



Factors Influencing the Happiness of Preschool Teachers in Weifang City

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that affect the professional well-being of kindergarten teachers in Weifang. Through a questionnaire survey of teachers in several kindergartens in Weifang, the study revealed the following main influencing factors: basic physiological needs, safety requirements, social belongingness, respect needs, and self-actualization needs. The research indicates that when these needs are met, the professional happiness of teachers is significantly enhanced. The professional well-being of kindergarten teachers can be improved by increasing their salary and benefits, providing opportunities for professional development, strengthening rights protection, optimizing the working environment, reinforcing social support, and enhancing the sense of respect and recognition.

Keywords: factors influencing the happiness, preschool teachers, Weifang City

1 Introduction

At present, both the national and societal focus on education has intensified. For China to ascend as an educational powerhouse and to nurture indispensable talents, foundational efforts need to be laid across all educational levels. The surge in the growth rate of preschool education in our nation over the past few years is noteworthy, indicating an escalating demand from the populace for quality early childhood education. This led the Ministry of Education to release the 'Several Opinions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council on Deepening the Reform and Regulating the Development of Preschool Education'. This directive emphasizes the essence of high-quality preschool education and underscores the role of young learners. Furthermore, it accentuates the imperative of fortifying the educator workforce. As highlighted in the 'Outline of the National Medium- and Long-Term Plan for Reform and Development (2010-2020)', the foundation of a successful preschool education system is a proficient and consistent kindergarten teaching staff^[1].

Kindergartens need kindergarten teachers who are full of occupational happiness. The occupational happiness of kindergarten teachers is closely tied to their physical and mental well-being as well as their professional growth. Research indicates that within just one year, a substantial number of kindergarten teachers from different counties and

districts in Weifang City have applied for resignation. These educators discussed various challenges they face in their roles. The most common sentiment is feeling overly exhausted and the need to remain vigilant from morning to evening. As a result, many kindergarten teachers opt to leave their positions, leading to a high turnover rate, lack of stability, resource scarcity, and frequent teacher transitions in kindergartens.

Therefore, I remain committed to my research on the occupational happiness of preschool teachers. I aim to investigate the current state of occupational happiness among kindergarten teachers in Weifang City, understand the actual conditions, and analyze the factors influencing the teachers' occupational happiness in Weifang. Through this, I hope to propose suitable and actionable recommendations.

2 Literature Review

2.1 The concept and importance of happiness

2.1.1 Happiness.

Happiness is a subjective emotional state in which people subjectively evaluate their overall life satisfaction and emotional experience ^[2]. It is a comprehensive reflection of an individual's quality of life, covering both positive and negative emotions ^[3]. Happiness is different from a short-term emotional experience, but a long-term, stable subjective evaluation, covering an individual's overall view of their own life ^[4]. In the composition of well-being, positive and negative emotions work together to form a state of dynamic balance.

2.2 Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, expectation theory and occupational happiness theory.

2.2.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Maslow believes that human needs arrange themselves in hierarchies of prepotency (i.e., predominance) and that the appearance of one need usually rests on the prior satisfaction of another more prepotent need. It is Maslow's feeling that the hierarchy of needs is arranged as follows: 1) The Physiological Needs, 2) The Safety Needs, 3) The Love Needs, 4) The Esteem Needs, 5) The Need for Self-Actualization. In addition, people are motivated by the desire to achieve or maintain the various conditions upon which these basic satisfactions rest and by certain more intellectual desires, any thwarting or possibility of thwarting of these basic human goals, or danger to the defenses which protect them, or to the conditions upon which they rest are psychological threats. It is such basic threats which bring about the general emergency reactions. ^[5]

2.2.2 Occupational happiness theory.

Joan E. van. Horn et al. After fully analyzing the happiness model of Ryff and Warr, they gave the relevant concepts of occupational well-being theory. They proposed that

it contains five dimensions: emotional, professional, social, cognitive and physical and mental dimensions. Among them, the emotion includes elements such as emotional burnout, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment; the professional dimension includes career-related motivation, self-accomplishment, and corresponding professional efficacy; the social dimension involves two contents, one is dehumanization, that is, Teachers are indifferent to the work object and environment, ignoring their feelings. The second refers to the social relationship established by individuals through work activities; the cognitive dimension shows the cognitive ability of employees, especially the acquisition of new knowledge and the emphasis on work the physical and mental dimension refers to whether the physical and mental conditions of employees are in a healthy state. [6]

