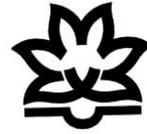




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Investigating the impact of job satisfaction/dissatisfaction on Iranian English teachers' job performance

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ABSTRACT

As part of a large-scale project, this study investigated the differences between satisfied and dissatisfied Iranian junior secondary school English teachers in terms of their job performance. To this end, 64 Iranian English teachers and 1774 of their students completed a validated questionnaire specifically developed to investigate EFL teachers' job performance. The results indicated that satisfied teachers significantly differed from their dissatisfied counterparts in terms of their job performance suggesting that the observed differences in their job performance might have mainly been caused by the degree to which they were satisfied with their profession. The results also showed a significant difference between students' evaluation of their teachers' job performance and the teachers' self-evaluation of their job performance. Furthermore, through a semi-structured interview, the most crucial factors contributing to poor job performance of dissatisfied Iranian secondary school EFL teachers were identified to be an insufficient subject and pedagogic knowledge, unequal attention to individual students, lack of professional commitment, interpersonal relationship problems, and demotivation.

Keywords: Iranian EFL teachers; job performance; job satisfaction; satisfied EFL teachers; dissatisfied EFL teachers

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Introduction

Job performance is a central construct in the field of work psychology (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). Organizations tend to assess their employees' work performance and use the information to identify their strengths and weaknesses based on which they can design training programs in order to improve their employees' job performance (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). Several studies so far have focused on the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance (e.g., Argyle, 1989; Fisher, 2003; Ostroff, 1992; Peng, 2014), some of which have reported that job satisfaction and job performance are correlated, though not very strongly. However, based on the findings of Ostroff (1992), Judge, Thoresen, Bono, and Patton (2001), and recent research on satisfaction-performance relationship (e.g., Bleik, 2013; Malakolunthu, Idris, & Rengasamy, 2010; Peng, 2014; Usop, Askandar, Langguyuan-Kadtong & Usop, 2013), the magnitude of the relationship seems to be greater than many researchers have estimated.

A review of the literature of the field on the topic reveals mixed results concerning whether higher levels of job satisfaction lead to better job performance. Furthermore, although literature has adequately investigated the job satisfaction/performance relationship overall, the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and job performance has received little attention. Since teachers play an integral role in fulfilling the goals of educational systems upon whom the success or failure of educational programs depend (Authors, 2015), the need to investigate their job satisfaction and its association with or impact on their job performance receives priority. We argue that additional evidence is required to claim whether more satisfied teachers are better performers or vice versa. Thus, the present study continues this line of inquiry by investigating whether job satisfaction/dissatisfaction has a significant impact on job performance of EFL teachers.

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined by Lambrou, Kontodimopoulos, and Niakas (2010) as "positive emotional state, resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (p.1). They argue that job satisfaction enhances job performance and that organizations should take measures to promote job satisfaction by, for example, arousing interests of existing and future employees.

The majority of the studies conducted on job satisfaction are primarily built upon the needs-based theory of motivation proposed by Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1959) whose theories and conceptualizations are considered to be the foundation of *job motivation theory*. Herzberg et al. (1959) differentiated between motivators (satisfiers), which are associated with factors in the immediate environment such as company policy and administration, interpersonal relations, salary, supervision, and working conditions, and demotivators (dissatisfiers), which contribute to job dissatisfaction such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, advancement, and responsibility. Adjusting Herzberg et al.'s theory, Locke (1976) specified two sets of factors influencing job satisfaction: 'agents' and 'events'. 'Agents' are factors causing an event to take place (e.g., managers, supervisors, colleagues, and clients), while 'events' are incidents leading to employees' satisfaction or dissatisfaction (e.g., success/failure, promotion/demotion, money, and working conditions).

Teachers' job satisfaction, defined as "teachers' affective reactions to their work or to their teaching role" (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011, p. 1030), has been studied in the field of work psychology. For one, Chen (2010), investigating job satisfaction of 294 teachers in Chinese middle schools, found that they were generally satisfied with their job. The job satisfiers were reported to be working conditions (e.g., collegiality, classroom control, and availability of resources), leadership, and opportunities for collaboration, while job dissatisfiers were found to be associated with teachers' income, workload and stress, and opportunities for development. The results also indicated that those who wished to stay in their teaching jobs were more satisfied with sub-factors of leadership,

opportunity, workload and stress, and income in comparison to those who wanted to leave the profession and were seeking non-teaching jobs. Within the same lines, Kassabgy, Boraie, and Schmidt (2001) investigated 107 English language teachers' job satisfaction in Egypt and Hawaii and found that the teachers were more concerned with altruistic and intrinsic aspects of their job such as helping their students learn, performing to the best of their ability in their job, and having a good relationship with their students, colleagues, and supervisors. Moreover, they found that job security, fringe benefits, and prospect for promotion were three factors to which both groups of teachers referred as their challenges.

Job performance

Job performance is a term which is mostly discussed and dealt with in the field of industrial and organizational psychology (Schmidt & Hunter, 1992). According to Viswesvaran and Ones (2000), job performance deals with the workplace and refers to the way individuals perform in their jobs. They define job performance as “scalable actions, behavior and outcomes that employees engage in or bring about that are linked with and contribute to organizational goals” (p. 216). That is, an employee's performance can be viewed from different dimensions, the most important of which are those directed to the main goals and policies of their organizations. Mawoli and Babandako (2011) argue that job performance is a multidimensional construct consisting of various kinds of behavior. Reviewing previous research on job performance, he offers a general definition of job performance as “the extent to which an employee is able to accomplish the task assigned to him or her and how the accomplished task contributes to the realization of the organizational goal” (p. 2).

