learners are individuals approaching language learning in their own unique way”. Therefore, for many language teachers, personality of the learners is one of the major factors that contribute to their success or failure (Ellis, 1996). In addition, it could also be concluded that individuals who are characterized as a particular psychological types, adopt almost the same way of learning, face almost the same problems in that process, and approach those problems in quite the same way (Fazeli, 2012).

Consequently, every one involves in the process of teaching and learning must be aware of the relationship between learners’ personality factors and their academic performance as personality and personality factors play an important and undeniable role in area of teaching and learning (Eysenck, 1967; Cattell & Butcher, 1968).

Individual variables such as motivation, cognitive styles, abilities and learning strategies play an important role in the process of learning and nowadays; many researchers have focused on them in their studies. Mokhtari (2007) asserted that some individuals’ differences such as attitudes, sex, nationality, major and so forth can affect the frequency and variety of language learning strategy use. One of these learners’ variables which we can mention to is intelligence.

In 1990s, the emotional intelligence was introduced, for the first time and it was used in many fields including education. This concept was formally developed out of growing emphasis on research on the interaction of emotion and thought in the field of psychology. Goleman (1995) defined emotional intelligence as abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustration, to control impulses and delay gratification; to regulate one’s moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to emphasize and to hope, which include self-control, zeal and persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself. Later, Goleman reformulated his first definition of emotional intelligence and broke down emotional intelligence into twenty-five different emotional competencies, like political awareness, service orientation, self-confidence, consciousness and achievement drive (Goleman, 1998). Furthermore, Mayer and Salovey (1990) defined the Emotional Intelligence as the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions.

In recent decades, a lot of researchers had investigated these aspects such as logical reasoning, spatial skills, math skills, understanding analogies, verbal skills, etc. for example, Terman (1921, cited in Rouhani, 2008) states that an individual is intelligent in proportion as he is able to carry on abstract thinking. Although Intelligence Quotient (IQ) could predict to some degree academic, professional and personal success, but there were some people with high IQ scores who

were poorly doing in their life and losing their chances of success.

In order to take advantages of social life and interact in an effective and confident environment, it is important to learn a complex set of social skills such as personality factors. The body of literature reveals a lack of empirical research on personality factors and language learning. Educators must be aware of the impact of individual differences among learners and the personality factors on their learning process. Educators must be aware of the research on personality, since one of the goals of education is the personal and social development of learners. Despite the significant role of personality features in differentiating individual learners, and potential effect it can have on teaching, to date, very scarce number of studies have been conducted to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence, personality factors and teachers' job satisfaction. This issue is highlighted when it is considered in Iranian EFL context.

The present study was an attempt to measure the relationship between EFL teachers' personality factors, emotional intelligence and their job satisfaction in English teaching. More specifically, this study sought to find whether Iranian EFL teachers' personality factors and emotional intelligence are significant predictors of their job satisfaction or not. Furthermore, this study investigated to find which aspect of Iranian EFL teachers' personality factors as well as emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of their job satisfaction. Finally, this study was going to see whether there is any significant difference between male and female regarding their job satisfaction in Iranian EFL teachers.

Method

The method of study is descriptive and causal-comparative.

Participants

The participants in this study included 80 EFL in-service teachers from high schools in Zahedan with English teaching experience ranging 10 and 15 years. The present study adopted convenience sampling method in which certain group of people are chosen for study because of convenience (Frankel & Wallen, 2003). This sampling method was chosen in order to maximize the number of EFL teachers close to the researcher's residence as possible in this survey. The researcher invited these EFL teachers working in the high schools to respond to the questionnaires.

Instruments

Personality Traits Questionnaire

Townend (1991) classified people into two groups: assertive and non-assertive. Non-assertive people were also grouped as aggressive, submissive and passive. The questionnaire comprised 80 yes/no items. The questionnaire included four sub-scales of assertive, aggressive, submissive, and passive characteristics. Each of these sub-scales consisted of 20 questions that were randomly placed in the questionnaire. After reading each item, test taker needed to examine the particular behavior introspectively; if the questioned attribute was present in his behavior with a high degree of frequency then the affirmative echoic was used; otherwise he should choose "no". Actually the answer sheet displays a binary choice. The personality version of the questionnaire was used in this study.

