

Spiritual Intelligence and Job Satisfaction among Teachers: A Review

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Abstract

The education system in Malaysia is undergoing rapid change and transformation. As the country is going through institutional reforms and moving towards the Fourth Industrial Revolution, teacher satisfaction is one of the areas that needs to be relooked. Spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction have received increasing attention in educational settings. This study focuses on the association between spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to systematically review the studies on spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction in teaching professionals. The studies that investigated on spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction were retrieved from Science Direct, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, and selected studies were analysed. The results showed a positive association between spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction. Finally, recommendations for future research and implications are discussed.

Keywords: *Spiritual Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, Teacher*

Article Information:

This paper was first presented at the First International Conference on Management and Social Sciences (ICMSS 2019), organised by the School of Human Resource Development and Psychology, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Bahru, Johor, Malaysia, on 27 April 2019.

Published after peer review: July 2019.

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Introduction

The education system in Malaysia has grown drastically over the last decade. Ministry of Education is striving to elevate the education sector in Malaysia with the development of Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025. This plan seeks to develop human capital, national identity, bridging the education gap, and enhancing the excellence of educational institutions (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). Towards realising this vision, the Malaysian government is dedicated to transforming Malaysian education system by preparing the young generation with knowledge, leadership skills, critical and creative thinking, and communication skills. Hence, the Ministry of Education focuses on proper learning environment and infrastructure, quality of teaching and learning, access to reliable and significant information, and transparent accountabilities (Malaysian Education Blueprint, 2013). This plan has made the role of the teacher as an agent of change and their role is very important in achieving that goal.

The role of teachers in the field of education constantly challenged by the environmental condition especially with the implementation of new examination system, student discipline problems, the excessive workloads, pressure working environment, inadequate administrative support, and parents' perceptions and demands (Ishak, Iskandar, & Ramli, 2010). In Malaysia, job satisfaction among teachers has become an interesting topic among researcher. Career as a teacher comes with other roles and responsibilities to be made towards students, the public and the job itself. Teachers are in charge of guiding students to understand and learn by providing clear guidelines and interpretations to educate the future generation. Teaching has been recognised as a stressful job based on earlier studies (King & Hegadoren, 2002; Kyriacou, 1989). Pillay, Goddard, and Wilss (2005) reported that job dissatisfaction could influence teacher well-being. Greenberg and Baron (2008) defined job satisfaction as the general attitude towards

the job. Job satisfaction also means the advantages an individual make from work and gain happiness when working with co-workers and the job done (Demirel, 2014). Teachers have to deal with their task to give knowledge, as well as to educate students to be a good person. With the job requirement made by Malaysia's Ministry of Education, as well as the growing demand from students and parents, the satisfaction levels are decreasing. This excessive role can cause emotional and psychological distress (Ishak et al., 2010; Ishak, Mustapha, Mahmud, & Ariffin, 2006) and the level of motivation of teachers decreased (Surana, 2010). Researches suggest that spiritual intelligence can influence or predict teachers' satisfaction (Makwana, 2015; Taziki, Taziki, Akbari, Saghafi, & Behnampour, 2016; Yahyazadeh-Jeloudar & Lotfi-Goodarzi, 2012; Zamani & Karimi, 2015). Therefore, spiritual intelligence plays a vital role in improving the level of teacher satisfaction.

Intelligence is an ability, an innate potential that can be developed through training (Wigglesworth, 2003). Compared to intelligence quotient or emotional quotient, spiritual intelligence is out-of-box thinking. Spiritual intelligence is conceptualised as creativity, in-depth and transformative thinking. Spiritual intelligence is not simply referring to innate ability but is more closely related to spiritual ability (Amram & Dryer, 2008). According to Emmons (2000), spiritual intelligence is a form of intelligence that uses as a predictor to suit the spiritual relationship to achieve the satisfaction of life. Zohar and Marshall (2000) have developed the spiritual intelligence concept by which defines intelligence to face and uncover the question of meaning and value. The spiritual intelligence leads human behaviour and life to be associated with the broader context of meaning especially in evaluating and carrying out more meaningful actions than others. In this case, spiritual intelligence expands one's capacity to understand others at the deepest level. Individuals who are spirituality intelligent associate their values to their work. They pursue value and meaning in their job and try to accomplish desirable results. Thus, individuals who are spiritually intelligent will be satisfied employees in the workplace.