Job performance might be influenced by a number of factors including *work engagement* and *organisational commitment*. Bakker, Albrecht, and Leiter (2011) believe that work engagement is a combination of willingness to work (e.g., dedication, involvement, commitment, conscience) and the capability to work (e.g., energy, strength, stamina), two factors of paramount importance that can impact upon job performance. On the other hand, organizational commitment, according to Stride, Wall, and Catley (2007, p. 39), refers to “people's affective reactions to their employing organisation as a whole” which is made up of the three components originally specified by Buchanan (1974, as cited in Stride et al., 2007):

- (1) Organisational Identification represents pride in the organisation and internalization of its goals and values; (2) Organisational Loyalty reflects affection for and attachment to the organisation, a sense of belongingness manifested as a wish to stay; and (3) Organisational Involvement refers to engagement with the work itself because of its contribution to the organisation as a whole (p. 39).

Several models of job performance have been proposed by scholars conducting research in the field of industrial and organizational psychology. However, Viswesvaran (2001) considers job performance as an abstract construct without one single physical manifestation. He maintains that although there are various manifestations of an individual's job performance, the actual behavior varies across contexts. For example, a bank teller's interpersonal competence, as one dimension of individual job performance, is measured through his/her friendly behavior toward customers, while that of a professor or researcher might be measured by considering his/her polite behavior in replying to reviewers.

The relationship between job satisfaction and job performance

The relationship between job satisfaction and job performance has not always been a straightforward positive one. Singh and Tiwari (2011) maintain there might be a number of employees who are satisfied with their jobs, but they might not perform well yet. They attribute

the problem to lack of motivation and commitment for the organization for which they work. It seems that the reverse is also true since there might be employees who are not satisfied with their profession but whose performance might not be influenced by their dissatisfaction for such possible reasons as altruism, dedication, and conscience.

As the literature suggests, research on the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance has produced mixed results. Argyle (1989) reviewed previous research on the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance and concluded that "job satisfaction and work performance correlate overall at about +.15, though more strongly than this for white collar workers" (p. 6). Fisher (2003) summarized the findings of the empirical reviews of the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance and argued that "the average observed relationship between overall job satisfaction and performance is positive but relatively weak, in all cases between 0.14 and 0.25" (p. 754). Exploring the relationship between satisfaction/happiness and performance in two separate studies, Fisher (2003) argued that lay people commonly believe more satisfied workers are better performers than less satisfied workers. In other words, it is generally believed that satisfied employees are more productive at work.

However, several research studies on the job satisfaction/job performance relationship have reported stronger correlation. Ostroff (1992), for instance, investigated the relationship between employee satisfaction, and other job-related attitudes, and organizational performance using the data collected from 13, 808 junior and senior high school teachers from the States and Canada. He claimed that previous studies on job satisfaction-job performance relationship had failed to find a strong relationship, as they focused on the satisfaction-performance relationship at the individual level. Instead, Ostroff examined the relationship at the organizational level using a very large sample. He investigated the issue from three different perspectives, that is, from the principals, the teachers, and the students' point of view. He found a strong relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and their job performance at the organizational level. He also found that satisfaction and other job-related attitudes (e.g., commitment, adjustment, and psychological stress) highly correlated with student achievement and school effectiveness.

In the same vein, Judge et al. (2001) also reviewed previous studies in which the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance had been investigated and raised doubts regarding not only the consistency of the results gained by the majority of studies but also their validity. The results of their own meta-analysis indicated a correlation of .30 for the satisfaction-performance relationship with a 'moderate' effect size. They maintained that considering the estimated job satisfaction-job performance correlation, it is probably premature to dismiss the relationship because the relationship between satisfaction and performance might be indirect and mediated by other variables (e.g., personality, self-concept, moral obligation, need for achievement, and positive mood). Therefore, they asserted that the magnitude of the satisfaction-performance relationship is probably greater than what most researchers believed. They finally suggested that research on the issue not be abandoned but be reconsidered.

More recently, Peng (2014) investigated the relationship between job satisfaction of Taiwanese university librarians and their job performance and offered useful insights regarding the job satisfaction/performance in the university library context. The results suggested that both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction (or job satisfaction as a single latent variable) contributed to the participants' expected level of task performance and contextual performance (or job performance as a single latent variable). However, she found that the effect of intrinsic job satisfaction on job performance was greater in comparison with extrinsic satisfaction. Thus, she argued that the idea of offering intangible rewards to those working in service industries in the non-profit sector with lower wages might be an effective one, but in careers such as librarianship, *intrinsic* motivation (e.g., the sense of fulfillment that can be obtained by helping others) has a more important role and contributes more to job performance.

