Female Headteachers' job satisfaction in the Eastern Province of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigated factors that influence job satisfaction among female headteachers at girls' schools in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. Research on headteachers in Saudi Arabia was found to be an underexplored topic. In contrast to previous Saudi studies, the sample used in this study included all the government schools, rather than one stage of school. In order to evaluate participants' responses this study used a sequential exploratory strategy employing a mixed methods approach. Building on semi-structured interviews, the first sample of the study gathered data from 20 female head teachers to determine which factors led to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The research investigated various contributory factors such as pay, recognition, promotion and these factors were subsequently used to build a questionnaire, which was sent to 664 headteachers. Finally, semi-structured interviews were held with nine headteachers to verify the results of the survey. The overall level of job satisfaction for elementary, middle and high schools' headteachers in the Eastern Province was generally low average. However, it was found that factors causing high and average job satisfaction derive from multiple demographic or independent causes in the workplace.

This study's findings could inform the work educational planners, helping them to improve their understanding of the most important aspects of the career of headteachers. In addition, this research provides a valuable contribution that could assist public policy development in education; it provides an understanding of what to avoid and what works most effectively. Future policy could be better informed by understanding the factors that affect levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction and implementing more appropriate policy objectives that deploy resources more effectively.

Keywords

1. Job Satisfaction

The extent to which headteachers feel content, fulfilled, and positive about their work, including work environment, responsibilities, incentives, and interpersonal relationships(Alyousef, 2015).

2. Female Headteachers

Women who occupy school leadership positions and are responsible for administrative, instructional, and supervisory duties within girls' schools(Alyousef, 2015).

3. Mixed Methods

A research approach that integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the studied phenomenon . (Alyousef, 2015).

4. Educational Policy

A set of guidelines, decisions, and strategic directions established by educational authorities to regulate school operations and improve the overall quality of education (Alyousef, 2015).

INTRODUCTION

A study in Saudi Arabia recognised that satisfied educators usually display an elevated level of creativity in their job role (Harem, 2010). Job satisfaction is often discussed at an organisational level and measured as job performance, loyalty, absenteeism, professional development, career aspirations and the intention to remain within the job or depart. These are generally accepted to be important factors in maintaining job satisfaction and the recruitment of high performing staff (Alyousef, 2015). Failure to address these concerns often leads to increased human resource costs and a reduction in the ability to attract and retain the required staff. Indeterminate adverse effects may also occur and have a negative impact on staff morale, poor performance and any organisational quality objectives (Wadeh, 2017). Recognising that this is an underexplored area in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, (Alzaidi, 2008). reinforced the importance of studying job satisfaction in an educational context with particular reference to headteachers, who play an important role in schools, as well as highlighting the fact that factors influencing the job satisfaction of headteachers requires further empirical attention.

This research will investigate and evaluate those factors that may influence job satisfaction among female headteachers at girls' schools in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia by assessing the level of satisfaction among headteachers within the context of an educational environment. Having had direct work experience in the Saudi Arabian educational system as both a teacher and a headteacher, I have observed, met and dealt with various challenges that have had a negative impact on the overall satisfaction of my own job and those of other female headteachers. These challenges affecting job satisfaction may be due to a lack of relevant experience, work overload or salary issues amongst many others, for example, the reluctance of teachers to self-nominate for promotion to the position of headteacher when the opportunity arises. A change from a teaching position to a management position would often be reflected in a reduction in

remuneration with taking on more responsibility. Therefore, with a strong motivation to investigate this specific area, as well as using my own experience to support the rationale for this enquiry, the objectives of this research are to acquire a greater understanding of the current attitudes of headteachers and to provide insights and further explore their main sources of job satisfaction. Moreover, I chose to specifically focus on female headteachers given that I am a female Saudi Arabian national and the prevailing social situation and customary extent of interaction therefore necessitates that my respondents must be female. More importantly, after conducting an extensive search for relevant literature, there appear to be few research studies examining the job satisfaction of female Saudi Arabian headteachers published in Saudi Arabia, reflecting the claim made by (Alhazmi, 2011) that this area is underexplored.

