

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTONOMY, JOB SATISFACTION, AND BURNOUT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

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### Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay. This study was based on Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory, Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, and Maslach's Multidimensional Theory of Burnout. In this research, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used to carry out the study. "*Teaching Autonomy Scale (TAS)*" developed by Pearson and Hall (1993) to study the perceptions of teachers on autonomy, "*Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ-Short form)*" developed by Weiss, Dawis, England and Lofquist (1977) to find out the perceptions of teachers on job satisfaction, and "*Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-ES)*" developed by Maslach, Jackson and Schwab (1996) to examine burnout perceived by teachers were used. Besides, interview questions were utilized to gain detailed information about autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout of teachers. In the quantitative study, the target sample was 317 teachers, and 30 teachers participated in the qualitative study. Descriptive statistics such as means, and standard deviations, and Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient were used to analyze data. And data collected from interviews with teachers were categorized and analyzed to complement quantitative findings on autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout of teachers. The findings of this study indicated that autonomy was positively and moderately correlated with job satisfaction ( $r = .582, p < .01$ ). So, it can be interpreted that if autonomy of teachers is increased, their job satisfaction will also be increased. Moreover, it was found that there was a negative and low correlation between autonomy and burnout of teachers ( $r = -.255, p < .01$ ). So, it can be concluded that if autonomy of teachers is increased, the feeling of burnout at their job will also be decreased, and vice versa.

**Keywords:** autonomy, job satisfaction, burnout

### Introduction

Teachers are the keystone of the learning process in all educational fields (Al-Siyabi, 2016). Nyamubi (2017) said that teachers are the heart of classroom instruction, so they are key to learners' productivity and hence to society's efficiency. Through the last decades, modern society demands high-quality teaching and learning from teachers and so it has been considered that teaching is one of the most stressful and demanding professions. The task of producing qualitative educational output has been an essential subject of concern (Al-Siyabi, 2016). Granting autonomy and empowering teachers is an appropriate starting point for education experts to solve current school problems (Short, 1994).

Moreover, Pearson and Moomaw (2006) mentioned that recognizing teaching as a profession and developing professional teachers is a possible solution to teachers' lack of motivation and satisfaction, as well as teacher burnout. If teachers are to be empowered and regarded as professionals, they must have the freedom to prescribe the best possible treatment for their students. Al-Siyabi (2016) commented that autonomy is a critical and contemporary term associated with educational quality, the innovation of the schools, colleges, and universities for many positive work outcomes. Because of effective teaching and successful learning are closely linked to teacher autonomy (Florio, 2016).

According to Saragih (2011), teachers with autonomy will be more motivated to do their best and lead to higher performance. In addition, the degree of autonomy perceived by teachers is

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an indication of current job satisfaction (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). Job satisfaction happens when a teacher feels he or she is having stability, autonomy, career growth, and a comfortable work-life balance. So, this implies that a teacher is having satisfaction at the job as the work meets the expectations of the individual. If a teacher feels happy with their work, he or she will give back to the school with all their efforts. So, it is a moderator for generating the relationship between working conditions and individual outcomes (Dorman & Zapf, 2001, as cited in Nigama, Selvabaskar, Surulivel, Alamelu, & Joice, 2018).

In recent years, educators have become increasingly interested in the problems of teachers' stress and burnout. Research on burnout syndrome has generally come from a psychological orientation, which views burnout as a failure to cope with job stress (Bas, 2011). Maslach (1998) proposed that burnout develops as a result of mismatches between professionals and their job contexts in several work-life areas (i.e. workload, control, rewards, community, fairness, and values). In addition, Gavrilyuk, Loginova and Buzovkina (2013) said that teacher autonomy is negatively associated with teacher's feeling of burnout, and so teacher autonomy is one of the factors which must be taken into account to explain and prevent teacher burnout.

