

Investigating the relationship between school climate and work-life balance of primary education teachers mediating the role of job stress

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to investigate the relationship between school climate and work-life balance of primary education teachers mediated by the role of job stress. The method of this basic research was correlation and more precisely structural equation modeling. The research population included all the teachers of primary schools (girls and boys) in Yazd city in 2020-21, numbering 1759 people. 317 teachers from the study population were selected by available sampling method. The research instruments were Pashiardis School climate Questionnaire (2011), Kyriacou & Sutcliffe Stress Questionnaire (1976) and Wang & Ko Work-Life Balance Questionnaire (2009). Data analysis was performed using Amos 24 software. Findings showed that the school climate negatively and significantly predicts job stress ($\beta = -0.42$) and positively and significantly predicts work-life balance ($\beta = 0.54$). The results also showed that job stress negatively and significantly predicts work-life balance ($\beta = -0.42$) in primary school teachers. The results of the bootstrap test showed that the job stress variable plays a mediating role in the relationship between school climate and work-life balance. Finally, the study of fitting indices showed that the proposed research model is confirmed through experimental data. Therefore, by improving the various dimensions of the school climate, it is possible to reduce the job stress of teachers and ultimately increase the work-life balance in this segment of society. In this way, it increased job satisfaction and improved job performance.

Keywords: School climate, job stress, work-life balance, elementary teachers.

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Introduction

Attending to teachers as one of the critical elements of education demands special care. Teachers at the forefront of this system proceed with educative programs, and the fulfillment of mass parts of the establishment's goals is in their hands (King & Vaiman, 2019).

One of the concepts which these days have gained popularity in psychology is the concept of work-life balance (Kelliher et al., 2019). Kasbuntoro et al, (2020) believe that work-life balance means people with jobs feel equilibrium regarding time, job stress, and the rights between work and personal life. Various studies have shown that different work-related and organizational factors exist that can affect the balance between these two critical aspects of life, such as stress and occupational burnout (Kelly et al., 2020), organizational climate (Pradoto, 2022), etc.

With the modern lifestyle today, stress has become a well-known phenomenon around the globe that could have destructive impacts on people's health in addition to their performance, whether personal or professional (Madian et al., 2019). Collie & et al (2012) and Hu & et al's (2019) studies have shown that one of the anticipatory factors of job stress in teachers is the climate of the school, which consists of beliefs, values, and shared attitudes that make the interaction between students, teachers, and school principals (Farahbakhsh et al., 2019).

Since teachers' work-life balance could significantly impact the student's academic achievements, it is vital to study and evaluate the influencing antecedent factors on this variable to present a more vivid outlook about the predisposing factors of teachers' work-life balance to the education community. Therefore, due to the importance of detecting the predisposing factors for work-life balance, this study discusses the relationship between school climate and work-life balance with the mediation of job stress.

Methodology

The present study is a correlational, or more precisely, structural equation fundamental research. The study's statistical population (1759 individuals) included all the working teachers in Yazd's elementary schools in the academic year 1399-1400 HS. According to Morgan and Kerjesy's table, 317 elementary school teachers, who were chosen in an available manner as the sample group, were assessed.

School Climate Questionnaire: this questionnaire was designed by Pashiardis (2000). The school climate questionnaire contains 30 items and four components (interaction, participation, organization and management, and school-centeredness). In this study, the reliability of this questionnaire amounted to 0.76 using Cronbach's alpha.

Job Stress Questionnaire: this questionnaire was designed by Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978. This measure contains ten phrases, and based on the answers presented by the teacher, the scale of their job stress is measured. In this study, the reliability of this measure amounted to 0.92 using Cronbach's alpha.

Work-Life Balance Questionnaire: this questionnaire was designed by Wang & Ko, 2019 to evaluate the employee's understanding of their work-life balance. This questionnaire contains 26 questions and the six components of having enough time off of work, workplace support of work-life balance, flexibility in working schedule, life's direction, keeping the job and profession, and the voluntary reduction of work time to carry out with personal needs. In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire amounted to 0.75 using Cronbach's alpha.