Significance of the Study

Many job satisfaction studies have been published, yet few of these studies are related to education, educators or specifically, headteachers (Oplatka & Mimon, 2008) (Spector, 1997). (Alagbari, 2003) drew attention to the lack of research on job satisfaction among headteachers, both globally and in Saudi Arabia. Whilst empirical research which focuses on job satisfaction has increased in educational sectors across different countries such as Norway (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011) and Pakistan (Khalid et al., 2012) (Nawab & Bhatti, 2011), and in the UK (Brush et al., 1987) (Evans, 1998) .there is a dearth of research that examines the job satisfaction of headteachers as a group within the educational arena.

Thus, this unique region has attracted people originating from diverse cultural backgrounds and this may influence the headteachers' approach to their position, as their personal values, beliefs and attitudes towards their job could influence the way they conceptualise their job role as well as their expectations (Brush et al., 1987) (Hart, 1998).

the contribution of this study is that the researcher hopes the findings will add significantly to existing knowledge in line with the methodology adopted. By reviewing empirical studies on the subject matter, the researcher used a new method in dealing with the quality assurance identified in prior research studies.

Objectives and research questions

The research has two primary objectives:

1.   To determine the level of job satisfaction among female headteachers in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia;

2.   To identify and analyse the factors that may have an impact on job satisfaction among female headteachers working in schools in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

These objectives will be examined through addressing the following research questions:

To what extent is headteachers job satisfaction affected by factors such as pay, recognition, promotion?

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is to explore notions of job satisfaction among female headteachers across three levels of school education: elementary, middle and high, in both urban and rural areas in the Eastern Province of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The literature that was judged to be most relevant to understanding school headship in Saudi Arabia. The overall aim is to shed further light on the research questions, which were informed both by my experience and by my reading of influential academic texts. Widely-cited articles and books proved generally to the most trustworthy guide to recent research. At an early stage scholarly databases were searched to determine whether my research project was original (see Introduction). Based on my initial readings, keywords were selected in order to refine the search from within the wider field. Databases used included Google Scholar and the Social Sciences Citation Index. The search results were checked against specialist bibliographies to verify that key works had not been missed. Searching for and selecting documents is a key aspect of building the literature review. More difficult, however, is the challenge of critical discussion of other scholar's work in relation to one's own, as described by (Hart, 1998): 'the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being proposed.'

Defining School Administration

There are numerous concepts of school administration (Alyousef, 2015). For example, explains school administration as a part of learning and leadership that is also an element of general school administration. School administration is defined as all the effort of a headteacher with all administration tasks in the school, with some help by teachers and deputy headteachers, to achieve educational objectives within the school. According to (Al-Mutairi, 2005) school headship is motivated to achieve the aims of the school by the headteachers of the school.

Headship in the Saudi Arabian Education System

The word 'headteacher' in the Saudi Arabian Arabic dialect is directly linked to the word 'manager' as the person who is charged with managing all administrative tasks in the school (Al Dhuwaihi, 2011). The headteacher is responsible for overseeing supervision duties relating to the functioning of the school and fostering positive relationships with the staff, students and families, whilst also being answerable to them and responsible for their satisfaction with the school's services (Education, 2011). The headteacher may therefore be under increasing stress due not only to the workload, but also to the ever-increasing number of students in the school – a phenomenon beyond their control and for which they are not compensated.

Educational Supervision

Educational specialists and researchers alike have long stressed the importance and requirement of supervision of headteachers as a key factor for improving the overall performance of schools (Harem, 2015). The supervision is intended to oversee and stimulate the following:

- Development of curricula

- Student and school attainment of results

- Preparation of students for future employment (Education, 2015).

Headteacher Remit

The role of the headteacher in the Saudi Arabian educational system is to pursue the ultimate objective in ensuring that students are equipped academically and vocationally for entry into the labour force, with participation in and development of the economy for the betterment of society (Education, 2015).

Headteacher Remuneration

A headteacher in Saudi Arabia does not have the gravity of their role or weight of that responsibility compensated monetarily (Al Dhuwaihi, 2011) as compared to headteachers in other advanced countries, such as those in the United Kingdom or the United States of America, whose salaries are proportional to leadership role, the size of school and the number of students. In Saudi Arabian schools, the headteacher is ranked evenly with an elementary or middle school teacher in terms of salary and may also be requested to return to teaching. Such a request would require the headteacher to depart from the position with little or no explanation or notice (Al Dhuwaihi, 2011).