As mentioned earlier, despite the important role that teachers play in fulfilling the goals of educational systems, investigating the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and job performance has received little attention. As one of the few studies conducted in this regard, Malakolunthu, Idris, and Rengasamy (2010) investigated the influence of work environment and general welfare of the Malaysian secondary school teachers on their performance. They found six factors (i.e. collective purpose, respect and recognition, job design, health and learning, workload, and institutional support) were of major concern to the teachers and which adversely affected their performance. Also, surveying 200 elementary teachers from twelve selected public schools in the Philippines, Usop et al. (2013) investigated the relationship between their job satisfaction and work performance. They concluded that the more satisfied the teachers were with their jobs, the more productive they were at work. Furthermore, they argued that satisfied teachers would normally develop and maintain high levels of performance. In the same vein, Bleik (2013) explored the influence of job satisfaction on Lebanese teachers' job performance and reported a positive correlation ($r = .364$). Bleik concluded that teachers who were satisfied with their jobs tended to be better performers.

Significance of the study and research questions

As the review of the literature of the field revealed, it still remains unclear whether higher levels of job satisfaction would lead to better job performance. However, as mentioned earlier, the results of Ostroff's (1992) study, Judge et al.'s (2001) meta-analysis, and recent research on satisfaction-performance relationship (e.g., Malakolunthu, Idris, & Rengasamy, 2010; Peng, 2014), reveal that the magnitude of the relationship is greater than most researchers believe and that the results might vary across professions. Thus, following Judge et al.'s (2001) suggestion, it is deemed essential to reconsider satisfaction-performance relationship and to delve more deeply into this relationship.

Furthermore, with regard to the integral role played by teachers as the ones fulfilling the goals of educational systems, the number of research studies investigating the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and their job performance is considerably limited in comparison with other professions. Also, to the best of our knowledge, little research seems to have been conducted on the relationship between job satisfaction/dissatisfaction and the performance of EFL teachers, in general, and in the context of the present study (i.e. Iran), in particular. To this end, in a parallel study, we identified a number of satisfied and dissatisfied EFL teachers and compared these two groups in the present study in relation to their overall job performance.

A major strength of this study might be that it evaluates teachers' job performance from both teachers' and their students' points of view. That is, previous studies have mostly assessed teacher performance from the perspectives of the teachers themselves. However, we believe that students are a valuable source of information whose perceptions and evaluations can be effectively used along with other sources to yield more dependable and more accurate estimations of teacher performance and hence more generalizable findings. Another plus to this study might be that, focusing on the characteristics of successful language teachers, we investigated and identified the crucial factors which might contribute to poor performance of dissatisfied Iranian secondary school EFL teachers. Therefore, the following research questions were formulated for the present study:

- (1) Do satisfied and dissatisfied Iranian secondary school EFL teachers significantly differ in relation to their job performance as perceived by their students?
- (2) What are the crucial factors contributing to poor job performance of dissatisfied Iranian secondary school EFL teachers?

- (3) What are the most demotivating factors influencing dissatisfied teachers' job performance?
- (4) Is there any significant difference between dissatisfied Iranian secondary school EFL teachers' self-evaluation and their students' evaluation of their job performance?

Before reporting the present study and the related procedures, presentation of some background information on teaching, particularly language teaching, in Iran is deemed essential. The Ministry of Education, on the part of the government, directly controls and supervises teacher recruitment and training and chooses teachers mostly (nearly 80%) from among graduates of the teacher training university (i.e. Farhangian University) affiliated with the Ministry. The mandatory working hours of Iranian teachers are 24 hours per week and their current average monthly income is between \$400 and \$500 (Authors, 2015). Also, it is worth mentioning that in Iran the teachers usually teach the same-sex students. Authors (2015) found that Iranian teachers are not apparently satisfied with their income and their occupational and social status. However, many choose to be teachers due to the *intrinsic aspects of teaching* (e.g., having a positive internal feeling toward imparting knowledge and helping others learn, and feeling internally satisfied with serving the society).

Several researchers in the field of foreign language learning and teaching in Iran have reported flaws and shortcomings in the educational system in relation to its success in teaching foreign languages (e.g., Mahboudi & Javdani, 2012, Tabatabaei & Pourakbari, 2012). In spite of the emphasis placed on the teaching of the four language skills in the Iranian national curriculum for teaching English since 2007, meticulous review of the assigned textbooks suggests that the main focus of the curriculum is, in fact, on the development of reading skills and grammar knowledge (Mahboudi & Javdani, 2012). Another problem concerning language teaching in Iran is little time (nearly two hours per week) allocated to teaching English as a foreign language in Iranian public schools. The inadequacy of the educational system to meet the communicative needs of students and the limited exposure to the foreign language in the school environment have resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of private English language teaching institutes across the country.

Methodology

The parallel study: a brief report

Authors (2015) conducted a research study with 210 practicing Iranian English teachers teaching English as a foreign language at Iranian secondary schools to investigate factors which contributed to their job satisfaction/dissatisfaction. The data were obtained through the Iranian EFL Teacher Motivation and Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (IEFLTJSQ), a 58-item Likert-scale questionnaire, developed and validated by the researchers through pilot study, expert judgment, and factor analysis. The results indicated that most Iranian teachers were mainly satisfied with the *intrinsic aspects of their job* (e.g., thinking of teaching as an enjoyable and stimulating job, having a positive internal feeling toward imparting knowledge, and serving the society). It was also found that insufficient income, low occupational and social status, lack of encouragement by the educational system to pursue professional development opportunities by teachers, principals' inattention to encouraging teachers and appreciating their work, students' lack of motivation to learn, and teachers' not being given a prominent role in the goal-setting and problem-solving processes at school were among the most crucial factors contributing to Iranian EFL teachers' job dissatisfaction.