Results

Findings showed that school climate has a negative and significant relationship with job stress ($r = -0.34$) and a positive and significant relationship with work-life balance at the level $P < 0.01$. In addition, the outcomes also showed that there is a negative and significant relationship between work-life balance and job stress ($r = 0.50$) at the level $P < 0.01$.

After making sure of the acceptability of the measuring model, the study's structural model was drawn in Amos and then analyzed.

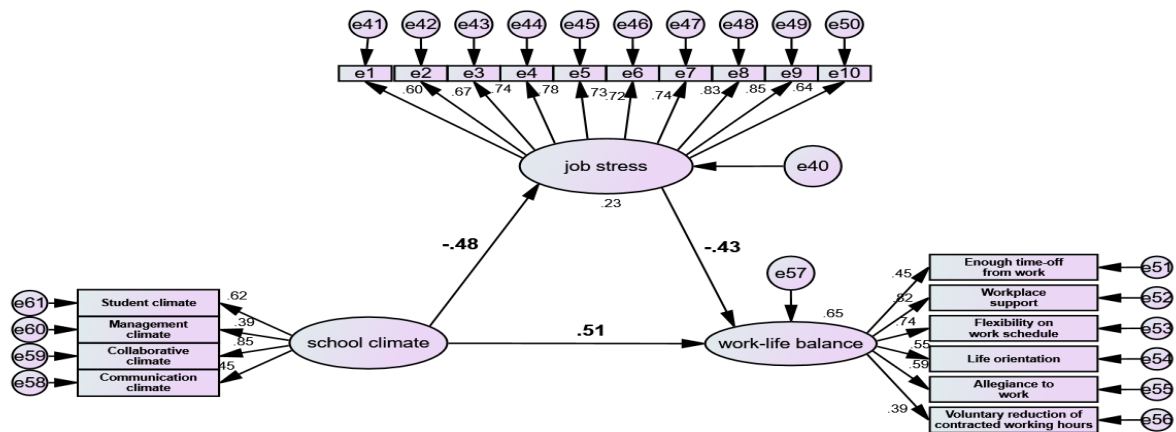


Figure 1: Final structural model

The outcomes indicated that the paths for the study's structural model are significant, so the school climate path to job stress has a -0.48 B, the job stress path to work-life balance has a -0.42 B, and the school climate path to work-life balance has a -0.51 B, all which are significant at a level lower than 0.01.

To determine the significance of the indirect path, the bootstrap command was analyzed in AMOS. The outcomes of bootstrapping showed that job stress established an intermediary

role between school climate and work-life balance. Finally, to assess the significance of the research model, the model's indices of fit are presented in the table below.

Table 1. Fit indices of the structural model of the research

GFI	RMSEA	PCFI	CFI	CIMIN/DF
0/89	0/07	0/79	0/91	2/42

Findings showed that the study's structural model has an acceptable fit index.

Discussion and conclusion

To assess the relationship between school climate and work-life balance and the mediation of job stress, this study was conducted between Yazd's elementary school teachers. The findings showed that school climate has a negative and significant effect on teachers' job stress. Research has shown that a healthy organizational climate has deep positive effects on employees; in reverse, restrained climates create distrust and distance between people (Abedikooshki et al., 2021).

Another finding of the study showed that school climate has a positive and significant effect on teachers' work-life balance. It seems that the school climate will create more motivation for teachers' participation and, as a result, when working, teachers proceed with more motivation, and when off work, do the other responsibilities and tasks with peace of mind.

Another finding showed that job stress has a negative and significant effect on elementary school teachers' work-life balance. It could be said that when the teacher faces stress and pressure in his workplace, such as heavy workload, parents and school principal's uncalled for and unrealistic expectations, students' learning difficulties, discontent with income, etc., he experiences less balance between in his work and life.

Finally, findings showed that there is a significant relationship between school climate and teachers' work-life balance with the mediation of job stress. It could be said that when the school climate is appropriate and positive, tension and mental pressure minimizes, and eventually, teachers can establish a balance between their work and life.

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