



## THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SELF-ESTEEM IN UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION AND LIFE SATISFACTION

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**Abstract:** The aim of the research is to test the mediating role of self-esteem between job satisfaction and life satisfaction among the primary school teachers who works in schools in Adana City (southeast mediterranean region in Turkey). The model type of the research is relational research model. In this research we analyze the casual mediating relation in job satisfaction and life satisfaction and self-esteem. The research group consist of 527 primary school teachers in Adana. In this research, Minnesota Job Satisfaction Scale (adapted by Oran 1989), Satisfaction with Life Scale (adapted by Köker 1991), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (adapted by Çuhadaroğlu, 1986) are used. In addition, to this the personel data form which is developed by the researcher is used. Firstly, the result of the research entered data in SPSS 22 program. Secondly, focused on theoretical properties of Structural Equal Modeling (SEM) in AMOS 22 program. As a result of the research thereis a signification and positive relation between life satisfaction and job satisfaction in teachers. In this relationsheep partly mediator role of self-esteem is established.

**Key words:** Job satifcation, Life Satifcation, Self-Esteem, Teachers

### 1. Introduction

Work or profession is one of the most pivotal components that influences every aspect of an individual's life. In fact, it is the profession that defines who an individual is. In addition to meeting the needs of occupation and work, food, shelter or transportation in everyday life, it also provides more possibilities such as free time activity, investing in children's future, a pool in the backyard. The world of work is indispensable for modern people because it becomes a sphere that regulates modern individuals' lives and enables them to socialize with each other. It is an inevitable reality in terms of life satisfaction because this environment in the world of work helps people to fulfill their needs and satisfaction.

A significant part of the people they spend in their lives is the working life. According to the data obtained by Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK, 2016), it has been observed that people spend most of their time in working life. Today, there are efforts to improve working life, to eliminate the negativities experienced by working people in their fields, and to make them happy in business life (Yüksekbilgili & Akduman, 2016, Dedeoglu, Özdevecioğlu & Oflazer, 2016). The most intensive organizational factor investigated in the field of work psychology is seen as job satisfaction (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). In general, job satisfaction in the literature can be described as a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of a person's job or professional experience (Lukose & Chaipoopirutana, 2015). Along with the developing and changing age, it increases the importance of employee satisfaction, which increases the capacity of the individuals for the productive working environment in the working life and facilitates adaptation to life and thus improves performance, success. In other words, it is seen that people are happy and pleased employees as a precondition of doing their job well (Robbins & Judge, 2013). This is because job satisfaction is assessed by employees' positive and negative feelings toward their working environment. In other

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words, emotional responses of employees towards a certain job are defined as job satisfaction (Weiss, 2002). Job satisfaction can be described as a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of one's work or professional experience (Lukose & Chaipoopirutana, 2015).

There are studies in the literature that show that job satisfaction is affected by many different variables. In some of these studies, job satisfaction is related to life satisfaction (Gök & Erdem, 2016; Uslan, 2016; Ünal, Karlıdağ & Yoloğlu, 2001; Judge & Watanabe, 1993); self-esteem (Alavi & Akaripur, 2003, Erbil & Bostan, 2004) is positively related to income level (Örücü, Yumuşak, & Bozkır, 2006); is negatively related to burnout (Abu-Bader, 2000), depression (Aslan, 2006). It is important that individuals find their work meaningful and business environment valuable, which provides satisfaction. Thus, it is ensured that individuals enjoy and feel happy in life. Based on these explanations, it can be said that the individual's work life and private life interact with each other and that they can reach satisfaction in the private life of the individuals who have reached satiety in business life (Çapri & Güler, 2016). Meeting employees' expectations in business life is a factor that affects job satisfaction positively. Failure to meet these expectations negatively affects job and life satisfaction (Loscocco & Roschelle, 1991).