The items of the questionnaire are related to features and characteristics which determine each of these four kinds of behaviors and personality traits. The purpose was to evaluate teachers with regard to assertive, aggressive, submissive, and passive attributes.

Emotional Quotient inventory (EQ-i) (Bar-On et al., 1997)

The Bar-On Emotional Quotient inventory (EQ-i) is the most comprehensive self-report measure of EQ. It consists of 15 subscales, which include emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, independence, empathy, interpersonal relationship, social responsibility, problem solving, reality testing, flexibility, stress tolerance and impulse control. In addition to the subscales, the EQ-i contains three factors that are considered facilitator of emotional intelligence which include happiness, optimism, and self-actualization. The EQ-I yields a measure of overall EI as well as scores on each of the sub-factors.

The original Emotional Quotient inventory (EQ-i) had demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha ranging from .87 to .90), and good two-week test-retest reliability ($r = .78$) (across a wide variety of cultures) (Bar-On et al., 1997).

Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (Karavas, 2010)

The Teachers' Job Satisfaction questionnaire, developed by Karavas (2010), consists of four main parts: Part 1 elicits biographical information about teachers (age, sex, years of teaching experience,

types of the schools/institutions and geographical region of schools/institutions in which they have taught). Part 2 consists of a series of 15 Likert-type statements related to teachers' level of satisfaction with various aspects their job extrinsic to the task of teaching such as their recognition by students, peers, parents and the wider community, the image of teachers, their status in society, their salary, working hours, benefits, etc. The scores on this part were measured by 5 point scale ranging from 1= highly satisfying to 5= highly dissatisfying. Part3 consists of series of 20 Likert type statements focusing on the second research question of study. More specifically, this part of questionnaire elicited respondents' attitudes towards various school based factors, their work and their relationship with students. The answers on this part were measured

on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly agree to 5= strongly disagree. Finally, Part 4 investigates reasons teacher s choose teaching as a career.

Procedures

In order to explore the correlation between personality traits, emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, structured procedure was designed. After brief explanation about questionnaire and the necessary instruction for answering the items, the researcher asked the participants to answer the questionnaires. Teachers with more than 10 years of experience filled out the questionnaire. Standard Multiple Regression and Independent sample T-test were used to analyze data.

Results

Table1. *Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.758 ^a	.575	.562	.3976

Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence, Personality

With regard to Table 1, the coefficient of multiple correlations is presented in the "R" column. R is the measure of the prediction of the dependent variable; in this case, job satisfaction. A value of 0.75 indicates a good level of prediction. The "R Square" or R² value is the proportion of variance in the job satisfaction that can be explained by the independent variables (i.e., emotional Intelligence and personality traits). It indicates that emotional

Intelligence and personality traits explain 57% of the variability of job satisfaction.

In order to determine whether the provided model (emotional Intelligence and personality traits as independent and job satisfaction as dependent variable) is a good fit for the data, a one-way ANOVA was performed. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2, *ANOVA of regression model*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.078	2	2.539	47.56	.000 ^b
	Residual	144.289	117	5.344		
	Total	149.367	119			

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence, Personality

The F value in the Table 2 verifies the fitness of overall regression model for the data. The result shows that (F= 47.56, p = 0) p value is lower than assumed level of significance (i.e., 0.05), therefore, EFL learners' emotional intelligence and personality traits can significantly predict their job

satisfaction (i.e., the regression model is a suitable method for analyzing of the data).

Table 3 shows information about the model coefficients. The general form of the model is to predict EFL learners' job satisfaction from their personality traits and emotional intelligence.

