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## **Psychosocial correlates of primary school teachers' job satisfaction**

### **Abstract**

An increasing number of researchers from various scientific disciplines (e.g. pedagogy, psychology, sociology, andragogy, as well as management studies) emphasise the great importance of job satisfaction, highlighting its tangible benefits both for an individual, his or her social environment, employer and organisation. Hence, an increasing number of studies focusing on this issue are published every year. Compared to representatives of other professions, teachers are rarely the object of study, which is unusual given the social implications of the lack of job satisfaction of this particular group. In light of the above, the author of this paper undertook research to examine the psychosocial correlates of teachers' job satisfaction with the aim of identifying the determinants of this aspect, which could help to design appropriate workshops to increase the number of teachers satisfied with their profession.

The main research problem of the study was summarised in the question: Do, and if so how, do selected personal resources, including personal dispositions and sociodemographic variables, correlate with the job satisfaction of the teachers surveyed?

In order to answer the main research problem, the author focused on five detailed questions:

1. What is the level of job satisfaction of the surveyed teachers?
2. Do, and if so, how do the surveyed teachers' personal dispositions, including assertiveness, self-esteem, sense of coherence, stress coping styles and sense of self-efficacy, correlate with their job satisfaction?
3. What types of job satisfaction can be identified in the group of teachers surveyed?

4. Do, and if so, how do selected personal dispositions (assertiveness, self-esteem, sense of coherence, stress coping styles and sense of self-efficacy), differentiate the scores of the surveyed teachers in terms of the identified types of job satisfaction?
5. Do and, if so, how do such socio-demographic variables as gender, age, length of service, promotion level, subject taught, place of work, place of residence, marital status, number of children and material status differentiate the scores of the surveyed teachers in terms of the identified types of job satisfaction?

Based on the research available in the literature on the subject, it was hypothesised that assertiveness, self-esteem, sense of coherence, sense of self-efficacy, task-focused and emotion-focused stress coping styles correlate positively with the job satisfaction of the surveyed teachers, while avoidance-focused stress coping style correlates negatively with it.

The survey was conducted on a group of 221 teachers from 17 primary schools located in the Lubelskie Province (in Świdnicki, Lubelski and Kraśnicki districts), and involved the diagnostic survey method. Independent variables were measured using: Job Description Sheet (AOP) by A. Zalewska; Assertiveness Questionnaire for Teachers (KAN) by T. Zubrzycka-Maciąg and J. Kirenko; Rosenberg Self-Esteem Questionnaire; Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS) by N. S. Endler and J. D. A. Parker; Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) by R. Schwarzer and M. Jerusalem (adapted by Z. Juczyński); Life Orientation Questionnaire (SOC - 29) by A. Antonovsky, and the author's own questionnaire used to collect information on the sociodemographic data of the surveyed group of teachers.

The results obtained showed that the majority of the surveyed teachers experience overall job satisfaction at an average level (60.6%); the results showing satisfaction separately for the identified eight areas of work (colleagues, supervisor, work content, working conditions, organisation and management, professional development, remuneration and workplace) fell within the range of average and high scores.

The research partially confirmed the adopted working hypothesis. It turned out that the observed correlations between the examined variables are much more complex than assumed. It was found that out of the independent variables in question, only general assertiveness and one of its components, namely acceptance of positive and negative evaluations, was irrelevant to explaining the dependent variable. The remaining independent variables formed various correlations with the job satisfaction of the surveyed teachers.

Teachers displaying higher levels of assertiveness, self-esteem, sense of self-efficacy and sense of coherence were found to have higher scores in terms of job satisfaction. In contrast, teachers' stress coping styles showed different correlations than expected with the

job satisfaction variable. Higher job satisfaction scores were obtained by respondents preferring task-focused and avoidance-focused stress coping styles. In turn, respondents opting for emotion-based coping style in difficult situations were characterised by lower job satisfaction.

It was also found that, out of the ten socio-geographical variables included in the research model, only three (respondents' age, length of service and subject taught) correlated with job satisfaction at the level of statistical significance. Early childhood education teachers, teachers aged 31 - 40 and those working in the profession for no more than 5 years were found to experience the highest professional satisfaction. On the other hand, the lowest job satisfaction was experienced by science teachers, teachers aged 41 to 50, and those with long work experience (16 years and above).

The conducted research corroborated the existence of a correlation between the selected personal resources and experiencing job satisfaction by the teachers surveyed. While the contribution of socio-demographic variables in explaining the degree of professional satisfaction was found to be less significant, the personal dispositions of the surveyed teachers, including assertiveness, self-esteem, sense of coherence, preferred stress coping style and sense of self-efficacy, correlated significantly with job satisfaction.

The results obtained can contribute to broadening the existing knowledge in the area under consideration, but also point to certain limitations with respect to the empirical study, in particular the voluntary nature of teachers' participation in the survey.

**Keywords:** job satisfaction, professional satisfaction, teachers