2.3 Concepts and principles of factors affecting preschool teachers' occupational happiness.

Preschool teachers' occupational happiness is influenced by several intertwined factors. Salary levels play a crucial role in teachers' economic status, influencing their career commitment and job satisfaction [7]. A stable sense of occupational security is paramount for their emotional health, and any instability could lead to heightened occupational stress [8]. Good communication and cooperation with parents can help solve educational problems, improve the learning environment for students, and enhance the positive effects of home-school cooperation [9]. Additionally, the dignity and respect they receive from all stakeholders, coupled with their own sense of self-worth, significantly shapes their professional experience [10]. Recognizing these elements and providing an environment that nurtures them is crucial for the holistic development of preschool teachers and, by extension, the quality of early childhood education.

3 Research Methods

3.1 Literature analysis method

In the early stage of topic selection, search on academic websites such as CNKI around the theme of teachers' occupational happiness, understand domestic and foreign research results, summarize research ideas, classify them according to the topic of this article, learn from previous experience, and create for yourself research provides a reference.

3.2 Questionnaire survey method

The questionnaire survey is based on the method of collecting data with questions, combing and analyzing the literature, determining the current situation of Weifang preschool teachers' occupational happiness, understanding the real situation and analyzing the factors that affect the occupational happiness of kindergarten teachers in Weifang City, so as to improve the occupational happiness of kindergarten teachers Put forward

practical suggestions to increase the stability of teachers, retain more talents for kindergartens, and ensure better education for young children. After revision and improvement, the topic was determined, and questionnaires were uniformly distributed to teachers of Various Kindergarten Weifang city to understand their occupational happiness status, and finally collected and sorted for data analysis and use.

4 Data analysis

4.1 Descriptive statistical analysis

Table 1. The descriptive statistical analysis of basic physiological needs scale problem storm

Name	Max	Min	Mean	SD	Median
You think your salary level can meet your basic living needs.	5	1	4.478	0.882	5
Your salary reflects the value of your work	5	2	4.443	0.88	5
Your salary level can affect your career happiness.	5	1	4.481	0.878	5
If your salary increases, you think your motivation to work will increase.	5	1	4.443	0.919	5
You believe that appropriate compensation is one of the important factors in attracting and retaining qualified kindergarten teachers.	5	1	4.475	0.852	5

From Table 1, the survey data from the five salary-related questions consistently show that participants have a positive assessment of their salary satisfaction and its importance. Participants generally believe that their salary meets their basic living needs and corresponds to the value of their work. Moreover, most people believe that there is a correlation between salary levels and job satisfaction. When salaries increase, participants feel their work motivation will also rise. Therefore, appropriate compensation is viewed as an essential factor in attracting and retaining qualified kindergarten teachers.

Table 2. The descriptive statistical analysis of security requirement scale problem

Name	Max	Min	Mean	SD	Median
You are satisfied with the stability and security of your current kindergarten job.	5	1	4.494	0.867	5
You are optimistic about the future of the preschool teacher profession.	5	2	4.453	0.866	5
The working environment and policies of the kindergarten give you a certain sense of job security.	5	2	4.472	0.856	5

Do you think that kindergartens should provide more career development opportunities and enhance teachers' sense of professional security.	5	1	4.434	0.89	5
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From Table 2, it was found that preschool teachers in Weifang City generally have a positive attitude towards their profession. They are satisfied with their current job stability and security, prospects for the future, working environment, policies, and protection of their rights. Moreover, they believe that kindergartens should offer more opportunities for career development to further enhance teachers' sense of job security. These factors contribute to a high sense of professional well-being among the preschool teachers in Weifang City, and may positively influence their sustained commitment and dedication in the field of education.

Table 3. the descriptive statistical analysis of social belonging need scale problem

Name	Max	Min	Mean	SD	Median
Collaboration and interaction with colleagues can boost your professional well-being.	5	1	4.465	0.927	5
You believe that positive social interactions in your work environment have a positive impact on your satisfaction.	5	2	4.472	0.881	5
In the work environment, you can feel the support and help of colleagues	5	1	4.459	0.888	5
Your ability to develop positive relationships with parents and students is critical to your job satisfaction.	5	2	4.462	0.87	5
Positive relationships have a major impact on your professional fulfillment	5	1	4.484	0.86	5

From table 3, the sense of social belonging plays a crucial role in the professional happiness of kindergarten teachers in Weifang City. Teachers generally believed that collaboration with colleagues, social interaction in the work environment, support and assistance from colleagues, positive relationships with parents and students, and good interpersonal relationships had a positive impact on their occupational happiness.