### Significance of the Study

First, nowadays, the provision of quality education is very important for facilitating a nation's development (Nyamubi, 2017). To be able to provide quality education, teachers need to become quality teachers, and to attract and retain the quality teachers is a great challenge to the educational institutions (Nigama *et al.*, 2018). Lawson (2004) mentioned that teacher autonomy is an important element in retaining and recruiting expert or quality teachers. And it is also one of the essential elements in building true employee engagement (Maylett, 2016). Moreover, teacher autonomy is essential for ensuring an effective learning environment that addresses children's diverse needs (National Curriculum Framework, 2005, as cited in Sehrawat, 2014). An autonomous teacher feels more motivated when he/she is at liberty to choose his/her teaching strategies (Esfandiari & Kamali, 2016). Thus, White (1992) said that autonomy is one facet of teacher motivation needed in the teaching profession, and Langfred and Moye (2004) argued teacher autonomy is, relatively a modern phenomenon.

Second, every teacher must have the potential and clear intention to discharge their duty with utmost devotion to derive satisfaction from their work. Any work cannot be effectively done without satisfaction. So, job satisfaction is an important concept that is not only related to an individual but it is relevant for society's well-being. It is also one factor that will ensure class performance and productivity of schools. Besides, all countries around the world are trying to improve their quality of education, so that it meets the demand of globalization. Teachers would perform to maximum capacity, only if they are satisfied with their job. Thus, job satisfaction is an important phenomenon in every sector especially in the teaching profession (Nigama *et al.*, 2018).

Finally, Bevis (2008, as cited in Bas, 2011) said that teacher burnout is an ongoing problem in school systems throughout the world. Burnout is a gradual process widespread among many professionals and comes in response to prolonged exposure to stress (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). If the teachers work under stress or burnout, they cannot be satisfied with their job and it will create a negative impact on the job (Nigama *et al.*, 2018). Kremer and Hofman (1981) described that several motives account for teachers leaving the profession; the most frequently mentioned include (1) burnout, (2) lack of encouragement, (3) low professional status, (4) lack of promotional opportunity, and (5) lack of teaching autonomy. So, when teachers experience burnout, they become less effective and even leave the profession (Bevis, 2008, as cited in Bas, 2011). Therefore, teacher burnout is an issue that deserves attention in the teaching profession.

For the reasons mentioned above, this study is important as it helps to find out the perceptions of teachers on autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout. Moreover, this study will explore the relationship between autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout of teachers. So, this study can help policymakers, decision-makers, and administrators have a better understanding of the relationship between autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout. And it can also support for them to build a satisfying working environment.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay. The specific purposes of the study are as follows:

- To study the levels of autonomy perceived by teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay,
- To find out the levels of job satisfaction perceived by teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay,
- To examine the levels of burnout perceived by teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay,
- To investigate the relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay, and
- To explore the relationship between autonomy and burnout of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay.

### **Research Questions**

This study will seek to answer the following research questions:

- What are the levels of autonomy perceived by teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay?
- What are the levels of job satisfaction perceived by teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay?
- To what extent do teachers perceive burnout at selected Universities in Mandalay?
- Is there any relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay?
- Is there any relationship between autonomy and burnout of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay?

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

**Autonomy:** Autonomy is having a sense of one's own identity and an ability to act independently and to exert some control over one's environment, including a sense of task mastery, internal locus of control and self-efficacy (Benard, 1995).

**Job Satisfaction:** Job satisfaction is defined as a nice, positive, inner state that originates from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1976, as cited in Esfandiari & Kamali, 2016).

• **Burnout:** Burnout is a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected result or effect or reward (Freudenberger, 1980, as cited in Esfandiari & Kamali, 2016).