The study

Participants

The EFL teachers who participated in the present study were selected from among those satisfied and dissatisfied teachers who were identified in a parallel study conducted by Authors (2015) as explained above. The present study was conducted in 35 Iranian secondary public schools. In order to examine the influence of motivating factors (i.e. satisfiers) and demotivating factors (i.e. dissatisfiers) on the teachers' job performance, 32 satisfied teachers (16 male and 16 females aging between 24 and 51) and 32 dissatisfied teachers (16 male and 16 females aging between 28 and 55) took part in the present study. Their length of service in the educational system ranged from 2 to 30. To be exact, 31 (48.4%) of the teachers had served as a practicing teacher for five to 15 years; 28 (43.7%) of the teachers had teaching experience between 15 and 25 years; three (4.6%) of them had served as a teacher for 25 to 30 years; two (3.1%) of them had two to five years of teaching experience. In fact, they were regarded as teachers who were satisfied or dissatisfied with their profession in relation to a number of motivating and demotivating factors specified in the parallel study. That is, those whose mean score on the items specified to be motivating was above one standard deviation above the mean in the parallel study were regarded as 'satisfied' teachers and those whose mean score on the items specified to be demotivating was below one standard deviation below the mean were considered as 'dissatisfied' teachers. In addition, in order to investigate their overall job performance level from their students' perspective, we also selected between 27 and 29 students per teacher (Total= 1774) to participate in the study. Nine-hundred twenty one of the students were male while 853 of them were female. The students all aged between 13 and 15.

Instruments

Successful Iranian English Teacher Questionnaire (SIETQ). The teacher participants' job performance was evaluated through SIETQ developed and validated in the context of the present study by Moafian and Pishghadam (2009). It consists of 47 items requiring participants to evaluate their teachers' job performance based on a five-point Likert scale (See Appendix A). The questionnaire was developed based on suggestions and comments made by Iranian teacher educators, language teachers, language learners, and also Suwandee's (1995) questionnaire on students' perceptions of university instructors' effective teaching characteristics. To investigate the validity of the questionnaire, Moafian and Pishghadam distributed it among 250 language learners to evaluate their teachers' performance. The results of the factor analysis (principal axis factoring with Varimax rotation) indicated that the questionnaire measured 12 factors regarding the characteristics of successful language teachers, namely teaching accountability, interpersonal relationship, attention to all, examination, commitment, learning boosters, creating a sense of competence, teaching boosters, physical and emotional acceptance, empathy, class attendance, and dynamism. These factors accounted for 48% of the total variance. Furthermore, to examine the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha consistency measure was run, the results of which indicated that the questionnaire enjoyed a high level of internal consistency ($\alpha = .94$).

Semi-structured interview. Furthermore, in order to triangulate the data and to make an in-depth interpretation of the data obtained from the Likert-scale questionnaire, a number of questions were formulated based on the motivating and demotivating factors specified in the parallel study to be incorporated in a semi-structured interview (See Appendix B for interview questions). Then, four university professors, two of whom held a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics and the other two

specialized in Psychology, commented on the content and the structure of the questions. Based on their comments, some modifications were made in the content and the structure of some items. The main purpose of conducting the semi-structured interview with dissatisfied teachers was to determine whether their job performance had been influenced by the demotivating factors specified in the parallel study explained earlier and, if so, to mention a number of reasons for that.

Data collection

In order to investigate Iranian secondary school EFL teachers' overall job performance level, the SIETQ was given to 64 teachers and 1774 students selected as mentioned earlier. After explaining the procedure and ensuring their anonymity, we requested the students to evaluate their teachers' job performance. The overall responses gained from students on this questionnaire were compared with their teachers' self-perceived job performance evaluated by the corresponding teacher version of the same questionnaire. The responses gained from satisfied teachers' students were then compared with those of dissatisfied teachers' students to see whether the teachers differed significantly in relation to their job performance as perceived by their students. Finally, the dissatisfied teachers were interviewed individually by one of the researchers to see whether their job performance had been influenced by their dissatisfaction with their profession and, if so, to specify the most crucial demotivating factors contributing to their job dissatisfaction.

Data analysis

To analyze the data, first, running a Shapiro-Wilk normality test, we were convinced that the data were normally distributed. Thus, two independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to find out the differences in the job performance of satisfied and dissatisfied teachers and the pattern of differences between teachers' self-evaluation and their students' evaluation of their job performance. Then, chi-square analysis was conducted to compare students and teachers' responses to each individual item of the questionnaire. In order to analyze the qualitative data obtained from the interview, participants' responses were thoroughly examined through content analysis. That is, the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Afterwards the common patterns and the recurring themes of the responses were extracted and coded in order to be 'quantitized' (See Dörnyei, 2007, pp. 269-270), frequency analyzed, and tabulated.

