

SOCIAL SUPPORT, HARDINESS AND JOB SATISFACTION OF TEACHER EDUCATORS

Lwin Lwin San¹, Khin Hnin Nwe², Yar Zar Chit³

Abstract

The main aim of this study was to analyze the social support, hardiness and job satisfaction of teacher educators in Education Degree Colleges. In this study, a total of 62 participants of the analyze were selected by using random sampling technique. Descriptive research design and survey method were used in this study. Hardiness Test consisting of 50 items developed by Suzanne Kobasa (1996) (Cronbach's alpha = 0.81) was used to measure the hardiness of teacher educators. The *t* test result revealed that there was no significant difference in hardiness by gender. And, the Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL) consisting of 40 items developed by Cohen & Hoberman (1983) (Cronbach's alpha = 0.631-0.847) was used to measure social support of teacher educators. The results of *t* test showed that there was no significant difference in social support by gender. Moreover, Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ) developed by Lester (1982) (Cronbach's alpha = 0.93), was used to analyze the job satisfaction among teacher educators. It encompassed 66 items in 9 subscales. The *t* test result revealed that there was no significant difference in job satisfaction by gender. To find out the relationships of social support, hardiness, social support and job satisfaction, Pearson product- moment correlation coefficient was used. According to the result, there were statistically significant correlation at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). The simple mediation path analysis was used to explicate the underlying mechanisms of the relationship between social support (IV) and job satisfaction (DV) through hardiness (Mediator). According to the result, Consistent Partial Mediation Model was found. Hardiness had significant direct effect on job satisfaction. Then, social support had significant direct effect on job satisfaction, and also significant indirect effect on it through hardiness as a mediator.

Keywords: hardiness, social support, satisfaction, job satisfaction

Introduction

One of psychological concepts that have been introduced by scientists of educational science is social support. It was one of the basic needs of human beings throughout the history. (Balbi, 1982) believed that humans can face crisis, threats and dangers during human history through help by others (Cited in RastegarKhaled, 2005). Thus, need to close attachment has been established and people can use support from family, friends and others. Social support is offered to enjoyment of love, support and attention of co- workers, supervisor, institutions, family members and friends. Many studies revealed that social support is one of the real elements on job satisfaction.

Social support is the availability of people that have demonstrated that they care, love, and value people (Kobasa, 1982); those that people can trust and rely on. Social support, according to Sarason, Levine, Basham, & Sarrason, (1983), increases the ability to withstand and overcome frustrations and problem-solving challenges. People perceive themselves as having high levels of social support, experience more positive events in their lives and have higher self-esteem (Sarason et. al). According to early research the personality trait of hardiness Kobasa (1982), social support could be more effective in mediating stress.

Individuals high on hardiness try to influence the outcomes of the life events, are actively engaged in them and, notwithstanding their positivity or negativity, try to learn something out of them. On the other hand, individual low on hardiness will be more likely to withdraw from some

¹ Vice Principal, Katha Education Degree College

² Professor & Head, Dr., Department of Educational Psychology, Yangon University

³ Lecturer, Dr., Department of Educational Psychology, Sagaing University of Education

life circumstances and perceive them as more threatening (Maddi, 1999). It is suggested that hardiness acts as a protective factor in stressful situations predominantly through cognitive appraisal and coping behaviors.

Studies have found that hardiness is positively related to job satisfaction (Cash & Gardner, 2011). Employees high on hardiness see their job in better light, are more committed to their organizations (Sezgin, 2009), have more responsible work behaviors and are more efficient in stressful tasks (Manning, Williams, & Wolfe, 1988).

Satisfaction is one of the factors of the overall efficiency of work performed, being configured as a result of the relation between what individuals actually get from work (in terms of salary, status, appreciation, etc.) and their projected results.

According to Locke (1976), job satisfaction is a positive or pleasant emotional state resulting from a person's appreciation of his/ her own job. Miller (2009) supported the idea that this definition of job satisfaction is the most referenced and generally accepted description, characterizing the necessary component needed to depict what is meant by broad construct of job satisfaction.