Emotional responses or attitudes of individuals to work, free time and life at different times constitute the general life satisfaction of people. Satisfaction with life is a cognitive aspect of subjective well-being and can also be referred to as an overall assessment of an individual's life (Myers & Diener, 1995). Job satisfaction is seen as one of the significant predictors of life satisfaction (Naz, 2015; Demirel, 2014; Mishra, Nielsen, Smyth & Newma 2014; Judge & Watanabe, 1993; Ernst-Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). It is often stated that there is a one-to-one relationship between positive attitude towards work and taking pleasure in life. In other words, good life requires good work life at the same time (Job Satisfaction Index, 2015). Judge and Locke (1993) indicate that job satisfaction increases life satisfaction and life satisfaction also increases job satisfaction. Although there are studies that have reached the conclusion that job satisfaction is a significant predictor, there are also studies that indicate that life satisfaction is a predictor of job satisfaction (Alghamdi, 2015). According to the result of the study, one of the variables related to both job satisfaction and life satisfaction is self-esteem. According to Rosenberg (1979), self-esteem is an individual's positive or negative attitude towards himself/herself. Self-esteem can be seen as a central concept involving multi-disciplinary studies (Yıldız, & Baytemir, 2016).

High self-esteem of a person means that he or she evaluates his / her behaviors, abilities, appearance, self-worth, achievements and failures in both working life and daily life (Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman, 1998). There are studies in the literature that show that high self esteem is positive for job satisfaction (Bagozzi, 1980; Kohli, 1985; Howell, Bellenger, & Wilcox, 1987; Heller, Judge, & Watson, 2002; Bono, & Judge, 2003; Piccola, Judge, Takahashi, Watanabe, & Locke, 2005). Similar to the relationship between self-esteem and job satisfaction, self-esteem has a significant relationship with life satisfaction, and self-esteem is the best predictor of life satisfaction (Diener & Diener, 1995; Lyubomirsky, Tkach, & Dimatteo, 2006).

It is clear that teachers are the ones who will bring new generations to society and reach the goals of contemporary civilizations. Teachers' job satisfaction is among the topics that needs to be investigated. Many studies report a statistically significant effect of teachers' job satisfaction on students (Spector, 1997; Dinham & Scott, 1998; 1999; Griffith, 2004). Job satisfaction and self-esteem are important variables for teachers to maintain their professionalism (Pillay, Goddard, & Wilss, 2005). Teachers' job satisfaction is also important in terms of personal happiness of the teacher. The teacher, who provides low satisfaction in his work, makes less contribution to the realization of the school's objectives (Taştan & Tiryaki, 2010). There are many individual and social factors affecting job satisfaction. Self-esteem and life satisfaction play important roles in these factors (Duffy & Lent, 2009; Lent, et al, 2011; Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Because self-esteem is related to both job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Canrinus, et al, 2012; Telef, 2011), self-esteem is expected to have a mediator role in the relationship between these two variables. In the literature, there is no study investigating the mediator role of self-esteem in the relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction of teachers.

The purpose of this study is to examine whether the mediating role of self-esteem in the relationship between life satisfaction and job satisfaction, which has an important role in the general and work life of the primary school teachers. For this purpose the following hypotheses were formed:

1. There is a significant relationship between job satisfaction, life satisfaction and self-esteem of teachers
2. Life satisfaction scores of teachers predict job satisfaction scores.
3. Self-esteem has a mediating role on the relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction of teachers.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Research model

This study is descriptive in that it examines the mediating role of self-esteem on the relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction of primary school teachers. The analysis was conducted on the relationships between life satisfaction, job satisfaction and self-esteem. For this purpose, structural equation model was used. Structural equation model allows the identification of direct and indirect relationships between the variables. It is a multivariate statistical approach that models the interactions between theoretical constructs by incorporating the relationships between measurement mistakes (Yılmaz & Çelik, 2009). Simultaneously modeling the relationships between multiple independent and dependent constructs allows researchers to respond to interrelated research questions in a systematic and comprehensive analysis (Gefen, Straub & Boudreau, 2000).