Qualifying as a Headteacher

Qualifying as a headteacher is in many cases a long and arduous task; exceptions are made when there is a requirement for a school headteacher in a remote location or when there is an urgency to fill a vacancy. To be eligible for consideration for promotion to the position of headteacher, the teacher must first assume a position of deputy headteacher – one that transfers the staff from a teaching role to that of an administrative role (Al Dhuwaihi, 2011). Access to a position of deputy headteacher is only available upon satisfying specific criteria as in the Table 2.1 below. It should be noted that in the education system in Saudi Arabia, a school and its headteacher may assign up to four deputies (Al Dhuwaihi, 2011). The only additional requirement for a headteacher is to have occupied a position of deputy headship for a minimum of four years, complete with satisfactory results and appraisals (AL-Damen, 2012) (Alzaidi, 2008).

Theoretical Framework

The concept of job satisfaction is crucial to this thesis and therefore requires detailed critical analysis. The topic of job satisfaction has been extensively researched across the world, so this section aims to provide a selective review of current literature relating to

job satisfaction, using both a theoretical and an empirical perspective, endeavouring to provide a solid foundation for the current study.

Definitions of Job Satisfaction

The study of job satisfaction addresses human feelings about work undertaken and the working conditions and environment surrounding it (AL-Damen, 2012). The concept of job satisfaction is the key concept underpinning this research and has many definitions globally (AL-Damen, 2012). In fact, there does not seem to be one operational definition, given that many scholars have defined job satisfaction using different views (Ghonaim, 1986). (Al-Amri, 1992) pointed out that one of the reasons accounting for the variable levels of job satisfaction is that since it involves human behaviours, attitudes and emotions, its interpretation can often have a subjective influence. Other researchers have shared a similar view (Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2004).

According to (Spector, 1997), job satisfaction should not be described as a general feeling, but also as a global feeling about the work or as a related constellation of behaviours about all facets of the work. However, (Lawler & E., 1971) indicated that there is a clear distinction between full job satisfaction and facets of satisfaction, which he defended as 'effective reaction to particular job aspects such as pay, supervision, and opportunities for promotions.

Historical Review of Job Satisfaction

At the time of the beginning of the modern industrial revolution the managers of Hawthorne Works, a factory near Chicago (1924-1934) performed several anthropological experiments within their factory to gauge relationships between workers and levels of job satisfaction (Alyousef, 2015). The results of Mayo's study (Muldoon, 2012) in that managers must have sufficient training and skills to understand human needs and appreciate them as being conducive to good relations in the workplace.

Importance of Job Satisfaction

The phenomenon of job satisfaction has attracted the attention of many psychologists. As most people spend a substantial part of their lives at work it has become important for workers to search out job satisfaction and occupy a role that positively impacts in their personal and professional lives. Satisfaction in a job can also lead to increased productivity and benefits for both worker and organisation, (Fox et al., 1993), (Cullen, 1999), and (Nobile & McCormick, 2008) all emphasised the importance of addressing the issue of job dissatisfaction given that there is a positive association between employee satisfaction, their psychological and physical well-being, their performance and staff recruitment and turnover. For example, when employees contribute considerable effort in the workplace and are dissatisfied with the outcome(s), their overall job performance is likely to decline (Nobile & McCormick, 2008).

Importance of Job Satisfaction in Education

(Alzaidi, 2008) has asserted that the job satisfaction of headteachers in Saudi Arabia should be given serious consideration by the Ministry of Education as it helps to build positive relationships between headteachers and educational managers. It is also arguable that this can boost the self-esteem and autonomy of headteachers in Saudi Arabia. I therefore intend to examine in greater detail and underline the factors that may affect job satisfaction among female headteachers in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

Job Satisfaction Theories

Job satisfaction theories have been categorised into 'content theories' and 'process theories' (Campbell et al., 1970). Content theories focus on the individual's motivating needs and on the influence of job satisfaction. On the other hand, process theories have provided an account of the process by which variables interact with the features of the job to introduce job satisfaction: needs, values and expectations (Riches, 1994). This review

will focus on both content and process theories since they are a characteristic in determining job satisfaction for some people; for example, the need for salary, social relationships and rewards.