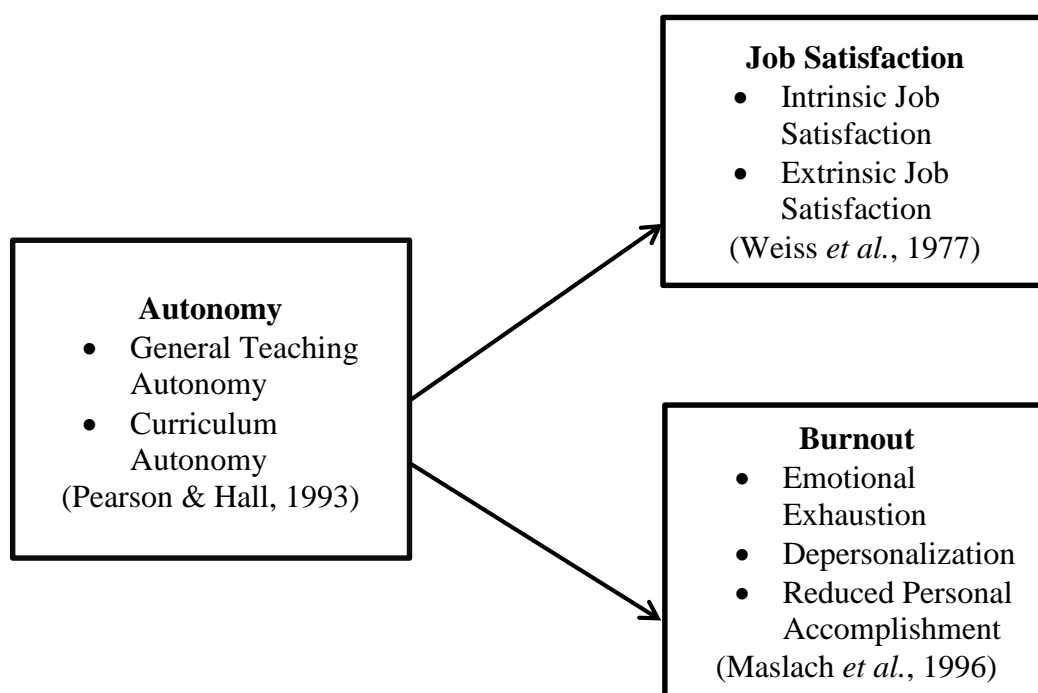
### Scope of the Study

- The scope of this study is limited to four Universities under the Ministry of Education in Mandalay because this study was based on available time and resources of the researcher.
- The scope of participants is limited to assistant lecturers and lecturers at selected Universities under the Ministry of Education in Mandalay.

### Conceptual Framework of the Study

This study analyzed three variables: autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout. In this study, autonomy is the independent variable, and job satisfaction and burnout are dependent variables. The perceptions of teachers on autonomy were examined by using two subscales of autonomy according to Pearson and Hall (1993): “General Teaching Autonomy” and “Curriculum Autonomy”. Moreover, the perceptions of teachers on job satisfaction were determined by using two subscales of job satisfaction according to Weiss *et al.* (1977): “Intrinsic Job Satisfaction” and “Extrinsic Job Satisfaction”. Lastly, the perceptions of teachers on burnout were measured by using three subscales of burnout according to Maslach *et al.* (1996): “Emotional Exhaustion”, “Depersonalization”, and “Reduced Personal Accomplishment”.

Moreover, this study was based on Deci and Ryan’s Self-Determination Theory, Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory, and Maslach’s Multidimensional Theory of Burnout. Self-Determination theory was developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan in the 1970s. This theory contends that human beings are motivated by three innate psychological needs: the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Fredrick Herzberg developed the Motivation-Hygiene Theory in 1959. This theory states that there are intrinsic factors that result in satisfaction while there are extrinsic factors that prevent dissatisfaction, all of which act independently of each other (Herzberg, 1966, as cited in Silver, 1983). Christina Maslach developed the Multidimensional Theory of Burnout in 1990s. This theory conceptualizes burnout in terms of three core components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach, 1998). The conceptual framework was illustrated by the following Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Conceptual Framework of the Study

## Review of Related Literature

### Autonomy

Jonge (1995) claimed that the concept of autonomy in old Greek is “autonomia”. Autonomia is derived from the word “autonomos”; “autos” means self and “nomos” means habit, rule, principle, or law. According to Benard (1995), autonomy is referred to as the ability to act independently and to exert control over an individual’s environment, including a sense of task mastery, internal locus of control, and self-efficacy. And it is the ability that regulates oneself and makes knowledgeable decisions by taking all relevant factors into account independently of rewards and punishments (Belias, Koustelios, Sdrolias, & Kamii, 1994, as cited in Ethridge, 1998). Besides, Gagne and Bhawe (2011) said that people feel autonomous when they feel free to choose to do things that are interesting and/or personally meaningful to them. Belias, Koustelios, Sdrolias and Aspidris (2015) also defined autonomy as the extent to which an employee has significant independence and freedom of programming their work, as well as the choice of implementation of tasks.