Table 3, *Coefficients of the model*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.531	3.197		-.166	.025
Personality	.036	.037	.373	.965	.000

Emotional Intelligence	.017	.011	.173	.533	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction					

Unstandardized coefficients in the above table show how much EFL teachers' job satisfaction variable varies with their personality traits and emotional intelligence, when the other independent variable is constant. As can be seen in the above table, the personality traits ($b = .37, p < .05$) is a significant predictor of EFL teachers' job satisfaction which would indicate that larger personality traits is related to higher job satisfaction. The emotional intelligence ($b = .35, p < .05$) is also a significant predictor of EFL teachers' job satisfaction which would indicate that higher emotional intelligence is related to higher job satisfaction. The results of multiple regression analyses showed that the personality traits is a stronger predictor of teachers' job satisfaction. Therefore research question of study was verified.

Discussion and Conclusion

The mastery of English language teaching not only consists of teachers' language proficiency, but also their ability to interact with learners in classroom environment. The present study was designed to investigate the impact of personality traits and emotional intelligence on Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction in Iranian EFL teachers. In addition, it was going to pursue whether significant is any significant difference between male and female EFL teachers regarding their emotional intelligence, personality traits and job satisfaction. In so doing, sample of 80 EFL teachers who were teaching English in public schools was selected. The participants' views towards their job satisfaction, emotional intelligence and personality traits were investigated using three Likert-type questionnaires.

The descriptive statistics revealed that Iranian EFL teachers were not satisfied with school-based and system-based factors of their job. Their satisfaction restricted to the intrinsic factors of their job. The results of multiple regression analyses showed that the personality traits is a stronger predictor of teachers' job satisfaction. Therefore, research question of the study was verified.

Based on the results of statistical analyses, one can conclude that most Iranian EFL teachers did not satisfy with their job conditions, resulting in not performing their role optimally in the classroom. EFL teachers tended to agree on the point that

support from administration and official system would highly increase their job satisfaction.

This finding supported those of Day, (2002), Day et al., (2006) and Shann (1998) who found that teachers are satisfied with the intrinsic elements of their work such as interaction with students and professional autonomy and self-growth and express dissatisfaction with issues related to school-based factors.

This result also confirms the findings from the study of Karavas (2010) who showed that Greek EFL teachers' satisfaction of their job has a significant relationship with students' achievements.

The results of multiple regression showed that assertiveness aspect of personality traits is a significant predictor of Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction. This is one of the most important findings of the study indicating the overwhelming agreement of teachers with the contribution of their positive personality behaviors in helping to promote teachers' job effectiveness and satisfaction. The results suggested that the job satisfaction can motivate EFL teachers to become effective in English language classroom and linking the learning to daily life. Therefore, the teacher's adequate satisfaction would cause the successful teaching in the language classroom on the strict condition that they refrain from any situational constraints.

This result confirmed those of Vandenberg and Huberman (1999) who found that teacher student relationship enhanced teacher satisfaction and the direct consequences for it when emotional exhaustion, a sense of futility and reduced personal accomplishment creeps into teachers working lives. EFL teachers are responsible for showing friendly and supportive behavior in order to ensure that students feel comfortable and have confidence to produce language. This is particularly significant in Iranian context where relatively rigid classroom traditions do not let teachers readily use their emotions. The limited emotional practice applied by the teachers will make a significant difference in students' motivation.

The implementation of this study in its present suggested form can be justified in terms of some limitations. The participants were selected according to available sampling. The study can be

duplicated using procedures that allow higher degree of randomization and eventually more generalizability. Furthermore, using qualitative approaches such as observations to examine the study's constructs would allow researchers to understand not only if relationship exists between the variables in question, but also the processes by which these constructs develop in the teaching context.

Future studies needs to develop more qualitative instruments such as interviews and observations to identify the processes by which variables could lead to higher levels of job satisfaction. It can provide to learn about mechanisms by which teachers influence student and into the kinds of instructional practices and interpersonal relationships that support it.

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