Content Theories

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

(Herzberg et al., 1959) proposed two factors that are considered powerful enough to influence motivation at work – hygiene factors (e.g. supervision, interpersonal relations, policies, working conditions, pay, status and security) which when inappropriate can demotivate employees, and motivational factors (e.g. the nature of the work, promotion, recognition, achievement and responsibility) that maintain effort. His theory brought its unique contribution by revealing an important empirical finding from his research in the USA which investigated the job attitudes of 203 accountants and engineers using interviews involving critical incident analysis. This study focused on the relationship between job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, which reported that dissatisfaction was purely a result of an absence of factors that pave the way to job satisfaction. In other words, whilst there are a series of factors that can cause job satisfaction there is another set of factors that can result in dissatisfaction (Locke, 1976).

Maslow's Hierarchal Needs Theory

Abraham Maslow was a clinical psychologist who believed that an individual is born with several needs and consequently developed 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs' theory. This theory was presented after observing his patients over many years. He asserted that when individuals grow up in an environment that does not satisfy their needs, they would not be classified as a well-adjusted. His theory postulates that the same is the case of those whose needs are not satisfied in their work environment; that is, they will not be active workers in their workplace (Adams, 1967).

relevancy of this theory in the current research. Although this research does not depend directly on Maslow's theory, some points were taken into account, such as the need for adequate salary and the importance of positive relationships between employees and self-esteem. All this was within the scope of this research and studied intensively in Maslow's theory.

Process Theories

Equity Theory

Equity theory is a process theory proposed by (Adams, 1967). This theory stipulates that employees strive for equity between the amount of effort that they put in and its gain; in other words, equity between the inputs and the outputs of their work in comparison to the inputs and the outcomes of their colleagues. In cases where there is equity with other workers in the same job role, there is a feeling of satisfaction, and the opposite also applies (Al Salem, 1997). However, some criticism has been levelled against this theory, namely that it is not clear who the person chooses as the comparator.

Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory, which is one of the most dominant process theories, was created as a result of Victor Vroom's criticisms of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor theory, which is part of the Content Theory. Vroom considered these two theories to be too basic because they did not include values and beliefs of people in their motivation theories. Vroom describes motivation as what an individual believes will happen. This theory comes from the belief that a worker's effort may lead to positive performance and performance may lead to value which is called rewards (Vroom, 1964).

Expectancy theory

The following is an explanation of how these variables impact on employees' job satisfaction: firstly, the first variable is expectancy (E) or expectation of how an employee can perform the given task based on their ability. When employees are promoted, they may feel satisfied and motivated to work harder. Secondly, the second variable of the equation is instrumentality (I) or an employee's confidence that s/he will be treated fairly and benefit from the same rewards just for doing the task itself. Lastly, the third variable is valance (V) or the value of the expected compensation to the individual in the workplace. In this formula, developed by Vroom, each variable has been given a prospect value, and when all of these variables are high, employees may be satisfied and have higher satisfaction. However, if any of these variables decrease, employee satisfaction may also decrease (Lamberts, 2011). (Lunenburg, 2011) supports Vroom's theory as he feels that these three variables can satisfied employees based on their outcomes in the workplace and hence motivate workers to change their individual effort and to provide the best performance in order to achieve the expected reward.

Job Satisfaction Factors

In line with prevailing theories of job satisfaction, and the overlapping concept of motivation, it is clear there are many factors that can influence job satisfaction. It is important to note that while some factors influencing job satisfaction relate to work, others may be motivational, and although they may intersect, they can be distinguished. However, all factors can be influential on overall job satisfaction. The following section provides an overview of some of the main factors that have been identified by research thus far, for example, and (Herzberg et al., 1959) (Lawler & E., 1971) and (Locke, 1976) explore the impact the following factors on job satisfaction.