Gozukara and Colakoglu (2016) reported that autonomy is a crucial part of professional development and it is directly related to the perceived responsibility of the employee that in turn binds with high intrinsic motivation (Belias *et al.*, 2015). Moreover, autonomy can make the employees creative and also allow them to take initiatives (Davis, 1994, as cited in Belias *et al.*, 2015) and it plays a vital role in employee well-being as employees can deal with work-related stress better when they have greater autonomy at work (Karasek, 1998, as cited in Gozukara & Colakoglu, 2016). Saragih (2011) said that autonomy keeps employees to believe that they have the competence and capabilities required to achieve their tasks and this leads to enhanced job performance and job satisfaction (Younes, 2012).

### Teaching Autonomy Scale

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, two studies carried out by Pearson and Hall (1993) was contributed greatly to the advancement of teacher autonomy. The first study focused on faculty members in the College of Education at the University of South Florida in 1988 and the original instrument used in their study was called *Teaching Environment Scale (TES)*. And the second study focused on public elementary, middle, and high school teachers. Moreover, because it is added on teacher demographic variables such as gender, age, years of teaching experience, highest degree earned, and the most years taught, and exploring their relationship to teaching autonomy in this study, Pearson and Hall changed the original instrument’s name to *Teaching Autonomy Scale (TAS)* (Pearson & Hall, 1993).

The TAS instrument measures two components: autonomy over general teaching practices (general teaching autonomy), and autonomy over curriculum (curriculum autonomy). The assessment of general teaching autonomy includes classroom standards of conduct and personal on-the-job decision-making. Curriculum autonomy is the second component of the TAS and it refers to the issues concerning the selection of activities and materials and instructional planning and sequencing (Pearson & Hall, 1993). The researcher also used *Teaching Autonomy Scale (TAS)* to assess the perceptions of teachers on autonomy in this study.

### Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of the most important issues in behavioral management in organizations (Randawa, 2003). Perera and Kajendra (2016) stated that job satisfaction is increasing in importance, as the competition for talent is high and still growing. Job satisfaction is one’s general attitude or feeling toward one’s job. In any organization, the employees’ feelings or perceptions toward their work have a significant impact on the success or the failure of the

organization (Herzberg, 1959, as cited in Younes, 2012). Hughes (2006) argues that a satisfied worker is a productive worker. This means employees who have a high level of job satisfaction commit their time, energy, and effort to work which results in high productivity (Scott, 2004, as cited in Ayele, 2014). Inuwa (2016) concluded that job satisfaction has a positive and significant relationship with his or her performance, implying that a satisfied employee is believed to have a higher performance level. Higher job satisfaction produces lower absenteeism, and lower employee turnover (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). Moreover, Ahsan, Abdullah, Fie and Alam (2009) said that there is a significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and job stress. Thus, employees with higher or improved job satisfaction levels feel healthier and are more satisfied with their health (Fischer & Sousa-Poza, 2007).

### **Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is a complex construct and it is influenced by very different factors, which are related to the job directly and indirectly (Persevic, 2011). In this study, these factors have been arranged according to two parts, namely, extrinsic and intrinsic factors (Weiss *et al.*, 1977). Perera and Kajendra (2016) said that there is a significant impact of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors on job satisfaction.

#### **• Intrinsic Job Satisfaction Factors**

Intrinsic job satisfaction refers to how people feel about the nature of the job tasks themselves (Weiss *et al.*, 1977). Intrinsic job satisfaction factors are the elements of a job situation that can fulfill teachers' needs for psychological growth. When present, adequate, and positive in a job situation, these elements cause feelings of satisfaction in the teacher; however, when absent, inadequate, or negative, they do not generally cause feelings of dissatisfaction. The six intrinsic job satisfaction factors are: Achievement, Recognition, Work Itself, Responsibility, Advancement, Possibility of Growth (Herzberg, 1966, as cited in Silver, 1983).

#### **• Extrinsic Job Satisfaction Factors**

Extrinsic job satisfaction refers to how people feel about the aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks (Weiss *et al.*, 1977). Extrinsic job satisfaction factors are the elements of a job situation that can fulfill teachers' pain-avoidance needs. When absent, inadequate, or negative in a job situation, these elements cause feelings of dissatisfaction; but when present, adequate, and positive, they do not generally cause feelings of satisfaction. The ten extrinsic job satisfaction factors are: Organization Policy and Administration, Supervision (technical), Salary, Interpersonal Relations (superior), Interpersonal Relations (subordinate), Interpersonal Relations (peer), Working Conditions, Status, Job Security, Effects on Personal Life (Herzberg, 1966, as cited in Silver, 1983).

