

The Relationship Between Liking of Children and Job Satisfaction Among Preschool Teachers



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Submission: October 10, 2019; **Published:** December 16, 2019

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Abstract

This study was conducted to examine the relationship between liking of children and job satisfaction among preschool teachers. This cross-sectional analytical study included 140 teachers who volunteered to participate. Data were collected using a sociodemographic information form, the Barnett Liking of Children Scale (BLOCS), and the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Scale. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 21 package program was used for statistical analysis and p values less than 0.05 were considered significant. There was a statistically significant difference in the preschool teachers' job satisfaction scores according to age, marital status, and the facilities in their school ($p < 0.05$). In addition, there was a statistically significant difference in liking of children scores based on the teachers' education level ($p < 0.05$). Correlation analysis revealed statistically significant and positive correlations between liking of children score and overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction, and extrinsic job satisfaction ($p < 0.01$). Regression analysis showed that liking of children affected overall, intrinsic, and extrinsic job satisfaction ($F = 13.175$; $R^2 = 0.081$; $F = 12.722$, $R^2 = 0.078$; $F = 10.739$, $R^2 = 0.065$, respectively). The results of this study demonstrate that preschool teachers' job satisfaction and liking of children are affected by various factors, and that levels of job satisfaction and liking of children are positively correlated.

Keywords: Liking of children; Job satisfaction; Preschool teacher; Child education

Abbreviations: SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences; BLOCS: Barnet Liking of Children Scale; SD: Standard Deviation

Introduction

Preschool education aims to support children in all areas of development in order to help them acquire new skills and behaviors and prepare them for primary education [1]. Currently, preschool teachers spend the longest time with children due to the prevalence of working mothers. After their primary caretakers (usually the parents), their preschool teachers is the most important person for a child [2]. Therefore, children's basic need for love and attention must be met as well as their developmental and educational needs [3]. According to Downing, Ryndak & Clark [4], necessary qualities of a preschool teacher include being able to interact with children, being patient, attentive, gentle, and flexible, and liking children. Gelbal & Duyan [5] stated that liking children is the main characteristic of teachers. Brown, Morehead & Smith [6] also emphasized that liking children is a particularly important condition for people who choose teaching as a career. Teacher performance and job satisfaction are also important for effective preschool education [7]. Job satisfaction has been defined in many ways. Especially about teaching, job satisfaction is defined as a series of emotional responses toward their work and their role that explains how they generally feel at work [8,9]. Altaş & Kuzu [10] reported that the positive influence of job satisfaction on preschool teachers' performance was stronger than that of

organizational reassurance or emotional commitment. Massari [11] emphasized that job satisfaction affects not only work-related attitudes but also teaching quality. Job satisfaction is an important factor that can affect teachers' productivity and their communication with children. Failure to find job satisfaction may have a detrimental impact on teacher-student rapport and quality of education [12]. It is especially important to investigate job satisfaction among preschool teachers, who interact extensively with their students. Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between liking of children and job satisfaction in preschool teachers. For this purpose, the following questions were explored in the study:

- Do teachers' scores on a liking of children scale differ from their descriptive characteristics?
- Do teachers' scores on a job satisfaction scale differ from their descriptive characteristics?
- Is there a statistically significant relationship between teachers' liking of children scores and job satisfaction scores?
- Does teachers' liking of children affect their job satisfaction and its sub-dimensions?

Methods

Study design

This cross-sectional, analytical study was conducted between April 1 and May 30, 2019 in 21 kindergartens (7 state, 17 private) associated with the Ministry of National Education in the city of Kutahya, Turkey.

Study population

The universe of the study comprised the 159 preschool teachers working in all of the kindergartens of Kutahya Provincial Directorate of National Education. No sample selection was made from the universe; all 140 teachers who were in school on the day of the survey and agreed to participate in the study were included in the study.

Ethical approval

The study was approved by the Kutahya Provincial Directorate of National Education and the Kutahya Health Sciences University Rectorate Non-Interventional Clinical Trials Ethics Committee (approval number 2019/04, dated 19.03.2019). The teachers provided verbal and written informed consent after being informed of the purpose of the study and assured that the study data would remain confidential.

Data collection

Questionnaires were used to collect data from the teachers who agreed to participate in the study. The teachers completed a sociodemographic information form, the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Scale and the Barnet Liking of Children Scale (BLOCS). It took approximately 20 minutes.