Remuneration as a Motivational Factor Could impact on Job Satisfaction

Traditionally, it has long been believed that the financial dimension is the principal factor among an employee concerning job satisfaction in the workforce in Saudi Arabia. While this may be of importance to satisfy the employee demands, salary is not the only factor in achieving job satisfaction. Some studies have shown that women are happy to be part of the workforce and building positive relationships takes precedence over financial allowances in determining their happiness and job satisfaction (Harem, 2015). Studies conducted in Saudi Arabia on headteachers' job satisfaction by (Alonazi, 2001) and (Al-Mutairi, 2005) found a moderate level of satisfaction regarding salary, whereas research undertaken by (Alagbari, 2003) and (Alzaidi, 2008) reported that salary was a major contributor to dissatisfaction. However, in (Alhazmi, 2011) study among female headteachers in the city of Abha, pay was not considered to be as important but was perceived as more of a hygiene factor. Alhazmi's study supports Herzberg's Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959) which considers pay an essential factor that could protect and prevent an employee from dissatisfaction, but not as a satisfier or 'motivator' in itself. Abha is a city in the southern region of Saudi Arabia and the cost of living is significantly less than that of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, which is ranked highest in terms of cost of living. However, based on 8.5 million tweets on Twitter between 2013 and 2015 in response to the hashtag 'salary is not enough to fulfil needs', (Kamel, 2008) strongly suggests that salaries regularly fail to meet the needs of employees in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, it has frequently been observed that headteachers in Saudi Arabia are not paid overtime for any work over five working days, each comprising seven hours. Headteachers and employees in education alike are restricted from engaging in any additional, further or private employment that may supplement their income.

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The question arising here is whether salary plays a role in the job satisfaction of female headteachers located in the Eastern Province. This is one of the research questions of the current study. It should be noted that in Saudi Arabia, men are deemed to be socially responsible for all domestic needs and economic matters (Alyousef, 2015).

Recognition as a Motivational Factor could Impact on Job Satisfaction

Incentivisation through recognition can be used to create a productive and distinctive workforce of employees and is one of the most powerful and effective proven methods, which is indispensable in awakening enthusiasm and motivation. It is important to recognise, respect and reward working individuals and their achievements, by providing them not only with material benefits such as wages, bonuses, promotions, but also with moral support such as good relations and encouragement, all of which are inexpensive. I therefore consider it essential to further examine the relationship between recognition and job satisfaction.

Research on Job Satisfaction

Taking the above into consideration, this section will specifically probe existing research based on work-related and motivational factors that appear to be contributing towards the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of headteachers within schools in Saudi Arabia. (Alzaidi, 2008) conducted a study in which headteachers in Saudi Arabia were found to be unenthused with the concept of job satisfaction as the highly centralised educational system was not considered forthcoming in evaluating and providing opportunities for schools to become semi-autonomous and, as such, these headteachers felt restricted in the headship role.

Whilst (Herzberg et al., 1959) considered decision-making as a hygiene factor that prevents dissatisfaction, (Alzaidi, 2008) found that headteachers in Saudi Arabia were unable to avoid the top-down management and hierarchy. Saiti(2007), who conducted a

study in Greece, found that the characteristics of centralised bureaucracy in education were very similar to the Saudi Arabian educational system. Moreover, it was also found that the lack of autonomy in the decision-making process in schools caused dissatisfaction among headteachers; a similar finding reported by (Alzaidi, 2008). (Alzaidi, 2008) asserted that the very nature of a headteacher's job is one that is highly demanding and carries with it a heavy workload, which is a fundamental aspect of job satisfaction. (Alzaidi, 2008) further proposes that headteachers have time-intensive tasks that may require them to take work home and any negative impact on personal lives may contribute to dissatisfaction. It should be noted that headteachers in Saudi Arabia are unable to refuse additional work and have no right to request overtime. Job satisfaction studies specifically focussing on education in Saudi Arabia, such as those conducted by (Ghonaim, 1986) and (Alzaidi, 2008), found that increased workload was a factor that could lead to job dissatisfaction. (Friesen et al., 1983), who studied job satisfaction among headteachers in Jeddah, also reported that work conditions and environment were also fundamental factors on influencing job satisfaction. Dissatisfaction often occurs as a direct result of limited access to important facilities in schools in Saudi Arabia, such as a lack of emergency exits, which in the past has caused many students and teachers to die from the effects of fire and smoke. This has happened in two schools, one in Makah in 2002 and another in Jeddah in 2011 (Alzahrani, 2017). According to Herzberg's theory, safety is a hygiene factor that relates to work conditions and is considered influential on worker satisfaction. In remote and rural areas, there have been numerous fatalities due to traffic conditions. Schools situated in remote areas sometimes require educational staff to commute back and forth at non-standard working hours. This is an area of concern for the Ministry of Education as educational staff have previously voiced their grievances relating to transport difficulties (Alzahrani, 2017). Frequently requisitioned with transfers, the bulk of which arise from educational staff wishing to transfer to schools closer to their homes, the Ministry of Education has little choice but to deny these requests due to a shortage of educators in rural areas (Alzahrani, 2017).