### **Burnout**

The term burnout was first coined in the 1970s by Freudenberger to describe the gradual emotional depletion and loss of motivation he observed among people who had volunteered to work for aid organizations in New York (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). Based on his observations, Freudenberger (1974, as cited in Esfandiari & Kamali, 2016) defined burnout as a state of mental and physical exhaustion caused by one's professional life, and he referred to the extinction of motivation or incentive, especially where one's devotion to a cause or relationship fails to produce the desired results.

During the same period, Maslach and colleagues interviewed human-services workers in California to find out how they were coping with client-related stressors. Based on the interviews,

burnout is defined as a psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that is encountered among employees who work with other people, such as in social work, health care, and teaching (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Thus, the initial descriptions of burnout by Freudenberg and Maslach generated a tremendous amount of attention and subsequent discussion and debate about this experience (Maslach *et al.*, 2001).

### Measurement of Burnout

*Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)* is the most widely used instrument to measure burnout (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). The original MBI was developed during the late 1970s based on a program of field research within healthcare and human services. It is now known as the MBI-Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS). A second version of the MBI, *MBI-Educators Survey*, or *MBI-ES*, was developed for use by people working in educational settings (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). In both the HSS and ES forms, the labels for the three dimensions reflected the focus on occupations where workers interacted extensively with other people (clients, patients, students, etc.): emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Schaufeli & Greenglass, 2001). In this study, the researcher used the *Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-ES)* to measure teachers' burnout at their job.

Emotional exhaustion refers to the feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted at work. It arises when workers start to feel tired, overwhelmed, and emotionally drained by the job (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). The key aspect of the burnout syndrome is increased by feelings of emotional exhaustion (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Depersonalization refers to negative, cynical, or excessively detached responses to other people at work (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). According to Leiter and Maslach (2004, as cited in Man, Men, Sin, & Urn, 2015), depersonalization often develops in response to overload exhaustion. Reduced personal accomplishment refers to the feeling of loss of efficiency and productivity at work (Maslach *et al.*, 2001).

## Methodology

### Research Method

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative methods were adopted. In the quantitative method, data were collected by using the questionnaires. The qualitative results were obtained by interviewing the teachers.

### Population and Sample

This study was limited to select four Universities under the Ministry of Education in Mandalay. The target population of this study was all assistant lecturers and lecturers at selected Universities in Mandalay. The researcher decided to choose an equal sample size for both assistant lecturers and lecturers from each University and so it consisted of 40 assistant lecturers and 40 lecturers from each University as a sample. Therefore, the total sample was 160 assistant lecturers and 160 lecturers in the quantitative study. In actual, 157 assistant lecturers and 160 lecturers responded to the questionnaire in this study. The total participants for interviewing were 15 assistant lecturers and 15 lecturers in the qualitative study.

### Instrument

In this study, three questionnaires and six interview questions were chosen as instruments to collect the necessary data. Three questionnaires used by the researcher are "*Teaching Autonomy Scale (TAS)*" developed by Pearson and Hall (1993) to study the perceptions of teachers on autonomy, "*Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ-Short form)*" developed by Weiss *et al.*

(1977) to find out the perceptions of teachers on job satisfaction, and “*Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-ES)*” developed by Maslach *et al* (1996) to examine burnout perceived by teachers.

### Data Collection Procedure

After taking the permission from the responsible persons, the questionnaires were distributed to the teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay during the second week of December 2019 and collected them after one week. The researcher interviewed with the assigned teachers on 30 January through 13 February, 2020.