Literature review

Spiritual intelligence

The spiritual intelligence has gained the attention of psychologist and management researchers recently (Munawar & Tariq, 2018). According to Karakas (2010), spiritual intelligence has altered the definition of success and achievement in the organisation. Zohar (2012) state that spiritual intelligence has appeared beyond the emotional and rational abilities of emotional intelligence and intelligence quotient. Spiritual Intelligence was first introduced in the book of ‘Frames of Mind: The theory of multiple intelligences’ by Howard Gardner (1983). Figure 1 show Howard Gardner (1998) define spiritual intelligence in three possible components:



Fig. 1: Gardner’s Spiritual Intelligence

Gardner chose not to include spiritual intelligence in his theory of multiple intelligence. He suggested for an existential intelligence, which meets his original criteria for intelligence. However, many researchers continue to explore and have theorised on the nature of spiritual intelligence (Emmons, 2000; Wigglesworth, 2003; Zohar & Marshall, 2000). These theories suggest that human beings are in need of meaning, values, and purpose of life. Fry (2003) identified that spiritual intelligence involves the growth of the human being.

Emmons (2000) characterized spiritual intelligence as the versatile utilization of spirituality to encourage critical thinking and goal achievement. In other word, people who are intelligent spiritually have the capability of using spiritual resources in problem-solving. Emmons defines five core elements of spiritual intelligence in Figure 2 below;

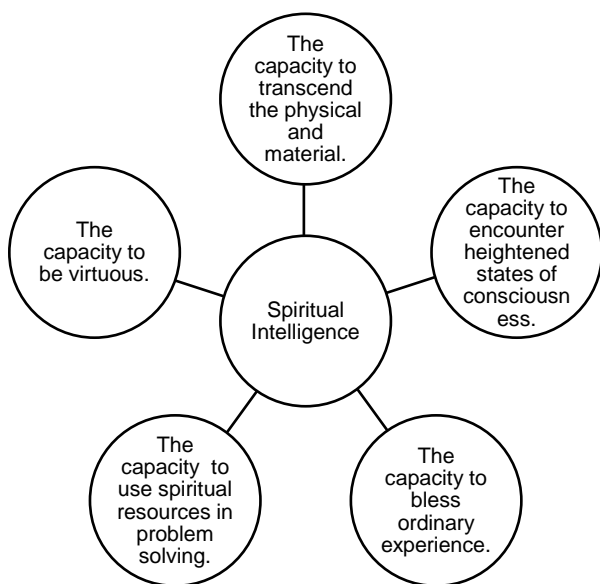


Fig. 2: Emmons Spiritual Intelligence

Researchers argued the fifth element ‘the capacity to be virtuous’ was not met the criteria of intelligence. The element was later removed because of its focus on human behaviour instead of ability. Zohar and

Marshall (2000) theorised twelve characteristics of spiritual intelligence in Table 1.

Table 1: Zohar Spiritual Intelligence

Characteristics of spiritual intelligence	
▪ Self-awareness	▪ Spontaneity
▪ Being vision- and value-led	▪ Holism
▪ Compassion	▪ Celebration of diversity
▪ Field independence	▪ Humility
▪ Tendency to ask why question?	▪ Ability to reframe
▪ Positive use of adversity	▪ Sense of vocation

Spiritual intelligence enables us to understand the broad context in which events take place and to recognise the big picture. It also gives comprehensive meaning and value in life (Zohar, 2012). Wigglesworth (2012) introduced 21 skills to develop their spiritual intelligence. She merged the 21 psychological concepts of spiritual and intelligence and arranged into four quadrants. Based on the model, the four abilities of spiritual intelligence are i) Higher Self/Ego Self-Awareness; ii) Universal Awareness; iii) Higher Self/Ego Self-Mastery; and iv) Social Mastery/Spiritual Presence.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of a popular topic in the field of industrial and organisational psychology. The meaning of job satisfaction has been defined by many researchers and psychologist. However, the standard and well-known definition of job satisfaction is defined as a pleasure or positive feeling resulting from job appraisal, work achievement, or work experience (Locke, 1969). Spector (1985) describes job satisfaction as the extent to which people like (satisfied) or dislike (dissatisfied) their job. Job satisfaction is basically the psychological disposition of people towards their work (Schultz & Schultz, 1990). It was suggested by Vroom (1994) that job satisfaction was an employee’s emotional state towards their current job roles and duties. Meanwhile, Siegel and Lane (1982) stated job satisfaction is an emotional response that determines the degree of people like their job. Greenberg and Baron (2008) describe job satisfaction as a positive or negative attitude that individuals make towards their work. Besides that, Gibson, Ivancevich, and Donnelly (2000) states job satisfaction as the attitude that employees have about their work.

Van Der Westhuizen, Pacheco, and Webber (2012) explain that individuals are more likely to work in an ordinary way when dealing with a task in the organization. Once they receive some internal and external rewards such as wage increases, praise and other forms of appreciation the situation and attitude will change. Individuals will show a high level of job satisfaction with their work and organization. On the other hand, those who are not rewarded will describe a low level of satisfaction.

