



Providing a Structural Model of Social-Emotional Competence Based on Psychology Capital with Mediation of Career Motivation among Primary School Teachers

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Abstract

This study was conducted in order to provide a structural model of social-emotional competence based on psychological capital with the mediation of career motivation among primary school teachers. The correlation method was applied in this cross-sectional research. The statistical population of the present study consisted of all teachers who were teaching in the elementary schools of Tehran in 2021-2022 from among, 350 people were selected by multi-stages cluster-sampling method. Psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2007), career motivation (Robinson, 2004) and social-emotional competence (Boyatzis, 2007) questionnaires were utilized to collect data. SPSS-V23 and Lisrel-V7.8 software were applied to analyze the data and structural equation modeling was used to test the research hypotheses. The research findings revealed that psychological capital has a direct effect on social-emotional competencies of elementary school teachers ($P < 0.05$) and has an indirect effect on social-emotional competencies of primary school teachers through career motivation ($p < 0.05$). Also, the results showed that the indirect effect of psychological capital along with social-emotional competencies mediated by career motivation was confirmed by 95% confidence. Therefore, social-emotional competencies can play a more effective role in increasing their career motivation through making psychological capital among teachers.

Keywords: Career motivation, psychological capital, social-emotional competence

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Introduction

Recently, organizational literature pays considerable attention to the concept of competence. Human resource

experts believe that employees' performance is related to their competence or ability to act appropriately and responsibly in a specific situation which involves a set of knowledge, skills and motivations and can create a

competitive advantage for the organization (Catalano, 2015). According to Emmerling and Boyatzis (2012), the concept of competence in the organization, so-called social-emotional competence, consists of a comprehensive combination of cognitive, emotional, motivational, and behavioral aspects which can be effective in the performance of human resources and organizational outcomes.

Many occupational experts also believe that the best policies and measures of managers especially in education which are social in nature and the behavior and communication of teachers are based on the superior social and intellectual capitals (Agarwal & Farndale, 2017). In addition, social and emotional competencies are considered as some part of this capital which is associated with organizational success (Troesh & Bauer, 2017). The results of Ramesh and Krishnan research (2020) showed that teachers are considered as vital component of social-emotional competencies because they are the main trainers of the curriculum based on social-emotional competencies. Hence, their talents in education are significant around the world in recent years. Achieving such a standard has been one of the main drivers of the modern competence movement. On the other hand, teachers, experts and professionals in the field of education have realized that the success of students in life requires something more than passing the courses and exams, acquiring academic knowledge and upgrading the degree. Education should also include social and emotional competencies to enable learners to encounter the upcoming challenges in life effectively (Sabot & Hicks, 2020). Therefore, most scientists believe that it is essential to equip teachers with cooperation skills to achieve high performance in the work environments. Hence, it is crucial to analyze and realize the variables related to the human resources performance in educational environments. Psychological capital is considered as a new method and attitude to improve the human resources performance and management (Osman et al., 2016).

Psychological capital is about the optimization of human status and seeks to develop individual mental health, well-being, and prosperity. Indeed, psychological capital discussions aim to examine the conditions and processes that lead to the optimal performance or prosperity of individuals, groups and organizations (Lupsa & Virga, 2020). Numerous research also indicated the optimal effect of psychological capital on the behavior, attitude and performance of human resources (Adil & Kamal, 2020). In fact, it can be suggested that new attitudes in positive psychology and concentration on psychological capital emphasize the ways in which competitive advantage can

be achieved through people positive competencies (Buettner et al., 2016; Chen & Li, 2017).

Psychological capital is a combined and interconnected structure that includes four perceptual-cognitive components, i.e. optimism, resilience, hope and self-efficacy (Lee & Chu, 2016). Optimism is an interpretation style that attributes positive events to permanent, personal and comprehensive causes and negative events to external, temporary and special circumstances (Modera et al., 2020). Resilience is a class of phenomena characterized by a pattern of positive adaption in the context of considerable problems and risks (Shkoler & Kimura, 2020). Hope is a positive motivational state based on a proactive driver of the sense of dynamic success, the sense of solutions success (Obeidat et al., 2018) and finally, self-efficacy is a person's strong belief in his/her abilities to mobilize motivational and cognitive resources and solutions required to achieve certain successes. In fact, these components give meaning to people's life through an interactive and evaluative process and make their efforts to continue in order to change stressful situations as well as prepare them to take the action and guarantee their resistance to achieve their goals (Oh et al., 2020). Each of these constructs is a part of positive psychology that has a valid measurement scale; they are based on theories and have the ability to grow and they are significantly related to functional outcomes. The components of psychological capital have a positive charge in terms of their nature and human capacities are considered from a completely positive point of view.