### Data Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaires was computer coded and processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software version 22. First, descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were calculated for the perception of teachers on their autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout. The researcher identified the levels of mean scores for autonomy, and job satisfaction such as “1.00 to 2.33 = low level, 2.34 to 3.67 = moderate level, and 3.68 to 5.00 = high level”. However, the mean scores for burnout was analyzed such as “1.00 to 1.49 = never, 1.50 to 2.49 = seldom, 2.50 to 3.49 = sometimes, 3.50 to 4.49 = often, and 4.50 to 5.00 = always”. Moreover, the Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient was utilized to determine the relationship between autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout of teachers. In this study, the correlation was analyzed in terms of Gay and Airasia (2003) such that if the correlation coefficient  $r$  was under  $\pm .35$ , the relationship was low or not correlated;  $r$  between  $\pm .35$  and  $\pm .65$ , moderately correlated; and  $r$  higher than  $\pm .65$ , highly correlated. Finally, data collected from the qualitative analysis (interviews with teachers) was categorized, analyzed and interpreted to complement quantitative findings on autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout of teachers.

## Findings

To find out the levels of autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout perceived by teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay, the descriptive statistics were calculated. The mean scores and standard deviations for autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout perceived by teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay are presented in Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3 respectively.

**Table 1 Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Autonomy Perceived by Teachers at Selected Universities in Mandalay (N=317)**

University		Dimensions		Autonomy	Remark
		GTA	CA		
A	Mean	3.43	3.48	3.44	Moderate
	SD	0.42	0.56	0.42	
B	Mean	3.63	3.70	3.66	Moderate
	SD	0.42	0.57	0.43	
C	Mean	3.62	3.80	3.68	High
	SD	0.48	0.53	0.45	
D	Mean	3.56	3.71	3.61	Moderate
	SD	0.50	0.47	0.45	
All Universities	Mean	3.56	3.67	3.60	Moderate
	SD	0.46	0.54	0.44	

1.00-2.33=Low

2.34-3.67=Moderate

3.68-5.00=High

**Note**-GTA = General Teaching Autonomy, CA = Curriculum Autonomy



According to Table 1, it was found that teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay perceived their autonomy at a moderate level in both two dimensions: “general teaching autonomy” ( $\bar{X}$ =3.56), and “curriculum autonomy” ( $\bar{X}$ =3.67). Moreover, it was found that teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay had higher mean scores in curriculum autonomy than in general teaching autonomy. All in all, the total mean score for autonomy perceived by teachers was 3.60. So, it can be concluded that teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay had a moderate level of autonomy.

**Table 2 Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Job Satisfaction Perceived by Teachers at Selected Universities in Mandalay (N=317)**

University		Dimensions		Job Satisfaction	Remark
		IJS	EJS		
<b>A</b>	Mean	3.56	3.41	3.50	Moderate
	SD	0.41	0.58	0.44	
<b>B</b>	Mean	3.81	3.65	3.75	High
	SD	0.42	0.49	0.41	
<b>C</b>	Mean	3.75	3.64	3.71	High
	SD	0.42	0.47	0.39	
<b>D</b>	Mean	3.68	3.53	3.62	Moderate
	SD	0.46	0.48	0.43	
<b>All Universities</b>	Mean	<b>3.70</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>3.64</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
	SD	<b>0.44</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.43</b>	

1.00-2.33=Low                      2.34-3.67=Moderate                      3.68-5.00=High

**Note-**IJS= Intrinsic Job Satisfaction, EJS= Extrinsic Job Satisfaction

As shown in Table 2, it was found that teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay perceived they had a high level of intrinsic job satisfaction ( $\bar{X}$ =3.70), however, they had a moderate level of extrinsic job satisfaction ( $\bar{X}$ =3.56). The total mean score for job satisfaction perceived by teachers was 3.64. Thus, it can be interpreted that teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay had a moderate level of job satisfaction according to their perceptions.

**Table 3 Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Burnout Perceived by Teachers at Selected Universities in Mandalay (N=317)**

University		Dimensions			Burnout	Remark
		EE	D	RPA		
<b>A</b>	Mean	2.47	1.99	2.20	2.27	Seldom
	SD	0.68	0.61	0.50	0.47	
<b>B</b>	Mean	2.32	1.93	2.09	2.15	Seldom
	SD	0.76	0.67	0.41	0.50	
<b>C</b>	Mean	2.43	1.99	2.02	2.18	Seldom
	SD	0.63	0.64	0.45	0.42	
<b>D</b>	Mean	2.42	1.98	2.27	2.27	Seldom
	SD	0.81	0.66	0.56	0.53	
<b>All Universities</b>	Mean	<b>2.41</b>	<b>1.97</b>	<b>2.14</b>	<b>2.21</b>	<b>Seldom</b>
	SD	<b>0.72</b>	<b>0.64</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.48</b>	