Results

The differences between satisfied and dissatisfied EFL teachers in terms of their job performance from students' perspectives

Descriptive statistics were calculated for the data obtained through the SIETQ but are not presented here for space considerations. However, in order to answer the first research question of the study as to whether satisfied and dissatisfied Iranian secondary school EFL teachers significantly differed in relation to their job performance as perceived by their students, we employed an independent samples *t*-test, the results of which are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1
Independent samples t-test comparing satisfied and dissatisfied EFL teachers in terms of their job performance

| <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | η^2 (Effect size) |
|----------|----------|------------------------|
| 10.05 | .00 | .31 |

As Table 1 indicates, there was a significant difference ($p = .00 < .05$) between satisfied and dissatisfied teachers regarding their job performance. Moreover, the difference was large enough in magnitude ($\eta^2 = .31$) that allowed us to state confidently that the observed differences in their job performance might have been mainly caused by their job satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

The crucial factors contributing to poor job performance of dissatisfied EFL teachers

To answer the second research question of the study as to what the crucial factors contributing to poor job performance of dissatisfied Iranian secondary school EFL teachers were, we considered items with means of below 2.5 (50%) to have a role in teachers' poor performance, the results of which are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

The crucial factors contributing to poor job performance of dissatisfied Iranian secondary school EFL teachers

| No. of the items | Items | Mean | SD |
|------------------|---|------|------|
| 30 | Being aware of the recent developments in teaching methods | 1.87 | .98 |
| 35 | Getting more proficient students to help less proficient ones | 1.89 | .87 |
| 24 | Knowledge of the subject matter being up-to-date | 1.94 | 1.94 |
| 38 | Being enthusiastic about teaching | 1.94 | .95 |
| 19 | Paying attention to every individual student in the class | 1.95 | .93 |
| 37 | Utilizing appropriate classroom aids and resources such as audio-visual materials | 1.96 | .83 |
| 15 | Involving all the students in the process of learning | 1.97 | .97 |
| 47 | Demonstrating creativity and variety in teaching and not following only traditional teaching methods and techniques | 1.98 | .98 |
| 23 | Having a good command of the subject matter | 2.04 | 1.01 |
| 17 | Creating equal opportunities to involve all the students in classroom activities | 2.04 | .96 |
| 41 | Speaking English clearly and with correct pronunciation | 2.05 | 1.07 |
| 10 | Having a good sense of humor and creating a cheerful atmosphere in the classroom | 2.13 | 1.03 |
| 31 | Preparing and organizing the materials to be presented each session and during the whole course | 2.15 | 1.02 |
| 1 | Being interested in the subject matter | 2.16 | .99 |
| 16 | Giving all the students the opportunity to participate in class discussion and activities | 2.29 | 1.07 |
| 18 | Treating the students with fairness | 2.31 | 1.09 |
| 27 | Addressing all the language skills according to course objectives | 2.31 | 2.31 |
| 9 | Developing an intimate relationship with the students | 2.32 | 1.17 |
| 11 | Being tolerant and patient | 2.33 | 1.09 |
| 5 | Helping motivated students both in and out of the classroom | 2.44 | 1.06 |
| 2 | Attending the class well-prepared | 2.45 | 1.02 |

As shown in Table 2, we can conclude that the most crucial factors contributing to poor job performance of dissatisfied teachers were connected with Factors 6 and 8 (i.e. learning boosters and teaching boosters, respectively): being unaware of the recent developments in teaching methods, not preparing and organizing the materials effectively, not addressing all language skills, not using classroom aids and resources such as audio-visual materials, and being demotivated to teach. Factor 3 (i.e. attention to all) indicated another element contributing to their poor job performance: paying unequal attention to every individual student, not involving all the students in the process of learning, not giving them equal opportunity to participate in classroom activities, and treating them unfairly. Factor 5 (i.e. commitment) also accounted for another problem: not

having an up-to-date and sufficient knowledge of the subject matter. Factor 2 (i.e. interpersonal relationships) manifested another problematic area: not having a sense of humor, not having a close relationship with the students, and not being tolerant and patient. Finally, Factor 1 (i.e. teaching accountability) accounted for some other problems possibly resulting in teachers' poor job performance: not being interested in the subject matter, providing little help to the interested students, and attending the class nearly unprepared.

Results of the interview

As mentioned earlier, we conducted a semi-structured interview with dissatisfied teachers to see whether their job performance had been influenced by their dissatisfaction with their profession and, if so, to specify the most crucial demotivating factors contributing to their job dissatisfaction (i.e. to answer the third research question of the study). The dissatisfied teachers' responses to four "yes/no questions" included in the interview (See Appendix B) are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
The dissatisfied teachers' responses to the first four questions of the interview

| No. | Questions | Frequency (out of 32) | | | Percentage | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------|----|-------------|------------|------|-------------|
| | | Yes | No | Not sure | Yes | No | Not sure |
| 1 | Are you satisfied with your profession as a teacher? | 0 | 32 | 0 | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| 2 | Do you believe that job dissatisfaction influences teachers' job performance in general? | 26 | 2 | 4 | 81% | 6.2% | 12.5% |
| 3 | Has your job performance been negatively influenced by your dissatisfaction with your profession? | 30 | 0 | 2 | 93.7% | 0% | 6.2% |
| 4 | Will you leave your teaching position if offered a better-paid job? | 31 | 0 | 1 | 96.8% | 0% | 3.1% |

As indicated in Table 3, all the interviewees claimed that they were dissatisfied with their profession as a teacher. Furthermore, the majority (81%) believed that job dissatisfaction influenced their job performance in general and almost all of them (93.7%) asserted that their job performance had been negatively influenced by their job dissatisfaction. Also, almost all the respondents (96.8%) were willing to leave the profession if offered a better-paid job.