Moreover, Job satisfaction is multidimensional, whether it comes to job satisfaction by itself or in wages, workplace safety, to promotion possibilities, recognition and appreciation, decision-making power and influence and of course carry a sense of productive work, useful and well done. Each of these dimensions may contribute to varying degrees, in shaping their sense of job satisfaction.

The importance of job satisfaction specially emerges to surface if had in mind the many negative consequences of job dissatisfaction such a lack of loyalty, increased absenteeism, increase number of accidents etc. Therefore, job satisfaction includes feelings and attitudes that everyone has about his/her job in a comprehensive definition. All aspects of a certain job such as good and bad, positive and negative aspects effect on satisfaction and dissatisfaction feeling (Imbert, 2004).

Purpose of the Study

The main aim of this study is to analyze the hardiness, social support and job satisfaction teacher educators in Education Degree Colleges. The specific objectives will be as follows:

1. To examine the social support, hardiness and job satisfaction teacher educators in Education Degree Colleges
2. To explore the differences in the social support, hardiness and job satisfaction teacher educators by gender
3. To find out the relationship among social support, hardiness and job satisfaction teacher educators
4. To examine whether social support predicts job satisfaction of teacher educators directly and indirectly through the mediator of hardiness

Definitions of Key Terms

Hardiness: "hardiness" was defined as a constellation of commitment, control, and challenge that serves as a "resistance resource" in encounters with stress (Kobasa, Maddi, & Kahn, 1982).

Social Support: The term "social support" refers to the various resources provided by one's interpersonal ties (Cohen & Hoberman, 1983).

Job Satisfaction: The term job satisfaction refers to the attitude and feelings people have about their work. Positive and favorable attitudes towards the job indicate job satisfaction (Armstrong, 2006).

Review of Related Literature

Kobasa's Hardiness Theory: The term "personality hardiness" has been used to describe persons who have a kind of personal and world view that underlies the positive capacity to cope with and mediate stress (Kobasa, 1979). In her originating research, Suzanne C. Kobasa (1979) stated that "persons who experience high degrees of stress, without falling ill, have a personality structure differentiating them from persons who become sick under stress". This personality structure "hardiness" was defined as a constellation of commitment, control, and challenge that serves as a "resistance resource" in encounters with stress (Kobasa, Maddi, & Kahn, 1982).

The resistance resource theory formed the foundation of Kobasa's proposed concept that individuals who are exposed to high levels of stress who do not become ill, may have characteristics that come under the rubric "personal hardiness" (Kobasa, 1979). Kobasa explained that these hardy individuals choose commitment rather than alienation, control rather than powerlessness, and challenge rather than threat. These three personality characteristics remain the basis of her continuous research on personal hardiness. Commitment involves activity and curiosity, not passiveness and alienation. It entails belief in the value for "what one is and what one is doing, as well as a tendency to involve oneself fully and vigorously in life." The committed individual finds life in general, and work in particular, meaningful and worth engaging, thereby lessening the threat perceived in situations and circumstances (Kobasa, 1982).

Control is the tendency to believe and act as if one is influential (rather than helpless) in the course of events in one's life. Individuals who have control strive to understand the reasons for things that occur with particular reference to their own sphere of responsibility (Kobasa, 1982). Control involves developing a repertoire of options and actions that transforms events into a continuing life plan (Holt, Fine, & Tollefson, 1987).

Challenge, the third dimension of the hardiness constellation, involves the belief that one should expect and accept change, not stability, as the normal pattern of life (Kobasa, 1982; Kobasa, Maddi, & Kahn, 1982). The anticipation of change is positive, rather than threatening and change is viewed as an incentive to growth. The individual with this characteristic emphasizes growing and changing, rather than conserving and protecting the status quo (Holt, Fine, & Tollefson, 1987).

Stress-Buffering Models of Social Support: Cohen and McKay (1984) argued that one's interpersonal relationships function as stress buffers only when the type of support resources that are offered by one's relationships match the coping requirements elicited by the stressor(s).

Cohen (1988) provided that the stress-buffering model posits that support "buffers" (protects) persons from the potentially pathogenic influence of stressful events. The following models focus on the perceived availability of social support because this conception has been found to result in stress-buffering effects.