1.00-1.49=Never 1.50-2.49=Seldom 2.50-3.49=Sometimes 3.50-4.49=Often 4.50-5.00=Always  
**Note-** EE= Emotional Exhaustion, D= Depersonalization, RPA =Reduced Personal Accomplishment

According to Table 3, it was found that teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay perceived they seldom experience the feelings of emotional exhaustion ( $\bar{X}=2.41$ ), depersonalization ( $\bar{X}=1.97$ ), and reduced personal accomplishment ( $\bar{X}=2.14$ ). Among them, emotional exhaustion had higher mean score than depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. And, the total mean score for burnout perceived by teachers was 2.21. Thus, it can be said that teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay seldom experience the feeling of burnout based on their perceptions.

To investigate the relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay, the Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient was calculated.

**Table 4 Correlation between Autonomy and Job Satisfaction of Teachers at Selected Universities in Mandalay (N=317)**

Variables	Autonomy	Job Satisfaction
<b>Autonomy</b>	1	<b>.582**</b>
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	<b>.582**</b>	1

\*\*Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed).

According to Table 4, it can be found that autonomy and job satisfaction perceived by teachers were correlated with  $r = .582$  at .01 level. The finding showed that the direction of the correlation was positive. According to Gay and Airasian (2003), the relationship was moderately correlated. So, there was a significantly positive and moderate correlation between autonomy and job satisfaction of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay. Therefore, it can be interpreted that if autonomy perceived by teachers increases then their job satisfaction will increase, and inversely, if autonomy perceived by teachers decreases then their job satisfaction will decrease.

To explore the relationship between autonomy and burnout of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay, the Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient was computed.

**Table 5 Correlation between Autonomy and Burnout of Teachers at Selected Universities in Mandalay (N=317)**

Variables	Autonomy	Burnout
<b>Autonomy</b>	1	<b>-.255**</b>
<b>Burnout</b>	<b>-.255**</b>	1

\*\*Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 5, it can be seen that autonomy and burnout perceived by teachers were correlated with  $r = -.255$  at .01 level. And the finding indicated that the direction of the correlation was negative. According to Gay and Airasian (2003), the relationship was low correlated. So, there was a significantly negative and low correlation between autonomy and burnout of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay. Therefore, it can be concluded that if autonomy perceived by teachers increases then the feeling of burnout at their job will decrease and vice versa, however, it has little effect on burnout according to the results.

In addition to quantitative data, teachers were asked three open-ended questions. The first open-ended question asked teachers to describe "Do you have autonomy when you perform teaching activities? If so, what roles do you have autonomy in your teaching?" Most of the teachers responded they have the autonomy to make their own choices in choosing teaching methods, teaching aids, and learning activities; they have the autonomy to select goals and objectives for

teaching themselves, and to select and use the forms of classroom assessment in teaching, however, some teachers responded they do not have autonomy in teaching. Next, the second open-ended question asked teachers about “Are you satisfied at work? If so, state the things that make you satisfying at work”. Most of the teachers responded they are satisfied at work, however, some teachers responded they are not. The responses of teachers included both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, however, intrinsic factors were more than extrinsic factors. Finally, the third open-ended question asked teachers about “Are you exhausted at work? If so, state the things that make you feel exhausted at work”. To summarize, most of the teachers responded they are not exhausted at work, however, some teachers responded they are exhausted at work. However, the responses were at the emotional exhaustion level.

According to interview responses, it can be interpreted that teachers have autonomy in selecting teaching methods and assessment activities, and in setting goals and objectives about the lesson. Next, it can be assumed that teachers have job satisfaction; however, intrinsic job satisfaction was stronger than extrinsic job satisfaction. Besides, it was found that teachers are satisfied because they have autonomy in selecting teaching methods, and they are also satisfied due to other intrinsic and extrinsic factors. At last, it can be concluded that teachers seldom experience the feeling of burnout. Moreover, it was found that teachers experience the feeling of burnout when they have low autonomy, and they also experience the feeling of burnout due to other factors.