As shown in Appendix B, the interview also included a question that required the respondents to specify the most crucial demotivating factors contributing to their job dissatisfaction. The results of the teachers' responses to this question are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4
Demotivating factors influencing dissatisfied EFL teachers' job performance

| Rank | Reasons | Frequency (out of 32) | Percentage |
|------|--|--------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Low payment | 32 | 100.00% |
| 2 | Demanding work (e.g. lesson planning, developing tests, correcting papers, managing the classroom, etc.) | 27 | 84.37% |
| 3 | Having to work in a second job | 25 | 78.12% |
| 4 | Receiving no praise or reward for commitment and successful teaching | 21 | 65.62% |
| 5 | The educational system having flaws and malfunctions | 19 | 59.37% |
| 6 | Lack of a systematic plan for teacher promotion | 15 | 46.87% |
| 7 | Principals' discriminatory behavior toward teachers | 13 | 40.62% |
| 8 | Low occupational status and social respect | 10 | 31.25% |
| 9 | Students' lack of motivation to learn | 8 | 25.00% |
| 10 | Having to do the same thing every day | 5 | 15.62% |

As indicated in Table 4, the most demotivating factors influencing teachers' job performance mentioned by dissatisfied teachers during the interview included, among other things, low payment, demanding work, having to work in a second job, low occupational status and social respect, and students' lack of motivation to learn. Furthermore, during the interview, the teachers were required to provide justifications and more details when responding to each question. A number of comments made by the teachers during the interview are discussed in the *Discussion and conclusion* section of the paper.

Dissatisfied teachers' self-evaluation and their students' evaluation of their job performance

To answer the last research question of the study, we compared the data collected from dissatisfied teachers' students through the SIETQ with the teachers' self-perceived level of job performance measured by the corresponding teacher version of the questionnaire. In so doing, first, an Independent Samples *t*-test was conducted to find the pattern of differences overall, and then chi-square analysis was run to compare their responses to each individual item of the questionnaire. The results of the *t*-test indicated that, overall, there was a significant difference between students' evaluation of their teachers' job performance and the teachers' self-evaluation of their own job performance ($p = .00 < .05$, $\eta^2 = .99$). That is, analyzing and comparing students and teachers' responses to student and teacher versions of the SIETQ, we realized that, overall, the teachers rated their performance significantly higher on almost all factors than their students did.

The results of the chi-square analysis, run to compare satisfied and dissatisfied teachers' responses to individual items of the SIETQ, are displayed in Table 5. For the sake of brevity and due to space limitations, only the data about the items being significantly different are reported.

Table 5
Chi-Square analysis on the individual items of SIETQ

| No. of the item & item title | Percentage | | Chi-Square test | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|------------------|--------|----------------------|------------------|
| | Students | Teachers | Chi-Square Value | df | Asmp. Sig. (2-sided) | Cramer's V value |
| | 4- Answering students' questions completely and in details | 33.8% Disagree | .4% Disagree | 18.737 | 4 | .00 |
| 5- Helping interested students both in and out of the classroom | 35.4% Disagree | 1.0% Disagree | 15.433 | 4 | .00 | .12 |
| 6- Being able to transfer knowledge adapted to the level of students | 32.5% Disagree | .3% Disagree | 22.844 | 4 | .00 | .15 |
| 7- Being open to constructive criticism | 35.0% Disagree | .6% Disagree | 12.449 | 4 | .01 | .11 |
| 11- Being tolerant and patient | 31.9% Disagree | 1.0% Disagree | 12.863 | 4 | .01 | .11 |
| 13- Understanding the students very well | 28.0% Undecided | 1.0% Undecided | 14.918 | 4 | .00 | .12 |
| 14- Respecting different opinions | 41.0% Strongly agree | 1.4% Strongly agree | 13.027 | 4 | .01 | .11 |
| 15- Involving all the students in the process of learning | 37.9% Strongly disagree | .0% Strongly disagree | 39.741 | 4 | .00 | .20 |
| 16- Giving all the students the opportunity to participate in class discussion and activities | 32.9% Disagree | .5% Disagree | 32.647 | 4 | .00 | .18 |
| 17- Creating equal opportunities to involve all the students in classroom activities | 34.6% Disagree | .5% Disagree | 45.411 | 4 | .00 | .22 |
| 18- Treating all the students fairly | 34.5% Disagree | .2% Disagree | 53.196 | 4 | .00 | .24 |
| 19- Paying attention to every individual student in the class | 37.2% Disagree | 1.1% Disagree | 25.297 | 4 | .00 | .16 |
| 23- Having a good command of the subject matter | 36.4% Disagree | .4% Disagree | 90.567 | 4 | .00 | .31 |
| 26- Inspiring the students in various ways | 32.8% Disagree | .6% Disagree | 12.993 | 4 | .01 | .11 |
| 29- Creating a sense of self-confidence in students | 34.6% Disagree | 1.2% Disagree | 13.775 | 4 | .00 | .12 |
| 30- Being aware of the recent developments in teaching methods | 41.4% Strongly disagree | .4% Strongly Disagree | 15.640 | 4 | .00 | .13 |
| 32- Knowing the students well (their capabilities, talents, and weaknesses) | 34.7% Undecided | 1.8% Undecided | 10.070 | 4 | .03 | .10 |
| 39- Being self-confident | 36.3% Strongly agree | .3% Strongly Agree | 12.066 | 4 | .01 | .11 |
| 41- Speaking English clearly and with correct pronunciation | 36.6% Strongly disagree | .0% Strongly disagree | 57.156 | 4 | .00 | .24 |
| 47- Demonstrating creativity and variety in teaching and following new teaching methods and techniques | 36.4% Strongly disagree | .3% Strongly disagree | 17.099 | 4 | .00 | .13 |