Research evidence has shown that psychological capital and its four components are related to a wide range of behavioral, health and cognitive variables such as satisfaction, commitment, health performance, well-being and stress perception (You, 2016) and has significant effects on the performance of the individual, family and society (Quellette et al. 2017). Most experts in the field of education believe that teachers are the main and crucial factor in the education process. Teachers are considered as the basis of a successful educational system. Realizing the factors influencing the quality of teachers' performance is the first step towards training successful educational staff and 'career motivation' of teachers is considered as one of these factors.

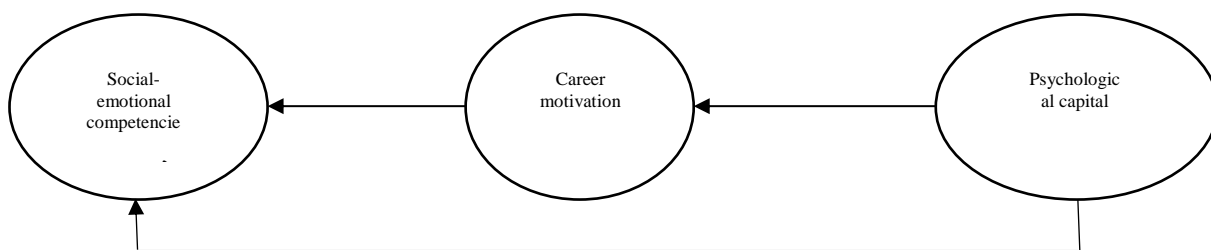
In all societies, effective, motivated and efficient teachers are required to train people in the framework of an optimal education system and prepare them for a better future. Teachers have a basic and decisive role in educational activities and students' behavior and thinking (Paek et al., 2015). Thus, the significance of recognizing the positive or negative motivation of teachers regarding the process of education in general is

obvious and accurate and comprehensive information about teachers' motivation can be effective to achieve the educational goals (Recepoglu, 2014). Alhija's observations (2015) have shown that the work efficiency of those teachers who have learned career skills and apply them in their teaching is higher than other teachers and they are highly motivated. Pogere et al. (2019) also considered the teachers as the main basis of educational evaluation and schools' progress. Finally, it can be suggested that appropriate implementation of educational system programs depend on the teachers who are highly motivated and have acquired career skills and competencies to teach students.

Having reviewed the books, articles, and dissertations related to the subject, the researchers realized that discussions about social-emotional competencies among teachers are provided in individual, group, and cross-cultural. Previous studies have worked on one or more of its dimensions and

indicators; however, there is no comprehensive model to consider all the dimensions and components of social-emotional competencies, psychological capital, and career motivation in the school environments. Also, the way they communicate with each other and the effects of these aspects on each other and on organizational communication from the perspective of teachers and experts in the field of psychology are ignored. Moreover, the social-emotional competency role in the organizations as well as its dimensions, main components, and the relationship between these components and career motivation is not identified. Hence, the researchers tried to fill the gap and investigated the relationship between social-emotional competencies based on psychological capital with the mediation of career motivation among elementary teachers. Thus, according to the objectives of the study, the conceptual model is presented as follows:

Figure 1
The Conceptual Model



Method

Design

The study adopted a correlational design and tried to find the relationship of social-emotional competencies based on psychological capital with the mediation of career motivation of elementary teachers through structural equation modeling.

Participants

The statistical population of the present study included all teachers working in the elementary schools of Tehran in 2021-2022. The multi-stage cluster random sampling method was applied through which eight regions were randomly selected from among 22 regions in Tehran. Then, three districts were randomly selected from each region and finally six elementary schools (three girl schools and three boy schools) were selected in each district. Also, six teachers were randomly selected from each school. The sample size can be determined between

5 and 15 participants for each measured variable (questionnaire questions) in structural equation modeling: $5q \leq n \leq 15q$;

Where:

q is the number of observed variables or the numbers of items (questions) of the questionnaire and n is the sample size (Lazaroiu, 2015). In this research, the sample size for each question was 5 participants and 350 people in general.