Instruments

Sociodemographic Information Form was developed by the researchers and consists of 7 questions that were answered by the teachers. Minnesota Job Satisfaction Scale was developed by Weiss, Davis, England, and the Turkish validity and reliability studies

were conducted by Baycan [13]. It has 20 items that are rated on a Likert-type scale of “very dissatisfied” (1 point), “dissatisfied” (2 points), “can’t decide” (3 points), “satisfied” (4 points), and “very satisfied” (5 points). Scores range from a minimum of 20 to a maximum of 100. The intrinsic satisfaction score includes factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, creativity, and working conditions, while extrinsic satisfaction score includes factors such as compensation, job security, and supervision. The original scale was calculated to have a reliability coefficient of 0.90 for overall job satisfaction, 0.86 for intrinsic satisfaction, and 0.80 for extrinsic satisfaction [13]. In this study, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was calculated as 0.89 for intrinsic satisfaction, 0.79 for extrinsic satisfaction, and 0.92 for overall job satisfaction. Barnett Liking of Children Scale (BLOCS) was developed by Barnett & Sinisi and the Turkish validity and reliability study was conducted by Duyan & Gelbal [14]. It includes 14 items scored on a 7-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The lowest possible score is 14 and the highest score is 98, with higher scores indicating more positive attitudes toward children. Results of the validity and reliability study indicated a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.85 and internal consistency level of 0.92 [14]. In this study, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for total BLOCS score was 0.84.

Data analysis

The study data were analyzed using the SPSS package program. Using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, we determined that the data were normally distributed. Number, mean, and standard deviation were used in descriptive statistical analysis. For categorical variables, independent-samples t test was used for comparisons of two groups and one-way ANOVA was used for comparisons of three or more groups. Pearson correlation analysis was used to evaluate the relationships between the scales. Simple linear regression analysis was performed to examine the direction and effect of the relationship between liking of children score and job satisfaction overall and within its sub dimensions. P values <0.05 were considered statistically significant in all statistical tests.

Result

Table 1: Mean job satisfaction and liking of children scores of preschool teachers according to their descriptive characteristics.

Variables		N	%	Job Satisfaction Score	Liking of Children Score
				Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD
Gender	Female	133	95	83.08 ± 10.12	91.65 ± 8.92
	Male	7	5	85.71 ± 8.85	88.00 ± 10.52
	t			0.68	1.05
	p			0.5	0.3
Age (years)	25 and under	45	32.1	85.38 ± 10.19	92.91 ± 7.62
	26–35	64	45.7	80.84 ± 9.33	90.23 ± 10.06
	36 and over	31	22.2	84.93 ± 10.51	91.90 ± 8.42
	F			3.39	1.22
	p			0.04**	0.3

Marital status	Married	72	51.4	81.04 ± 10.36	90.25 ± 10.29
	Single	68	48.6	85.50 ± 9.23	92.75 ± 7.24
	t			2.68	1.67
	p			0.01**	0.1
Parental status	Has children	65	46.4	82.49 ± 10.77	91.17 ± 9.26
	No children	75	53.6	83.83 ± 9.40	91.72 ± 8.82
	t			0.78	0.36
	p			0.44	0.72
Education level	High school	8	5.7	83.50 ± 12.48	86.50 ± 17.12
	Associate degree	23	16.4	87.39 ± 8.50	95.70 ± 5.05
	Undergraduate	99	70.8	82.41 ± 10.39	90.76 ± 8.83
	Master's	10	7.1	81.20 ± 5.37	92.70 ± 5.98
	F			1.7	2.87
	p			0.17	0.04*
Professional Experience	0-5 years	69	49.3	83.59 ± 10.04	91.43 ± 9.32
	6-10 years	42	30	81.29 ± 10.46	91.48 ± 8.99
	10 years and over	29	20.7	85.07 ± 9.31	91.52 ± 8.52
	F			1.32	0
	p			0.27	0.1
School Facilities	Advanced	105	75	84.28 ± 9.78	92.20 ± 7.49
	Moderate	35	25	80.00 ± 10.28	89.26 ± 12.37
	t			2.211	1.329
	p			0.03*	0.19

The teachers' mean job satisfaction and liking of children scores according to descriptive characteristics are shown in Table 1. The study group included mostly women (95%, n=113), 45.7% (n=64) of the participants were in the 26-35 age group, 51.4% (n=72) were married, 53.6% (n=75) did not have children, and 70.8% (n=99) had undergraduate degrees. The preschool teachers' job satisfaction scores showed significant differences according to age, school facilities, and marital status (p<0.05). Mean scores were significantly higher in single teachers (85.50) compared to married teachers (81.04), teachers who rated their school's facilities as advanced (84.28), and teachers 25 years

old or younger (85.38). There were no significant differences in the preschool teachers' job satisfaction scores according to their gender, education level, years of professional experience, or parental status (p>0.05) (Table 1). BLOCS score differed significantly according to education level (p<0.05). Mean score was significantly higher among teachers with associate degrees (95.70) compared to those who graduated from high school (86.50) or had undergraduate (90.76) and master's degrees (92.70). BLOCS score was not associated with gender, age, marital status, years of experience, school facilities, or parental status (p>0.05) (Table 1).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients of the study variables.