In summary, factors such as decision-making, the nature of the job, pay and work conditions may influence the level of job satisfaction of headteachers. (Friesen et al., 1983) conducted a study in Alberta, Canada of 410 headteachers, to recognise the factors that affect their job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The study showed that salary, incentives, sufficiency of resources in workplace, professional relationships with vital authority, recognition, autonomy, and less workload created a good level of job satisfaction, while relationships with parents and students, workload, and constraints were the main factors of job satisfaction.

CHAPTER 3:
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter explains the challenge and context of the research, the obstacles faced, and provides a brief outline of how they were tackled. I will also explain why the selected approach or design was overtaken by subsequent events. The research had three Phases: A, B and C. The first phase of the study used a qualitative approach through interviews. Phase A was used to guide the development of Phase B: the survey questionnaire. The survey development was also informed and guided by the conceptual framework in the previous chapter. The final interview Phase C was designed to confirm the results of Phase B.

Research Methods

I explore various social research methods and methodologies to appraise their suitability and made a selection. I also justify how I arrived at any conclusions regarding their suitability, specifically why I thought they were suitable and how and where I wanted and expected them to assist me, with critical consideration of any limitations and alternatives, and why I proceeded with those I selected.

Mixed-Method Study Design

I selected the three-phase Sequential Exploratory Design (Figure 3.2) method as the most appropriate approach to explore the phenomena of job satisfaction among headteachers, as this method allowed me to explore and identify unknown variables and determine the most appropriate measures and/or instruments to be developed. Furthermore, this method allowed me to start by collecting qualitative data, rather than pursue bulk data collection

with unknown variables that would only become apparent during the data collection and its analyses, which could have taken up inordinate amounts of time. My appreciation of this design method was further corroborated by (Greene et al., 1989), who stated that the results of the first phase (qualitative) will inform the second one (quantitative), and will be further validated by another qualitative approach using interviews (Greene et al., 1989). By using this method, I aimed to interpret additional perspectives understood from the qualitative data gathered.

Phase A – Qualitative Method (Interviews)

The purpose of this phase was to lay the foundations for Phase B of the research study. In this regard, (Taylor et al., 2015) highlighted that a qualitative research approach is concerned with describing experiences, emphasising meaning and exploring the nature of an issue. Also, (Guba & Lincoln, 2013) point out that qualitative research allows for a detailed exploration of a topic of interest, in which a researcher collects information through case studies, ethnographic work or interviews. In-depth semi-structured interviews were used to collect data directly from the research participants.

Qualitative Sampling Method

Of 664 headteachers in total, 20 were selected by purposive convenience sampling. Qualitative research is much more intensive than extensive in its purposes (Al Dhuwaihi, 2011); therefore when I did responders' choosing it must be selected suitably, since qualitative research studies the participant's categories and assumptions not the individual who holds them. Working with a few participants in-depth may deliver better findings rather working superficially with numerous people (E. & D, 1992).

I concluded by distinguishing conceivable scopes of view and experience from the collection of headteachers and attempting to achieve a representative population of participants.

I divided the headteachers into small groups that represented the whole sample of the headteachers in the Eastern Province. Then I selected two or three headteachers who have different demographic characteristics, such as age, experience and qualification from each group. They also worked in different schools: primary, middle and high schools, whether in a rented or non-rented building, or if it was supervised by the Ministry of Education, or under the supervision of Aramco, until I reached 20. In Phase C I selected the sample in the same manner as in Phase A until I reached nine headteachers, which is the number where I reached the stage of saturation. However, I excluded the frequent interviewees in Phase C to achieve a balance in the sample to attempt to cover the largest proportion of the school headteachers' sample to try to gain the best level of credibility in results from the interviews.

Semi-Structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews are categorised by the formal nature of a commitment between an interviewer and interviewee, when the interviewer prepares an 'interview guide', which is usually a list of key questions with relevant topics that the researcher wants to discuss in-depth with the interviewees, and therefore this gives some direction to the interview process (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). Further, lesser significant subtopics and questions similarly could be used to obtain 'nice-to-know' responses. Any other filler questions or notifications may also provide support in giving structure to the interview at the same time as the interviewer conducts the interview; it is also vital that a track is maintained (Dearnley, 2005). I made sure that the interview always revolved around the headteacher's job satisfaction only because some participants occasionally deviated from the topic of career satisfaction to overall satisfaction, or they would shift to another subject that had no relation to job satisfaction.