Theories of job satisfaction mostly overlap with a motivation theory. The most prominent theories discussed in the area of job satisfaction include Maslow’s needs hierarchy theory and Herzberg’s two-factor theory. Maslow’s needs hierarchy theory suggests that people at work are motivated by a desire to satisfy some of the existing needs of a person. This theory is based on three basic assumptions as follows:

1. Human needs are structured in a hierarchy, ranging from the hierarchy of the most basic necessities to the complex or highest level of need.
2. The desire to meet needs can affect one’s behaviour, where only insufficient demand can drive behaviour. Satisfied needs cannot function as motivators.
3. Higher need functions as a motivator if the lower hierarchical need is at least satisfied.

On the basis of the above assumptions, the hierarchy of human needs according to Maslow is as in Figure 3:



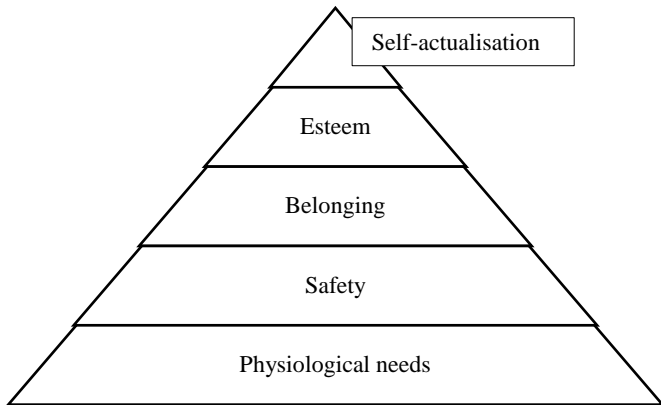


Fig. 3. Maslow's needs hierarchy

Herzberg's two-factor theory suggests that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not in the same continuum, yet rather are two independent and, even unrelated to each other. This theory states that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are driven by different factors known as motivation and hygiene factors. Motivating factors like an achievement in work, recognition, promotion opportunities should be met all together for a worker to be happy and satisfied with work. These factors are considered to be intrinsic to the job. On the other hand, job dissatisfaction is associated with hygiene factors such as wage, supervisory practices, organisation policies, and workplace conditions.

Regardless of its popularity, it is unfortunate that there is limited empirical support for the two-factor theory and hierarchy of needs approaches. However, it is hard to deny that the motivating factors affect the surrounding environment and has an impact on the satisfaction of employees with their job.

Methodology

This study aims to identify the association between spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction in the educational setting. The keywords used in the search process of previous related studies include job satisfaction, spiritual intelligent, spirituality, and teacher. Previous studies have been obtained through an online database such as Science Direct, Web of Science and Google Scholar. The following criteria were used to search for earlier studies that are relevant:

1. Research on job satisfaction and spiritual intelligence;
2. The study focuses on the educational setting;
3. Studies published between 2009 to date; and
4. The study should indicate the variable of job satisfaction and spiritual intelligence.

For the selection of research publications starting from 2009 to date is to ensure that these studies are current and updated. After a qualitative analysis, a review of spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction in the educational setting has been carried out, and a summary of the findings is provided in Table 2 for spiritual intelligence.

Results and Discussion

Based on the review, there are many elements associated with job satisfaction and spiritual intelligence can be identified.

Spiritual intelligence

Spiritual intelligence is one of the most important elements in every individual. The study conducted by Malik and Tariq (2016) found that there was a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and employee performance. Saremi and Farkhani (2015) found that there was a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and organisational commitment. It is clear that spiritual intelligence can affect the teacher's work commitment. The results of the study by

Nikoopour and Esfandiari (2017) stated that spiritual intelligence could influence teaching effectiveness in the classroom. Stress (Ahmadian et al., 2013; Azad et al., 2012; Baezzat & Sharifzadeh, 2013; Rani et al., 2013) and the heavy workloads (Adams, 2009) in the workplace can influence the spiritual intelligence of teachers. Furthermore, the teacher's wellbeing will also be affected if they have low levels of spiritual intelligence (Ahmadi et al., 2013; Bigdeloo & Bozorgi, 2016). Spiritual intelligence is one of the key elements that can affect someone's happiness, including teachers (Amirian & Fazilat-Pour, 2016). It can be concluded that there are many elements and factors that relate to spiritual intelligence.