### 2.2. Research model

The study group consisted of 363 (67.8%) female and 164 (32.2%) males, 527 primary school teachers volunteering to participate in Adana city (southeast mediterranean region in Turkey). The participants were between 24 and 65 years old, with a mean age of 40.85 and a standard deviation (Sd) of 2.02. Convenient sampling was used in identifying the study group. Convenient sampling is the process of selecting among easily accessible individuals to respond to measurement tools in research (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

### 2.3. Data collection tools

Minnesota Job Satisfaction Scale (adapted by Oran 1989), Satisfaction with Life Scale (adapted by Köker, 1991) and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (adapted by Çuhadaroğlu, 1986) were used as data collection tools in the study.

**Minnesota Job Satisfaction Scale:** It was developed by Weiss, David, England and Lofguist (1967). The job satisfaction scale was first translated into Turkish by Oran (1989). The scale consists of 20 questions. The materials prepared in the 5-point likert type consist of multiple choices based on the degree of satisfaction of the participants. The highest score that can be taken from the scale is 100 and the lowest score is 20. The neutral satisfaction at the midpoint is 60 points. Scores close to 20 indicate low job satisfaction and scores close to 100 indicate high job satisfaction. Translation of the Minnesota Satisfaction Scale from English to Turkish was conducted by two tutors at Hacettepe University. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were found between the internal consistency value of .90 and between .82 and .92 abroad.

**Satisfaction with Life scale:** Diener et al. (1985) developed Satisfaction with Life Scale based on a 5-item scale to measure satisfaction of individuals in their lives. The adaptation of the scale to Turkish was performed by Köker (1991). The reliability test was performed with the test re-test technique and the correlation between the two applications was reported to be .85. When the scale score was calculated, the total score of the questions in the scale was taken. An increase in the scale score

indicates that life satisfaction increases (Kubilay, 2013). As a result of the reliability studies of the scale; test-retest reliability was calculated as  $r = .85$ , and item-test correlations between  $.71$  and  $.80$ . In this study, the cronbach alpha value of scale was  $.89$ .

**Rosenberg Self-esteem scale:** Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Short Form; Rosenberg, 1965), which is used frequently in the literature, is used to measure the value that an individual gives to himself/herself. The adaptation study of the scale was carried out by Çuhadaroğlu (1986). Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale has ten subtests. The first subscale of the scale is used to measure self-esteem. In this study, this subtest was used to measure the self esteem of the scale.

The scale was prepared in the form of a four-point likert. The first three items in the scale are scored among themselves, the fourth and fifth items among themselves, and the ninth and tenth items are scored among themselves. The sixth, seventh and eighth items are scored separately. The marking resultant individual is scored by "1" for negative evaluation and "0" for positive evaluation. The scores obtained as a result of this evaluation range from "0" to "6". The self-esteem subscale indicates 0-2 points higher, 2-4 points lower, and 5-6 points lower self-esteem (Çuhadaroğlu, 1986). In the self-esteem subscale, the answers are evaluated with 0-6 points. In the study, the cronbach-alpha value of the self-esteem scale was found as  $.78$ .

## 2.4. Data analysis

Primarily statistical analyses were carried out to collect data in SPSS 22 and necessary analyses were conducted. Descriptive statistical techniques of the data were calculated by Correlation Analysis. The degree of freedom of the study was accepted as  $.05$ . Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed and cronbach's alpha values were calculated. Confirmatory factor analyses of the three scales were performed separately in AMOS programs used in the study. Intermediary analysis is based on Baron and Kenny (1986) model.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1 Findings about the validity of the scale

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test the validity of the scales in the study. Verification values of confirmatory factor analysis applied to scales are shown in table 1.