Phase B – Quantitative Method

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a self-report data gathering tool, which is filled out by the study's participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2004) The questionnaire is often utilised in the field of social and educational research, either as the one method for information gathering, or related to some other instruments; it deals with objective resources by gathering information about people's knowledge, culture, habits beliefs attitudes and behaviour; the questionnaire can be structured, closed and open-ended questions. (Cohen et al., 2006) recommended that the type of questionnaire depends on the size of the sample. When the study has a large sample, a structured questionnaire should be used (Cohen et al., 2006). In this research there were 664 headteachers so the structured questionnaire was selected as a quantitative tool for data gathering.

Quantitative data collection

All headteachers selected from schools in the Eastern Province were sent a direct internet link (URL) to enable them to complete the survey. This URL was sent electronically and directly to their private emails by the researcher. This satisfied privacy and security concerns, but also allowed for a more convenient time for the respondent to complete the questionnaire. There was no additional requirement for involvement of the Educational Supervisor or their provincial educational office to be involved, as consent was already approved final version (Page).

Survey Validation

Revision of this questionnaire was conducted by asking three doctors from the University of Dammam in the learning and leadership department in Saudi Arabia by sending them the questionnaire via their emails. In order to confirm the questionnaire's validity, they revised the questionnaire according to its degree of ambiguity and applicability to be

answered and advising any essential changes. After their revision, they concluded that the questionnaire was very understandable, but it needed minor Arabic spelling corrections.

Phase C – Qualitative Method (Post-Survey Interviews)

By associating the findings of Phases A, B and C, the purpose was to further explore the issues connected with female headship and job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia. It was designed to elicit additional or supplementary information that Phase B could not reveal. It expanded on the details learned from the questionnaire phase. This phase adopted a qualitative approach using interviews with female headteachers who were not involved in Phase A. This took place following the analysis of the quantitative data collected through the survey questionnaire. Regarding sampling and data collection, the same procedures discussed in Phase B were adopted where the sample was selected using the Convenience Sampling Technique. The aim was that nine interviews would be conducted, and Thematic Content Analysis would be employed for the data analysis. The following discusses data handling in Phases A, B and C.

Data Handling and Analysis

Introduction

In this section I explain how I dealt with the data collected and the resulting outcomes.

Qualitative Data

All the interviews' records and the questionnaires were originally recorded and developed in the Arabic language, as all the instruments were administered in Arabic. All the records were checked through translation into English by the researcher to ensure compatibility of the meaning of the two versions. I provided all the transcripts after I translated them into English and deleted any clues about headteacher identities or schools, using a colleague who works in linguistics, to confirm the correction of the translations.

Quantitative Data

Initially, data collected from the online survey was transferred to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) format. Next, the data collected was analysed using SPSS, which offers a user-friendly interface that can help researchers to manage the data efficiently. It is also fast and more efficient, which assists in providing more reliable results (Carolan, 2014), enabling the researcher to analyse many different factors and variables, such as salary, promotion, and workload, head accounts, age, experience; these tests were also used as appropriate to test different hypotheses (see section quantitative data analysis for further details).

Data Protection

Confidentiality and Protection of Participants

No personal identities were collected during any phase of the study. Moreover, identities of the schools have not been revealed and will be kept secure and safe.

Discussion of Main Findings

The primary aim of this study was to determine the level of job satisfaction among female headteachers in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. The results of Phase B, the questionnaire survey and quantitative analysis of this study, demonstrated that the level

of job satisfaction in the Eastern Province was low average. This result differed from the overall findings of (Alzaidi, 2008), which measured the level of job satisfaction for headteachers in Jeddah, one of the biggest cities in the Saudi Arabia where in his study overall finding was moderate. The results of this study did corroborate the findings from several other smaller cities in Saudi Arabia (Al-Mutairi, 2005), (Alagbari, 2003); (Alonazi, 2001) and also agreed with the results of Alamri's research (Al-Amri, 1992), which was conducted in the Sultanate of Oman, in terms of salary recognition and the overall of headteachers' job satisfaction. Oman's culture and education system are very close to the education system and culture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in terms of religion, language and conservative lifestyle.

Research question: To what extent is headteachers' job satisfaction affected by motivation factors such as pay, recognition, promotion?