## **Conclusion and Discussion**

**Research question one** asked teachers to describe their perceptions on autonomy. According to the responses of teachers, it can be concluded that teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay had a moderate level of autonomy. Moreover, dimensions of autonomy; general teaching autonomy and curriculum autonomy had moderate mean values. It can be assumed that teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay had a moderate level of autonomy in setting classroom standards of conduct, personal on-the-job decision making, the selection of activities and materials, and instructional planning and sequencing. Autonomy is one of the essential elements in building true teacher engagement and in enhancing teacher performance and teacher job satisfaction. Thus, it is still needed to enhance the freedom in carrying out their duties independently due to the current autonomy level of teachers was moderate at selected Universities in Mandalay.

**Research question two** asked teachers to describe their perceptions on job satisfaction. Based on the research findings, teachers at selected Universities had a moderate level of job satisfaction. In detail, one of the dimensions of job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction had a high level. So, it can be assumed that teachers have the chances to do something that makes use of their abilities, to try their teaching methods, to tell students what to do, and to be somebody in the community and they also have the freedom to use their judgment and the feeling of accomplishment from the job. However, it was found that extrinsic job satisfaction had a moderate level. Thus, it is still needed to improve extrinsic factors such as working conditions, salary, organization policy, supervision, and interpersonal relations with colleagues or superiors because the current job satisfaction level was moderate.

**Research question three** asked teachers to describe their perceptions on burnout. It was found that the experience of burnout is seldom for teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay. Besides, looking back the dimensions of burnout, it was also found that teachers perceived they seldom experience the feelings of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Thus, it was concluded that teachers may feel tired and fatigued at work, they may have negative attitudes and feelings toward others, and they may have negative self-evaluation

about their job performance, however, this happening is rare. Among them, the mean score of the emotional exhaustion dimension was the highest. So, it can be assumed that teachers feel more emotionally tired and fatigued from the job than they develop negative feelings toward others, and they feel unhappy about themselves and dissatisfied with their accomplishments on the job.

**Research question four** investigated the relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay. By the findings, autonomy was positively and moderately correlated with job satisfaction. So, it can be concluded that if autonomy perceived by teachers increases, then their job satisfaction will increase. Also, the more autonomous the teachers are, the more satisfied with their job they will be. And this finding is in line with other previous studies (Koustelios, Karabatzaki, & Kousteliou, 2004; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Gozukara & Colakoglu, 2016) conducted in different cultural contexts. Self-Determination Theory argued that when the need for autonomy is fulfilled, people feel more motivated, engaged, happy, and satisfied in their workplace. Moreover, the Motivation-Hygiene Theory mentioned that autonomy is one of the factors that are strong determinants of job satisfaction. Hence, the finding of research question four is also in harmony with the Self-Determination Theory and Motivation-Hygiene Theory.

**Research question five** examined the relationship between autonomy and burnout of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay. It was found that autonomy is significantly and negatively correlated with burnout but the correlation is low. So, it can be interpreted that if autonomy perceived by teachers increases, the feeling of burnout in their workplace will decrease and vice versa, however, autonomy has little effect on burnout or to say otherwise, there is little association between autonomy and burnout. And it was found that this finding is consistent with the findings of Gavriluk *et al.* (2013), Javadi (2014), and Kim, Liu, Ishikawa and Park (2019). In the Multidimensional Theory of Burnout, it argued that if people have little control over the work they do, they will have the chance that the feeling of burnout occurs and so, autonomy is one of the factors that must be taken into account to prevent and reduce burnout. Therefore, the finding of research question five is also fit by the Multidimensional Theory of Burnout.

All in all, teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay had moderate levels of autonomy and job satisfaction, and they had the feeling of burnout, however, it rarely happened. According to this study, there was the relationship between autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout of teachers at selected Universities in Mandalay. The results highlight the consequence of teachers' autonomy in enhancing their job satisfaction, and also showed that deficiency of perceived teacher autonomy can be regarded as a single of possible trouble and lead to burnout. Thus, paying attention to the role of autonomy as a crucial predictor of job satisfaction and burnout is a worthwhile effort. Developing a high level of perceived autonomy helps teachers make positive effects on their job satisfaction. Besides, it will prevent and reduce the burnout of teachers. Therefore, the understanding of the relationship between autonomy, job satisfaction, and burnout, it supports policymakers, decision-makers and administrators to build a satisfying working environment.

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