**Table 1.** *Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results of Minnesota Job Satisfaction Scale, Satisfaction with Life Scale and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale*

Scale	X <sup>2</sup>	X <sup>2</sup> /df	RMSEA	GFI	CFI	SRMR
Job Satisfaction	632.96	3.88	.074	.89	.91	.059
Life Satisfaction	16.39	4.10	.077	.99	.99	.024
Self-Esteem	9.04	2.26	.049	.99	.99	.018

As seen in Table 1 these values Show that CFA analysis is within acceptable limits (Geuens, ve De Pelsmacker, 2002; Hair, Sarstedt ve Ringlei 2011, Marsh, Balla, ve McDonald, 1988; Sümer, 2000; Jöreskog ve Sörbom, 2001)

### 3.1. Findings related to job satisfaction, life satisfaction and self esteem

In order to investigate the relationship between the job satisfaction, life satisfaction and self-esteem scores of primary school teachers, Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated and the results are given in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Arithmetic Averages, Standard Deviations and Correlations Related to Variables

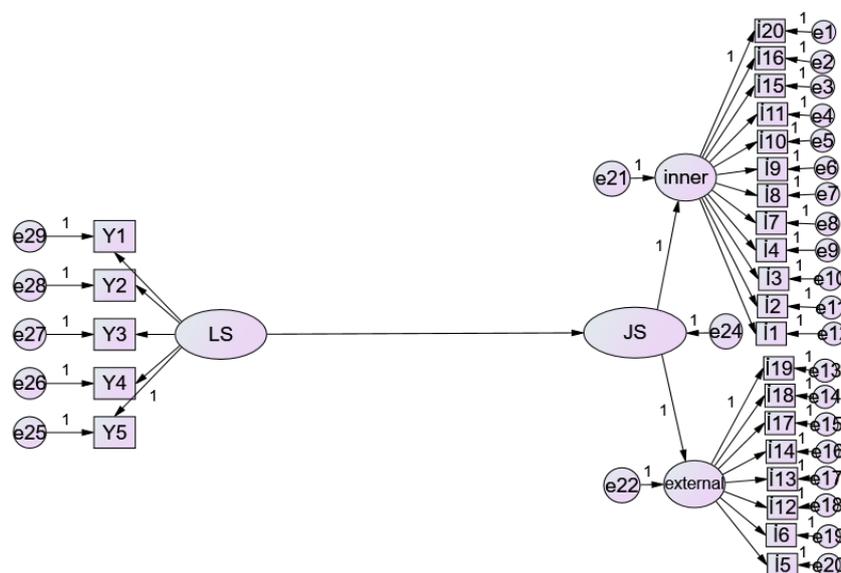
Variables	x	Sd	N	1	2	3
Job Satisfaction	73.19	12.80	527	1		
Life Satisfaction	23.02	6.42	527	.512**	1	
Self-Esteem	3.75	1.32	527	.135*	.199**	1

\*p< .05 \*\*p< .01

When the results of the correlation analysis in Table 2 are examined, there is a positively significant relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem ( $r = .135$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and between life satisfaction and self-esteem ( $r = .199$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Also there is a positively significant relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem ( $r = .512$ ;  $p < .01$ ).

### 3.2. Findings on Life Satisfaction Scores that predict Job Satisfaction Scores (Model 1)

In order to examine the effect of life satisfaction on job satisfaction, the model in Figure 1 was formed and tested with the structural equation model (Model 1).