Information-Based Model. To the extent that this information reduces the evaluation of the event would be appraised as less threatening and/ or harmful and hence the risk of illness increased. It is also likely that in many cases the perception of available support operates without any actual support being provided. That is, knowing (or at least believing) those others will provide needed information if it becomes necessary can similarly result in a potentially stressful event or events being appraised as benign. Emotional responses to stressful events may also elicit network provision of information.

Identity and Self-Esteem Model. They suggested that others' willingness to help and/ or the enhanced ability to cope that results from receiving help increase feelings of personal control and self-esteem. According to this model, social support may give the person a sense of identity

and belonging, increased self-esteem and perceived control. This positive psychological state suggested in this model may lead to good performance.

Social Influence Model. Social controls and peer pressures could influence persons to cope with stressors in particular normative manners. Such influence processes would promote health to the extent that the normative coping behaviors were effective in reducing perceptions of stress, no adjustive behavioral adaptations, and negative affective responses.

Tangible-Resource Model. Network contribution of aid or tangible or economic services could reduce the probability of potentially stressful events being appraised as threatening or harmful and hence could reduce the behavioral and affective concomitants of such an appraisal. Tangible resources could also help resolve specific (tangible-related) problems after a stress appraisal is made (Cohen, 1988).

Theories of Job Satisfaction: Theories of motivation present various approaches for the determinants of motivation and satisfaction. Lunenburg and Ornstein (1996) grouped them into two categories: content and process theories. Content theories concentrate on the definition of motivators, whereas process theories focus on how motivation occurs. The most popular three content theories are; (a) Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory, (b) Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, and (c) Alderfer's Existence Relatedness Growth Theory. The three major process theories are (a) Expectancy Theory, (b) Equity Theory, and (c) Goal-setting Theory.

According to Motivation-Hygiene Theory, developed by Herzberg, employees have two kinds of needs; hygiene and motivator (Furnham, Petrides, Jackson & Cotter, 2002). The motivation factors (motivators) are achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. Company policies, interpersonal relations, working conditions, and salary constitute the hygiene factors (dissatisfiers).

This theory mainly focuses on the working environment, and asserts that job satisfaction is a consequence of the aspects of job which meet the individual's need for psychological growth, whereas job dissatisfaction arises from working conditions (Galloway, Boswell, Panckhurst, Boswell & Gren, 1985). Therefore, it is possible to be both satisfied and dissatisfied at the same time. Determinants of satisfaction have expanded in time by the development of various theories and research conducted to measure satisfaction.

Method

Participants

The participants of this study were teacher educators chosen from Katha, Sagaing and Mandalay Education Degree Colleges. A total of 62 teacher educators were selected by simple random sampling technique. Among 62 teacher educators, 6 are males and 56 are females.

Research Method

Descriptive research design and survey method were used in this study.

Instruments

Hardiness Scale: In this investigation, the third-generation version of the hardiness test/scale, also known as the personal views survey, was used to measure hardiness. This instrument was developed by Suzanne Kobasa in 1996. The current version is a 50-item, four-point Likert scale. The reliability coefficient for hardiness was .81.

Social Support Questionnaire: The Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL) (Cohen & Hoberman, 1983) was used in this study to measure social support. The ISEL consists of a list of

40 statements. For each statement check 4-point Likert scale. The reliability coefficient for social support was 0.631-0.847.

Job Satisfaction Questionnaire: Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ) developed by Lester (1982), was used as the main instrument to analyze the job satisfaction among teacher educators’ in Upper Myanmar Education Degree Colleges. It encompassed 66 items in 9 subscales. The instrument contains responses which are presented in the form of a five-point Likert scale. The reliability coefficient for job satisfaction was .93.

Data Collection Procedure

For collecting data for this study, the researcher requested permission from the Head of Department of Educational Psychology. Second, permission to collect data was acceded from the respective principals of Katha, Sagaing and Mandalay Education Degree Colleges. All of the participants’ responses were gathered by survey method. On average, the participants spent about twenty-five minutes to complete all items. According to the above procedures, the collection of the required data was conducted in each selected Education Degree Colleges by survey procedure.

Findings

In this study, social support and hardiness on teacher educators’ job satisfaction were investigated among the selected Education Degree Colleges from Upper Myanmar.