Table 4. the descriptive statistical analysis of respect needs scale problem

Name	Max	Min	Mean	SD	Median
You think the status and respect you get in society as a preschool teacher is enough.	5	1	4.443	0.898	5
You can feel the respect and approval of students and parents in your work.	5	1	4.462	0.881	5
Do you think that improving the social status of preschool teachers could improve your job satisfaction.	5	2	4.475	0.885	5
You see a connection between the dignity of an early childhood teacher and your job satisfaction.	5	1	4.399	0.919	5

Do you think that improving the public image of preschool teachers can help improve preschool teachers' job satisfaction.	5	2	4.5	0.853	5
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From table 4, the analysis shows that kindergarten teachers in Weifang City generally believe that gaining social respect and improving their social status are crucial to their professional happiness. They gain respect from students and parents at work, which has a clear positive impact on their career satisfaction. Furthermore, increasing the social status of kindergarten teachers and improving their public image are considered key factors in improving job satisfaction.

Table 5. the descriptive statistical analysis of self-actualization needs scale problem

Name	Max	Min	Mean	SD	Median
At work, you are able to demonstrate your professional competence and creativity.	5	1	4.453	0.881	5
You believe your work has a significant impact on the growth and development of young children.	5	1	4.449	0.884	5
Your sense of mission and responsibility is reflected in your work.	5	2	4.494	0.86	5
You are satisfied and proud of the results and impact of your educational efforts.	5	2	4.484	0.841	5
You consider certain achievements in the field of kindergarten education to be part of your professional job satisfaction.	5	2	4.408	0.888	5

From table 5, Self-actualization needs are the highest level in Maslow's hierarchy of needs and involve realizing one's potential and abilities. For kindergarten teachers, this often relates to their professional outcomes, positive impact on young children, and creativity and purpose in their work. These data show that kindergarten teachers in Weifang City are generally satisfied with their self-actualization needs. They believe that they can not only demonstrate their abilities at work, but also have a positive impact on the growth of children. They are satisfied and proud of the results of their work and consider this to be closely related to their career satisfaction.

4.2 Correlation analysis

Table 6. the correlation analysis results stform

	Basic physiological needs	Security requirement	Social belonging needs	Respect need	Self-actualization need	Career happiness
Basic physiological needs	1					
Security requirement	0.81	1				

Social be- longing needs	0.827	0.804	1			
Respect need	0.805	0.812	0.813	1		
Self-actual- ization need	0.809	0.816	0.824	0.825	1	
Career happiness	0.807	0.799	0.802	0.803	0.823	1

From table 6, there is a significant positive correlation between occupational well-being and basic physiological needs, safety needs, social belonging needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs. Specifically, the correlation coefficients between occupational happiness and these needs are 0.807, 0.799, 0.802, 0.803 and 0.823 respectively. This suggests that when these basic needs are met, early childhood teachers are more likely to experience greater occupational happiness.

5 Conclusions

Basic physiological needs have a close positive correlation with the professional happiness of kindergarten teachers. This means that when the basic physiological needs of Weifang kindergarten teachers, such as appropriate salary, reasonable working hours and a healthy working environment, are fully met, their professional happiness will be enhanced accordingly. Safety needs also have a significant impact on the professional happiness of kindergarten teachers. When teachers feel safe in their profession, such as job stability and future career security, their professional happiness will be relatively high. The degree of satisfaction of the need for social belonging is directly reflected in the professional happiness of kindergarten teachers. This means that factors such as teachers' social relationships in kindergarten, interactions with parents and colleagues, and teamwork play a central role in enhancing their professional well-being. There is a clear positive correlation between teachers' need for respect and their professional happiness. When teachers feel that their efforts, abilities, and contributions are recognized and respected by colleagues, management, and parents, their professional well-being is significantly improved.

The need for self-actualization is also closely related to teachers' professional happiness. Providing professional development opportunities, ongoing training and education, and other resources that contribute to teachers' professional growth all play a decisive role in enhancing teachers' professional well-being.

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