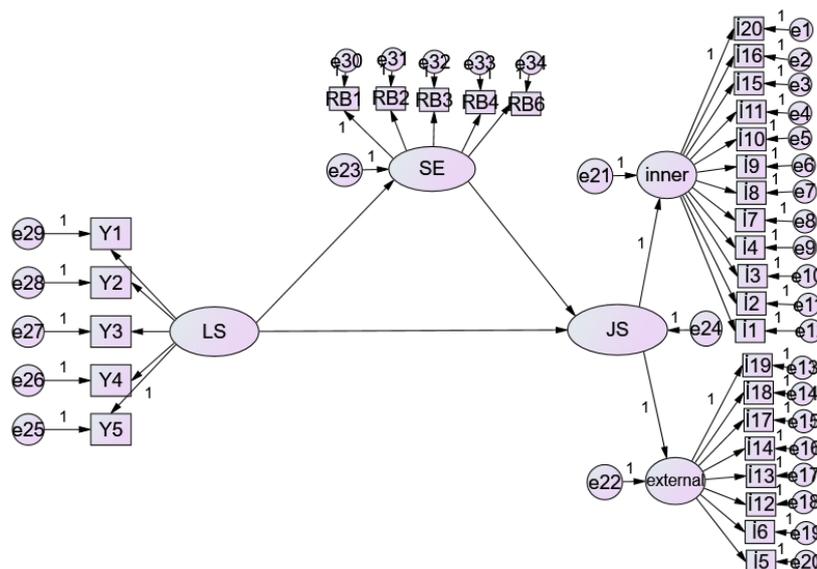


**Figure 1.** Relationship between life satisfaction (LS) and job satisfaction (JS) (Model 1)

In the model 1 where the effect of the life satisfaction variable on the job satisfaction variable is examined, it is seen that the model is significant when the model test values are  $\chi^2$  (1076.58),  $\chi^2/df$  (2.73). The Fit index values are found to be within acceptable limits when GFI (.88), CFI (.91), RMSEA (.057) and SRMR (.059) are found. It has been understood that the effect of the Variance of Life Satisfaction on job satisfaction is valid both in terms of chi-square result and in terms of fit values. It is seen that the effect is statistically significant when the regression coefficient (.59), which is the effect of the life satisfaction variable on the job satisfaction variable, is  $p < .01$  in the estimated values. Based on this effect, as the job satisfaction values of teachers increase, life satisfaction values also increase.

### 3.2. Findings on the mediating role of Self Esteem on the relationship between life satisfaction and job satisfaction (Model 2)

Model 2 was constructed to examine the mediating role of self-esteem between life satisfaction variable and job satisfaction (Figure 2) and tested through structural equation modeling.



**Figure 2.** Intermediate role of self-esteem (SE) on the relation between life satisfaction (LS) and job satisfaction (JS) variables (Model 2)

The model in which the mediating effect of the self-esteem variable is investigated is found to be significant when the model test values are  $\chi^2$  (406.57),  $\chi^2/df$  (1.865). The fit index values are found to be within the acceptable limits of GFI (.901), CFI (.953), RMSEA (.061) and SRMR (.0638). Life satisfaction affects job satisfaction variable (.59) while life satisfaction has a significant effect on job satisfaction variable (.56) when life satisfaction and self-esteem are taken between job satisfaction and life satisfaction ( $p < 0.01$ ). Decrease in impact value (.59 to .56). It is understood that the life satisfaction variable is a partial agent in the effect of Job Satisfaction on the self-esteem variable. However, it can be said that this decrease in impact value is very low. Below are the compliance criteria for Model 1 and Model 2.

**Table 3.** Fit Criteria Values of Model 1 and Model 2

	$\chi^2$	$\chi^2/sd$	RMSEA	GFI	CFI	SRMR
Model 1	1076.58	2.730	.057	.88	.91	.059
Model 2	882.17	3.304	.066	.88	.91	.060
Acceptable- Fit	-	<5.000	<.08	>.85	>.90	<.08

(Geuens ve De Pelsmacker, 2002; Hair, Sarstedt, Ringlei 2011; Marsh, Balla, ve McDonald, 1988; Sümer, 2000; Jöreskog ve Sörbom, 2001)

#### 4. Discussion

The first hypothesis of the study was that there was a positive relationship between teachers' job satisfaction, life satisfaction and self-esteem scores. The hypothesis is confirmed as a result of the correlation analysis performed to test this hypothesis. This finding is consistent with the related literature. Previous studies have shown that there is a high level of positive correlation between job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Schmitt and Pulakos, 1985, Avşaroğlu et al., 2005, Bryant and Constantine, 2006, Tomrukçu, 2010). The existence of a high relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction is not surprising. Because the factors such as the relationship between life satisfaction and self-esteem variables in the research, the time period spent in the work environment and the fact that many people have business life in their daily life are considered while analysing the relationship between the variables (Çetinkanat, 2000). This study shows that there is a positive relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction and that self-esteem variable might be closely related to a