	Variables	Mean ± SD	1	2	3	4
1	Liking of Children	91.46 ± 8.99	1			
2	Job Satisfaction	83.21 ± 10.05	0.30**	1		
3	Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	51.10 ± 6.19	0.29**	0.97**	1	
4	Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	32.11 ± 4.34	0.27**	0.93**	0.81**	1

Table 3: Result of simple linear regression analysis of the effect of liking of children on overall job satisfaction.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	B	sh	t	F	R	R2	p
Overall Job Satisfaction	Constant	53.061	8.345	6.358	13.175	0.295	0.081	0.001**
	Liking of Children	0.33	0.091	3.63				

Table 4: Results of simple linear regression analysis of the effect of liking of children level on intrinsic job satisfaction.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	B	sh	t	F	R	R2	p
Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	Constant	32.819	5.15	6.373	12.722	0.291	0.078	0.001**
	Liking of Children	0.2	0.056	3.567				

Table 5: Results of the simple linear regression analysis of the effect of liking of children on extrinsic job satisfaction.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	B	sh	t	F	R	R2	p
Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	Constant	20.242	3.638	5.564	10.739	0.269	0.065	0.001**
	Liking of Children	0.13	0.04	3.277				

Pearson correlation analysis revealed statistically significant but weak positive correlations between job satisfaction and liking of children ($r=0.30$; $p<0.01$); intrinsic job satisfaction ($r=0.29$; $p<0.01$), and extrinsic job satisfaction ($r=0.27$; $p<0.01$). There were strong positive correlations between overall job satisfaction and both job satisfaction sub-dimensions (Table 2). The results of simple linear regression analysis to determine whether BLOCS score affects job satisfaction are shown in Table 3. The regression model generated from the analysis was found to be significant ($F=13.175$; $p<0.01$) and indicated that liking of children affects job satisfaction ($B=0.330$; $p<0.01$). According to the regression model, liking of children explains 8.1% of job satisfaction (Table 3). Simple linear regression analysis showed that the teachers' liking of children had a significant effect on their intrinsic job satisfaction ($F=12.722$, $p<0.01$). According to the regression model, liking of children explains 7.8% of intrinsic job satisfaction (Table 4). Similarly, the linear regression model for liking of children and extrinsic satisfaction was significant ($F=10.739$; $p<0.01$) and revealed that liking of children significantly affects extrinsic job satisfaction ($B=0.130$; $p<0.01$). According to the regression model, 6.5% of extrinsic job satisfaction is explained by liking of children (Table 5).

Discussion

In this study, we detected a significant age-based difference in preschool teachers' job satisfaction, with the highest job satisfaction in teachers aged 25 and under ($p<0.05$). Kılıç et al. [15] evaluated job satisfaction and social comparison levels in primary and secondary school teachers and determined that teachers in the 20-25 age group had the highest job satisfaction levels. In another study investigating job satisfaction in male and female early childhood educators, Şahin & Sak [16] also found that female teachers aged 21-25 years had higher job satisfaction levels. A possible explanation for these findings is that teachers starting their career at an early age are young and enthusiastic. Another finding of our study is that preschool teachers who considered their school facilities to be advanced also reported higher job satisfaction. Aldridge & Fraser [17] also emphasized the high level of job satisfaction among teachers working in schools with good facilities. Gupta & Gehlawat [18] analyzed secondary school teachers' job satisfaction and motivation in term of certain

demographic variables and reported that teachers working in schools with good opportunities had higher job satisfaction. Treputtharat & Tayiam [19] conducted a study examining the effects of the school environment on job satisfaction in teachers working in primary education and determined that teachers working in schools with adequate physical facilities and advanced school facilities have higher job satisfaction. In a study by Jiang et al. [20] including 206 preschool teacher candidates in Shanghai, China, school facilities were found to have a positive effect on job satisfaction. These common findings can be attributed to the fact that quality education given under better physical conditions increases teachers' productivity and job satisfaction.