Table 2: Studies on Spiritual Intelligence

No	Elements	Studies
1	Job Performance	(Kulshrestha & Singhal, 2017; Malik & Tariq, 2016)
2	Job Satisfaction	(Makwana, 2015; Rastgar, Davoudi, Oraji, & Abbasian, 2012; Taziki et al., 2016; Yahyazadeh-Jeloudar & Lotfi-Goodarzi, 2012; Zamani & Karimi, 2015)
2	Organisational Commitment	(Awais, Malik, & Qaisar, 2015; Saremi & Farkhani, 2015)
3	Teaching Effectiveness	(Nikoopour & Esfandiari, 2017)
4	Job Stress	(Adams, 2009; Ahmadian, Hakimzadeh, & Kordestani, 2013; Azad, Hoshmandja, & Poorkhalil, 2012; Baezzat & Sharifzadeh, 2013; Rani, Ghani, & Ahmad, 2013)
5	Happiness	(Amirian & Fazilat-Pour, 2016; Isfahani & Nobakht, 2013)
6	Well being	(Ahmadi, Ahghar, & Reza Abedi, 2013; Bigdeloo & Bozorgi, 2016; De Souza, 2009)

Table 3 below shows the summary of the finding for the variable of job satisfaction.

Table 3: Studies on Job Satisfaction

No	Elements	Studies
1	Emotional Intelligence	(Adey & Bahari, 2010; Hassan, Ishak, & Bokhari, 2011; Salim, Nasir, Arip, & Mustafa, 2012)
2	Motivation	(Anghelache, 2015; Kjeldsen & Hansen, 2013; Lokman & Boon, 2012; Mokri, Atan, & Hashim, 2012; Zuki, Sunaidi, & Boon, 2012)
3	Self efficacy	(Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Klassen, Usher, & Bong, 2010; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014)
4	Burnout	(Brackett, Palomera, Mojsa-Kaja, Reyes, & Salovey, 2010; Cheung, Tang, & Tang, 2011)
5	Job Performance	(Chamundeswari, 2013; Usop, Askandar, & Langguyuan-Kadtong, 2013)

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a pleasant emotional state, as a result of the interpretation of one's work (Locke, 1969). Salim et al. (2012) found that emotional intelligence is an element that can affect teachers' job satisfaction. The results of the study by Hassan et al. (2011) state the



dimensions of emotional intelligence such as self-control, self-awareness, motivation can influence the satisfaction of individual in their careers as teachers. Furthermore, Adey and Bahari (2010) state that emotional intelligence has a positive relationship with job satisfaction in their research. Besides, teachers' job satisfaction is also closely related to human motivation (Aziri, 2011).

A study by Mokri et al. (2012) found motivation have an effect on teacher satisfaction. Lokman and Boon (2012) stated that working environment, salary, promotion, colleagues (dimensions of job satisfaction) had a relationship with the level of teacher motivation while Zuki et al. (2012) found that there was a weak relationship between motivation and job satisfaction among teachers. This study was supported by Anghelache (2015) which found that motivation had a weak relationship to job satisfaction among teachers in Romania. Furthermore, Kjeldsen and Hansen (2013) point out that motivation has a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Studies show that the self-efficacy of teachers is positively associate with job satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Klassen et al., 2010; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). However, individuals who have a high level of job satisfaction were less likely to face burnout in the workplace (Brackett et al., 2010; Cheung et al., 2011). According to Chamundeswari (2013) and Usop et al. (2013), job satisfaction has a positive relationship with job performance. This study suggests that when employees satisfied with their work, the employees will be motivated in every job done and demonstrating good work performance.

There has been little discussion about the relationship between spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction in an educational setting. A study conducted by Rastgar et al. (2012) found that there is no significant association between spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction. However, a study by Yahyazadeh-Jeloudar and Lotfi-Goodarzi (2012) showed that there is a relationship between job satisfaction and spiritual intelligence. Research by Zamani and Karimi (2015) also showed similar result between both variables. The result of studies showed inconsistency on the relationship between spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction. Further investigation is required to determine exactly how spiritual intelligence affects job satisfaction. Zohar and Marshall (2000) expressed that when spiritual intelligence is high individual seems to be intellectual and have appropriate behaviour and action. After all, when spiritual intelligence is low, individuals will seem to have troublesome and problematic behaviour. So, the individual with high spiritual intelligence demonstrated a high level of performance and satisfaction.

Conclusion

Job satisfaction is important in ensuring that teachers are consistent in providing the best teaching and learning to their students. The role played by spiritual intelligence is important in improving the level of teacher satisfaction. Hence, the author proposes a study on the relationship between spiritual intelligence and teacher job satisfaction. Furthermore, studies on this area are limited in Malaysia context. Therefore, a deeper exploration in this area needs to be developed in order to have a great contribution and positive impact on teacher job satisfaction while improving the quality of education in Malaysia.

In conclusion, spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction are common factors in individual life, especially for teacher and educator. It is important for a teacher to achieve satisfaction in their careers to ensure that the teaching and learning sessions are progressing smoothly. Thus, the role of spiritual intelligence is emphasized in this study in ensuring the satisfaction of teachers with their job.

Acknowledgement

The author would like to thank the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) for their support of this research.

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