As Table 5 indicates, the chi-square analysis found significant differences for items 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 26, 29, 30, 32, 39, 41, and 47 of the SIETQ, suggesting a significant difference between students' evaluation of dissatisfied teachers and the teachers' self-evaluation of their own job performance in relation to these 20 items of the questionnaire. However, considering the chi-square value and Cramer's V value, we concluded that the most significant differences were explained respectively by Factor 1 (i.e. teaching accountability) and item 23 (i.e. having a good command of the subject matter) ($p = .00 < .05$, $V = .31$), Factor 9 (i.e. physical and emotional acceptance) and item 41 (i.e. speaking English clearly and with correct pronunciation) ($p = .00 < .05$, $V = .24$), and Factor 3 (i.e. attention to all) and items 18 ($p = .00 < .05$, $V = .24$), 17 ($p = .00 < .05$, $V = .22$), 15 ($p = .00 < .05$, $V = .20$), 16 ($p = .00 < .05$, $V = .18$), and 19 ($p = .00 < .05$, $V = .16$): treating all the students fairly, involving all the students in classroom activities, involving all the students in the process of learning, giving all the students the opportunity to participate in classroom activities, and paying attention to every individual student in class.

Discussion and conclusion

In the present study, we investigated the differences between satisfied and dissatisfied Iranian secondary school EFL teachers in terms of their job performance. We found that satisfied teachers significantly differed from their dissatisfied counterparts in terms of their job performance, suggesting that the observed differences in their job performance might have been mainly caused by their overall level of job satisfaction. Furthermore, the results showed a significant difference between students' evaluation of their teachers' job performance and the teachers' self-evaluation of their job performance. Analyzing and comparing students and teachers' responses, we found that teachers rated their own performance significantly higher on almost all factors than their students did. Finally, the crucial factors contributing to poor job performance of dissatisfied Iranian secondary school EFL teachers were identified to be 'an insufficient subject and pedagogic knowledge', 'unequal attention to individual students', 'lack of professional commitment', 'interpersonal relationship problems', and 'demotivation'. However, it should be noted that since the sample used in this study included only secondary school teachers serving in Iranian educational system, the findings might not be readily generalizable to employees working in other organizations.

As mentioned earlier, Ostroff (1992), investigating the relationship between employee satisfaction, and other job-related attitudes, and organizational performance from three different perspectives (i.e. from the principals, the teachers, and the students' points of view), found a strong relationship between job satisfaction and job performance at the organizational level. Likewise, the present study investigated the issue from students and teachers' perspectives and found that the difference between satisfied and dissatisfied teachers' job performance was significant. Combining the results gained from the SIETQ with those obtained through the interview in which dissatisfied teachers acknowledged that their job dissatisfaction had a negative influence on their performance, we might be able to argue that a causal relationship might exist between teachers' job satisfaction and job performance. This argument might additionally be corroborated by the existence of a large number of students in the present study (i.e. 1774) who evaluated their dissatisfied teachers' job performance.

The results of this study are also in line with those of Fernet, Austin, and Vallerand (2012) who found that work motivation played a significant role in employee functioning. They argued "by promoting optimal motivation, schools and other organizations could benefit from additional strategies not only to attract dedicated employees but also to sustain their commitment and psychological health" (p. 226). The results are also in accordance with Malakolunthu, Idris, and

Rengasamy's (2010) findings that demotivating factors contributing to teachers' job dissatisfaction might adversely affect teachers' performance. Furthermore, this study lends support to Peng's (2014) finding that both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction could contribute to the job performance of the employees. Considering the results of this study, which included a sample of teachers, we were convinced to conclude that job satisfaction/dissatisfaction might play a significant role in *teachers'* job performance. The privilege of this study over other similar studies might be the fact that we evaluated teachers' job performance by considering both their students' evaluations of the teachers and the teachers' self-evaluations. Furthermore, the large number of student participants in the study (i.e. 1774 students) gave us the confidence that the conclusions we made were most likely dependable and almost a true estimate of the real characteristics of the teacher participants in the study.

The results of the present study also indicated that one of the most significant factors contributing to dissatisfied EFL teachers' poor performance was their lack of commitment to the profession. This finding is in line with that of Bakker et al. (2011) who found that job performance was influenced by work engagement which is a blend of willingness to work (e.g., dedication, involvement, commitment) and the capability to work (e.g., energy, strength, stamina). Considering the students' evaluation of the teachers' job performance and the teachers' self-evaluations in the present study, we might be able to conclude that dissatisfied teachers seemingly did not have sufficient knowledge of the subject matter they taught and were not enthusiastic about studying and updating their subject and pedagogical knowledge. Another problematic area in the job performance of dissatisfied teachers was found to be the amount of energy and time they put into their work. The majority of them were evaluated by their students as not preparing and organizing the materials effectively, not using educational aids such as audio-visual materials, not being interested in the subject matter, providing little help to motivated students, and attending the class nearly unprepared.

One reason for this lack of commitment might be that most of the teachers sampled in this study announced their teaching income would not suffice their expenses and that they had to make ends meet by working in a second job, an argument which could be corroborated by the findings of other similar studies. Markovits, Boer, and van Dick (2014), for instance, examining the impact of the recent economic crisis in Greece on employees' work-related attitudes, found that concerning job satisfaction and organizational commitment, the employees' affective commitment significantly decreased during crisis in comparison to that existing before crisis. Thus, the results of Markovits et al.'s (2014) study along with those of the present study might suggest the possible existence of a causal relationship between job satisfaction and job performance of teachers.