In our study, preschool teachers' job satisfaction differed significantly according to marital status, with single teachers' showing higher job satisfaction levels than married teachers ($p<0.05$). Kılıç et al. [15] also reported that single teachers were more satisfied with their jobs than married teachers. Considering economic conditions, fewer individuals in the household increases the amount of income per capita. Therefore, single teachers have a higher welfare level and this may contribute to greater job satisfaction. In contrast, job satisfaction was not show significant differences in our study based on the teachers' gender, education level, years of experience, or parental status ($p>0.05$). Karakaya et al. [21] also detected no difference in teachers' job satisfaction according to gender. Koruklu et al. [22] emphasized that job satisfaction of secondary school teachers was not affected by gender or years of experience. Demirtaş & Alanoğlu [23] found that job satisfaction of administrators and teachers did not show significant differences associated with their gender, the school they worked in, their branch, or years of professional experience. However, other investigators have reported contradictory results. Büyükgöze & Özdemir [24] reported that male teachers had higher job satisfaction than female teachers, while a comparative analysis of job satisfaction among male and female early childhood teachers by Şahin & Sak [16] showed that female teachers had higher job satisfaction than male teachers. The preschool teachers participating in our study showed significant differences in liking of children according to their education level. Those with associate degrees had higher mean liking of children score compared to those graduated from high school and those with undergraduate and master's degrees ($p>0.05$). In a study conducted by Bayram

Sarıkaya & Özdemir [25] in teachers working with autistic children, a significant and positive relationship was observed between empathic tendency and liking of children, with associate degree holders having the greatest empathic tendencies. The teachers' success in improving themselves in their schools and the fields in which they studied may be a factor in this difference.

Among the preschool teachers in our study, liking of children was not associated with gender, age, marital status, years of experience, school facilities, or parental status ($p > 0.05$). Durualp & Kaytez [12] showed that there was no significant relationship between teachers' gender and their liking of children. [26] also determined that preschool teachers' age, professional experience, institution, and marital or parental status did not have a significant effect on their liking of children. Türk et al. [27] observed no statistically significant effect of gender on liking of children among female and male teachers. All of these findings indicate that teachers' attitudes toward children are not affected by their gender, age, years of experience, school facilities, or whether they are married or have children of their own. However, some studies have demonstrated a relationship between these variables and teachers' liking of children [2,28]. In a study conducted by Kaynak et al. [29], it was found that the gender of preschool teacher candidates was associated with their liking of children, with female preschool teachers expressing more positive attitudes toward children than male preschool teachers. Quaglia et al. [30] found that female teachers could establish closer relationships with children. These discrepancies may be due to the fact that the studies were conducted in different societies and cultures. Our evaluation of the relationship between liking of children and job satisfaction revealed positive correlations between liking of children and overall, intrinsic, and extrinsic satisfaction. Longobardi et al. [12] also found a positive, moderate relationship between teachers' overall job satisfaction and their liking of children. These results are consistent with those of another study [31]. The fundamental building block of the teaching profession is liking children. We believe that teachers who enjoy their profession and like children also have greater job satisfaction.

Conclusion

At the end of the research, it was determined that the preschool teachers' job satisfaction scores showed significant differences. Mean score was significantly higher among single teachers, teachers who rated their school's facilities as advanced, and teachers 25 years old or younger ($p < 0.05$). BLOCS score differed significantly according to education level. Mean score was significantly higher among teachers with associate degrees ($p < 0.05$). BLOCS score was not associated with gender, age, marital status, years of experience, school facilities, or parental status ($p > 0.05$) When the relationship between the job satisfaction and child liking levels of the teachers is analyzed, the positive and weak level relationship was found between the job satisfaction

and child liking levels of the teachers. There were strong positive correlations between overall job satisfaction and job satisfaction sub-dimensions ($p < 0.01$). Additionally, at this research, the regression model was found to be significant and determined that the liking of children affects job satisfaction and job satisfaction sub-dimensions ($p < 0.01$). This research is limited to the answers provided by the preschool teachers working in one province of Turkey. Thus, the same study can be used with different sample groups. All the necessary works to better the factors (physical conditions, work environment, salary, motivation, etc.) that affect the job satisfaction of the teachers negatively can be conducted and the students can be directed towards choosing a profession consciously.

Acknowledgment

We thank the staff and teacher of kindergarten for their help during data collection and participation in the study.

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DOI: [10.19080/JOJNHC.2019.11.555816](https://doi.org/10.19080/JOJNHC.2019.11.555816)

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