Teacher Educators’ Social Support, Hardiness and Job Satisfaction

In terms descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation of Teacher Educators’ social support, hardiness and job satisfaction were calculated to analyze data. The results were described in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Educators’ Social Support, Hardiness and Job Satisfaction

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social Support	91	152	127.60	12.895
Hardiness	98	145	126.11	9.066
Job Satisfaction	200	294	251.66	18.413

As shown in Table 1, the mean score and standard deviation of the teacher educators’ overall social support were 127.60 and 12.895 respectively. Since the sample mean score (127.60) is greater than the theoretical mean (100) in overall social support, it can be assumed that the teacher educators’ social support is satisfactory and effective for all teacher educators.

Next, the mean score and standard deviation of the teacher educators’ overall hardiness were 126.11 and 9.066 respectively. Since the sample mean score (126.11) is greater than the theoretical mean (125) in overall hardiness, it can be assumed that the teacher educators’ hardiness is satisfactory and effective for all teacher educators.

Moreover, the mean score and standard deviation of the teacher educators’ overall job satisfaction were 251.66 and 18.413 respectively. Since the sample mean score (251.66) is greater than the theoretical mean (198) in overall job satisfaction, it can be assumed that the teacher educators’ job satisfaction is satisfactory and effective for all teacher educators.

To find out the significant differences by gender, independent samples *t* test was used. The results were shown in Table 2.

Table 2 The Result of Independent Samples *t* Test for Social Support, Hardiness and Job Satisfaction of Teacher Educators by Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>MD</i>
Social Support	Male	6	125.67	8.548	-.126	60	.900	-.107
	Female	56	126.16	9.192				
Hardiness	Male	6	127.50	9.975	-.019	60	.985	-.494
	Female	56	127.61	13.243				
Job Satisfaction	Male	6	255.67	10.875	-.557	60	.575	4.435
	Female	56	251.23	19.062				

Table 2 indicated that there were no significant differences between male and female for teacher educators' social support, hardiness and job satisfaction.

The Relationship Among Social Support, Hardiness and Job Satisfaction of Teacher Educators

To find out the relationship among social support, hardiness and job satisfaction of teacher educators, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used. The results were shown in Table 3.

Table 3 The Relationship Between Social Support, Hardiness and Job Satisfaction of Teacher Educators

	Social Support	Hardiness	Job Satisfaction
Social Support	1	.424**	.643**
Hardiness		1	.547**
Job Satisfaction			1

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the result of Table 3, there was a statistically significant correlation in social support and hardiness ($r=.424$, $p<0.01$). Therefore, it can be interpreted that there was positive correlation between social support and hardiness of Education Degree College teacher educators.

Moreover, there was a statistically significant correlation in hardiness and job satisfaction ($r = .547$, $p <.01$). Therefore, it can be interpreted that there was positive correlation between hardiness and job satisfaction of teacher educators. This means that the teacher educators who are high in hardiness are also high in job satisfaction accordingly.

According to table, there was a statistically significant correlation in social support and job satisfaction ($r = .643$, $p <.01$). Therefore, it can be interpreted that there was positive correlation between social support and job satisfaction of teacher educators. This means that the teacher educators who are high in social support are also high in job satisfaction accordingly.

The Mediating Role of Hardiness on the Relationship Between Social Support and Job Satisfaction

The simple mediation path analysis was used to explicate the underlying mechanisms of the relationship between social support (IV) and job satisfaction (DV) through hardiness

(Mediator). After conducting the Simple Mediation Path Analysis in SPSS, the results of the direct and indirect effects between variables were presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Summary of Causal Effects for the Path Model (Job Satisfaction)

Outcomes	Determinants	Causal Effects		
		Direct	Indirect	Total
Hardiness $R^2 = 0.403$	Social Support	0.298**	-	0.298**
Job Satisfaction $R^2 = 0.488$	Social Support	0.716***	0.202***	0.918***
	Hardiness	0.679**	-	0.679**

Note. *** denotes significant paths t at $p < 0.001$.
 ** denotes significant paths t at $p < 0.01$.