Regarding the crucial factors contributing to dissatisfied teachers' poor performance, we found that the dissatisfied teachers in this study paid most of their attention to more extroverted and more proficient students; most of the class activities were apparently assigned by the teachers to be accomplished by only certain individuals. That is, they tended to pay unequal attention to their students and did not involve all of them in the process of learning. This shows a sense of irresponsibility, inability, or unwillingness on the part of dissatisfied teachers to manage their classrooms effectively. However, as Xuerong (2012) maintains, good English teachers involve all the students in class activities and encourage them to talk in order to improve classroom interaction. Likewise, according to Rahimi and Karkami (2015), "a caring language teacher is the one who makes the ground ready for language tasks that need genuine interaction, communication and cooperation among students" (p. 73). The paradigm shift in second language education (SLE) also highlights autonomous and cooperative learning, that is, paying greater attention to the role of learners in education and the social nature of learning (Jacobs & Farrell, 2003). The paradigm shift in SLE also considers pair-work and group-work activities as one way of enhancing learner autonomy and collaborative learning in which learners are brought to the center of attention and take responsibility for their own learning.

Furthermore, the results of the interview indicated that the most demotivating factors contributing to teachers' job dissatisfaction and influencing their job performance included low payment, the job being demanding, having to work in a second job, low occupational status and social respect, and students' lack of motivation to learn. This finding provides further support for Author's (2015) findings that the most demotivating factors giving Iranian English teachers the most job dissatisfaction included inadequate salary, principals' inattention to the teachers, students' lack of motivation to learn English, low occupational and social status, tough working conditions, and not being engaged in participatory decision-making.

Regarding the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction/dissatisfaction and their job performance, one of the teachers interviewed in the present study asserted,

"I believe there is a direct relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and their job performance. I mean, the more satisfied you are with your job, the better you perform".

Another teacher maintained,

"It is obvious that job satisfaction influences teachers' job performance positively. Satisfied teachers tend to be better performers".

Moreover, with respect to their own job performance being influenced by their job dissatisfaction, one of the teachers interviewed argued,

"I notice it clearly that my performance in the classroom and my motivation to pursue professional development opportunities outside the classroom have been influenced by my job dissatisfaction. The most important factor which demotivates me to do my job well is the fact that I am not paid in proportion to the time and energy I spend in my classes. I believe my income is less than I deserve. I have to work in a second job to be able to support my family and afford my living expenses. So, I can't really find the time to study, plan the lessons in advance, design tests, and correct papers well. Also, while teaching, I try not to spend so much energy because I also need it for my part-time job in the afternoon".

Another point mentioned repeatedly by the teachers interviewed in the study was that they felt they were not socially valued and respected because they were paid less than other jobs in the society, something which demotivated them and led to their poor job performance as they reported. In this regard, another teacher maintained,

"Teaching income does not reasonably compare with similar jobs in the country. For example, physicians, lawyers, engineers, and managers receive salaries not comparable at all with the salary teachers receive."

Another respondent added,

"I believe what teachers do is being undervalued by the government, a fact that has negatively influenced teachers' social and professional status".

Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, almost all the interviewees claimed that they would leave their teaching position if they were offered a better-paid job. Thus, the results of the interview conducted with dissatisfied teachers gave us more confidence in arguing that job satisfaction/dissatisfaction might play a significant role in *teachers'* job performance.

Implications and future research directions

The results of this study might have some implications for both practicing and prospective teachers. An advantage of conducting such studies, according to Moafian and Pishghadam (2009), is that it can benefit teachers by making them aware of the influential factors and criteria which are conducive to successful and effective teaching. Accordingly, the results gained from this study could inform teacher participants of their students' perceptions of their performance in order to assist the teachers in reflecting on, understanding and finally meeting their students' expectations and needs.

Educational policy makers might benefit from the findings of the present study, as well. Combining the results gained from our previous parallel study on EFL teachers' job satisfaction/dissatisfaction with those of the present study, we might be able to argue that there should be a rigorous investment in teachers' job satisfaction on the part of educational policy makers as teachers are the most important agents who will contribute to such crucial factors as fulfillment of the goals of educational systems, student motivation and achievement and eventually, shaping the future generation of their nation (Authors, 2015). As such, it seems that the Ministry of Education and its policy makers need to take more serious measures to address the problems contributing to teachers' poor job performance as found in the present study in order to prevent them from being emotionally exhausted and psychologically demotivated. Unless these factors are addressed appropriately, they might lead to teachers' lack of commitment and ineffectiveness. After alleviating the demotivating factors contributing to teachers' job dissatisfaction (e.g., low payment and demanding work), the idea of 'performance pay incentives' can be considered by educational policy makers as one of the possible options to promote teachers' job performance.

Finally, it should be noted that no research is without its limitations and the present study is no exception. That is, the present study was conducted with 64 English teachers and 1774 students in 38 schools located only in Kermanshah (one of the large cities in Iran) and the towns nearby. Nevertheless, for the results to be generalized to the country's population, we need to conduct further research with more teachers teaching English in various areas across the country. Future research is also suggested to investigate the possibly different effects of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction on English teachers' job performance.

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