different psychological construct. As a result, how individuals perceive and define themselves influences individuals' satisfaction as well as satisfaction and motivation they receive from their lives (Guindon, 2009). Doğan and Eryılmaz (2013) have come to the conclusion that self-esteem of individuals in their work is a significant predictor of life satisfaction. Since life satisfaction and self-esteem are related to individuals' self-esteem, in some studies, it has been discussed that these two variables are different or similar (Diener & Diener, 1995; Lyubomirsky et al., 2006). There was also a positive correlation between job satisfaction and self-esteem and a significant relationship at low level. Avşaroğlu et al. (2005) and Tomrukçu (2010) also reached similar findings. In another study conducted with the teachers, it has also been found revealed that if the teachers' self-esteem is high, then it is likely that their satisfaction from work will be high (Ahmed, 2015). Griffith (2004) also found a significant relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem in the study done with the teachers.

The second hypothesis of the research was that the life satisfaction scores predicted job satisfaction scores of Teachers. This hypothesis has also been confirmed. When the related literature is examined, it can be seen that in some studies life satisfaction predicts job satisfaction, but in some studies it is also observed that job satisfaction predicts life satisfaction. The effect of job satisfaction on life satisfaction was found to be stronger at relatively significant level than the effect of life satisfaction on job satisfaction (Alghamdi, 2015). This study supports the previous studies in the literature (Heller, Judge and Watson, 2002, Judge and Klinger, 2008, Mafini, 2014). Thus, it can be said that employees who are satisfied with their lives are happy with their work.

The third hypothesis of the research was that self-esteem had a mediating role in the relationship between the teachers' job satisfaction and life satisfaction. To test this hypothesis, structural equation modeling was conducted and the mediating role of self-esteem in relation to job satisfaction and life satisfaction of teachers was partially confirmed in the analysis. When the mediating variable was included to analyze the relationship, it was found that the direct relationship between life satisfaction and job satisfaction decreased, but this relation remained significant. Thus, it can be interpreted that self-esteem has a partial mediator role in understanding the relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction. We can say that other important variables related to job satisfaction and life satisfaction might also be mediated because self-esteem as a mediator is statistically significant at a low level. Edward, Deci, Gagne, Leone, Usunov, and Kornazhev (2001) also used a structural equation model of workers' intercultural job satisfaction, well-being and self-esteem. It has been argued that the work undertaken may depend on other factors such as job satisfaction, managerial setting and moreover peer relationships. Sociocultural factors that affect teachers' experience can be considered important in job satisfaction. The findings of this present study seem to be inconsistent with some studies while they are consistent with some studies.

Judge et al. (2005) found that the mediating role of basic self-evaluations in relation to job satisfaction and life satisfaction was significant. The sub-dimensions of basic self-evaluations include concepts such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and neuroticism. In other words, it can be said that the sub-dimension, which is self-respect, is the intermediary role. Some researchers emphasize that the relationship between job satisfaction, life satisfaction and self-esteem, some attitudes such as job satisfaction in collectivist cultures is more dependent on social relationships at work rather than individual factors (Diener & Diener, 1995, Oishi et al., 1999). Hofstede (2001) stresses the fact that self is affected by culture.

While individualistic society is defined as being emotionally independent from the groups, organizations and other communities involved, collectivist culture can be described as dependency on family, relatives, members of the society. The low mediating role of self-esteem in relation to job satisfaction and life satisfaction can be explained by the fact that teachers in our country are composed of teachers who are raised in a collectivistic culture. That is, teachers in collectivist cultures may be influencing job satisfaction their life satisfaction through other social values independent of the concept of self.

### 3. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study shows that there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction of primary school teachers, a significant but low level of relationship with job satisfaction and self-esteem, and a significant relationship between life satisfaction and self-esteem. In addition, as life satisfaction increases, job satisfaction levels show an upward tendency. The role of self-esteem as a mediator in the relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction is partial and low. Studies on work-related variables other than only personality traits that explain causality may also lead to better outcomes. In this study, job satisfaction, life satisfaction and self-esteem were examined. It is suggested that organizational factors may be more effective than internal factors such as positive personality traits in this study because the role of mediating role of self-esteem in relation to job satisfaction and life satisfaction of primary school teachers. Therefore, studies can be conducted taking different variables into consideration including organizational factors.

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