According to the result, Consistent Partial Mediation Model was found. Hardiness had significant direct effect on job satisfaction. Then, social support had significant direct effect on job satisfaction, and also significant indirect effect on it through hardiness as a mediator (See in Figure 1). Totally, 48.8% of the variance in job satisfaction can be explained by the path model.

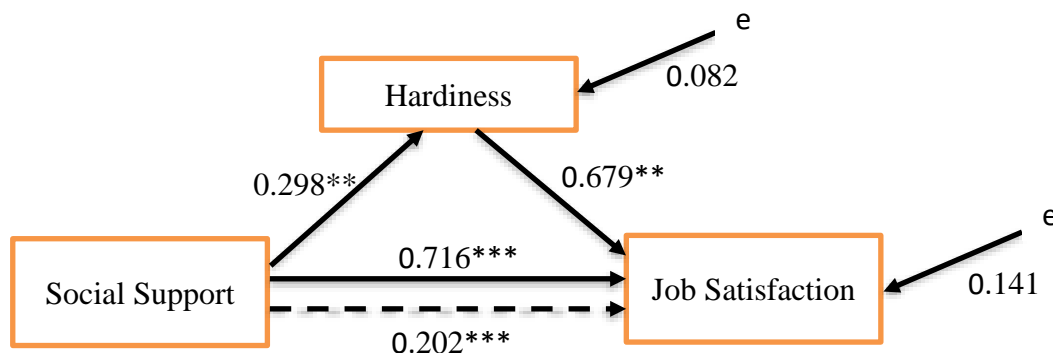


Figure 1 Simple Path Diagram for Predicting Job Satisfaction from Social Support and Hardiness

*** denotes significant paths t at $p < 0.001$.
 ** denotes significant paths t at $p < 0.01$.

Conclusion and Suggestions

As the results of descriptive statistic of the whole social support, hardiness and job satisfaction, it can be seen that teacher educators in this study have high level of social support, hardiness and job satisfaction.

Observing social support, hardiness and job satisfaction by gender were analyzed. An independent samples t test result by gender indicated that there was no significant difference between male and female teacher educators in social support, hardiness and job satisfaction.

There were positive correlations between social support and hardiness, social support and job satisfaction, hardiness and job satisfaction of teacher educators. It was consistent with the studies of Ganellen and Blaney (1984) found that commitment and challenge, but not control, were significantly correlated with social support. Therefore, the researchers conclude that the higher the level of social support subjects report, the higher their level of hardiness.

Moreover, Falinski (1985) found that personal hardiness contributed to the ability of New York state school superintendents to handle role stress and therefore feel job satisfaction. In another similar study by Hammond (1987), faculty, researchers, and administrators at a southwestern university responded to a questionnaire revealing that satisfaction could be predicted by hardiness, social support, and coping strategies. Gupta (1988) investigated the correlates of effectiveness and ineffectiveness in teacher's teaching. He found job satisfaction and financial support to be significantly influencing effective teaching.

The simple mediation path analysis was used to explicate the underlying mechanisms of the relationship between social support (IV) and job satisfaction (DV) through hardiness (Mediator). According to the result, Consistent Partial Mediation Model was found. Hardiness had significant direct effect on job satisfaction. Then, social support had significant direct effect on job satisfaction, and also significant indirect effect on it through hardiness as a mediator.

According to the result, teacher educators from Education Degree Colleges who have high level of social support, hardiness and job satisfaction in their job. One of the effective factors on job satisfaction is social support such as tangible support, belonging support, self-esteem support, appraisal support. All teacher educators need to be provided with social support for job satisfaction. Moreover, teacher educators need to be high on level of hardiness. When the social support and hardiness of teacher educators are improved, they will get job satisfaction in their lives efficiently.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Pro-rectors of Sagaing University of Education, Dr. Myat Myat Thaw, Dr. Khin Hnin Yee and Dr. San San Lwin. Then, profound thanks are also due to Dr. Myo Ko Aung (Professor and Head, Department of Educational Psychology, Sagaing University of Education). We would also like to express our indebtedness to Principals and teacher educators from Katha, Sagaing and Mandalay Degree Education Colleges for their permission and actively participation to conduct this study.

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