The overall results of this study demonstrate a difference between the quantitative results in Phase A and the questionnaire results in Phase B, which examined job satisfaction in terms of the salary factor. The interview time of Phase A, however, was set up before the enactment of ''the law to reduce the financial allowances in all government employees' salaries in Saudi Arabia in 2015'' (Alarifee, 2016).

Salary/Remuneration

This study found salary to be one of the strongest causes of job dissatisfaction, a finding which has not been previously identified by earlier studies. In that respect, school headteachers considered themselves as the backbone of their schools, with their responsibilities for their students, staff and managing the school. Notwithstanding all those headteachers' huge responsibilities, their salaries are still lower in the educational salary scale than school teachers. This is because the headteachers have administrative titles, while the teachers maintain an educational category in the employment contracts, so teachers have salaries higher than headteachers. Thus, the school headteachers feel a

lack of job satisfaction through the feeling of inequity. According to the theory of equity, (Adams, 1967) explained that a lack of justice in the workplace arises because of the employees' feeling that their colleagues are obtaining financial advantages. In turn, this feeling leads to a decrease in job satisfaction for the employee. Consequently, this study is in agreement with Adam's theory, whereby salary becomes a dissatisfying factor.

Promotion

Promotion was identified as the second catalyst for job satisfaction in this study, with a negative or positive effect on the job satisfaction of headteachers. The promotion factor is divided between financial promotion and career promotion. The headteachers in the Phase B of the quantitative analysis felt strongly dissatisfied with their financial

The analysis of quantitative of the promotion factor in this study occurred after the implementation of 'Vision 2030' which empowered headteachers to have senior positions in the Ministry of Education or in different government sectors. It thus represented an indication of the change in the direction of the Saudi Arabian educational system by offering more opportunities for further promotions for headteachers (Hadi, 2018). For example, the current deputy of the Minister of Education in Saudi Arabia was formerly a female school headteacher (AlShamri, 2017).

Recognition

The quantitative analysis in Phase B confirmed the observations of headteachers in Phase A who were not satisfied in their work with neglecting the financial incentive side for their professional excellence and job performance or working overtime. The financial estimate in this study was considered unsatisfactory.

Headteachers in Phase A and Phase C indicated that they were dissatisfied with the level of appreciation they received. Whether these recognitions are provided materially, morally, or even in writing by their supervisors or the Education Ministry, headteachers

described the quality of appreciation they received as insignificant, in return for their enthusiasm, dedication and excellence in the school's administrative work. Yet, it is interesting to note that recognition in the quantitative results in Phase B in this study was satisfactory. The difference between these two results in the same study may be due to the changes in the assessment system for headteachers in the new education system after 'Vision 2030', which was described and expressed by most headteachers in Phase C. It seems that the headteacher became aware of her responsibilities about her career or her rights in life and work and could defend her requirements with support from the new crown prince Mohamed bin Salman with his new vision in 2015 (Alsobai, 2016).

Research Recommendations

It can be concluded from the results of this study that the overall level of job satisfaction for elementary, middle and high schools' headteachers in the Eastern Province is generally low average. However, it was found that factors causing high and average job satisfaction derive from multiple demographic or independent causes in the workplace. Therefore, this study may attract the attention of educational planners to improve the knowledge of the most important aspects of the career of headteachers and could assist public policy development in education, as it provides an understanding of what to avoid and what works most effectively.

A second recommendation is that employers should increase the salaries of school headteachers and make them distinguished from the teachers' salaries to increase job satisfaction. A financial addition to the number of working hours outside the working hours would reduce the resulting job dissatisfaction due to the amount of the overtime work which is unpaid.

Another recommendation is to provide more opportunities for promotion to upgrade the headteachers to higher positions, rather than limiting them to be supervisors, and thus do more to facilitate the promotion of staff to higher grades.

Recommendations for Further Researchers on Job Satisfaction

A recommendation to all researchers who have to follow the specific ethics of educational research is that they should understand and respect the culture of all the participants in their research. The researchers should study the background of their participants, whether this background relates to religious, politic, social culture or even professional rules. Therefore, the researcher should consult as much as possible the people who have experience in the field before beginning to collect the data.

Conclusion

The overall level of headteacher job satisfaction in this study was moderate. However, I tried as much as possible to fill the gaps that I found in the previous studies in the kingdom to understand the job satisfaction of headteachers.

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