Instruments

The following instruments were used in this study:

Boyatzis Social –Emotional Components Scale (2007)

Boyatzis scale of social-emotional components has 40 items on 5 Likert-type options and some components including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. The validity of the scale was measured using the item analysis method and the results of the obtained coefficients between 0.90 and 0.47 were significant at 0.0001 level. Cronbach alpha was also used to calculate the reliability of the

scale which showed the reliability of .77, .88, and .83 for self-awareness competence, self-management competence, and relationship management competence respectively (Mohammadi et al., 2015).

Luthans' Psychological Capital Scale (2007)

This scale was invented in 2007 to measure the psychological capital of people and was standardized among students and employees (Luthans et al., 2007). The psychological capital questionnaire has 24 items with 6 options: completely disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, agree, and completely agree on a Likert scale which is scored from 1 to 6 respectively. These six parts of this test individually measures one of the subscales of hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience. The score of each subscale is calculated separately and then their sum determines the total score of psychological capital. To determine the construct validity of this questionnaire, the chi-square ratio of this test was calculated which was equal to 24.6 (Luthans et al., 2007). In Kian et al.'s research (2016), Cronbach alpha of psychological capital questionnaire was estimated at .87, and Bahadori Khosrowshahi et al. (2011) reported the reliability of this questionnaire to be .85.

Robinson Career Motivation Scale (2014)

The career motivation scale used in this research was designed by Robinson in 2014. This scale consists of 11

items and asks the respondents to specify their career motivation and perform their career activities on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from completely agree to completely disagree. Irfanmanesh (2010) reported the reliability of the career motivation scale as .83 and .77 using the split-half method while Taghipour (2010) obtained the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire via two Cronbach alpha methods as .82 and .74, respectively.

Procedure

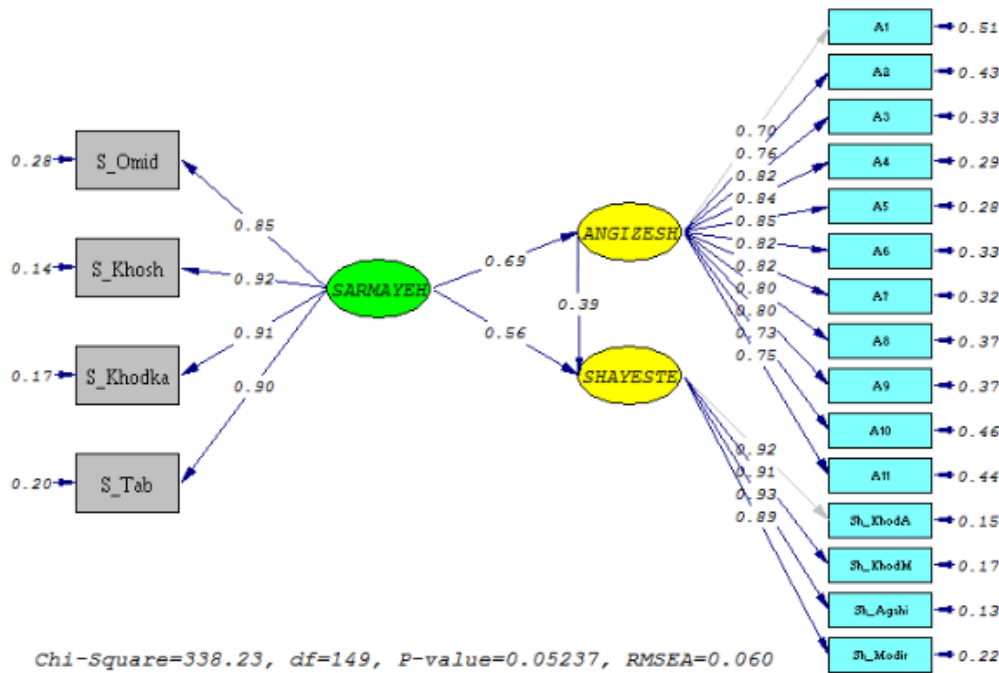
After selecting the participants, all the questionnaires were administered and distributed to them. It should be noted that all ethical considerations consisting informed consent, volunteer participation, and confidentiality of the information were observed. Then, the obtained information was analyzed through SPSS-24 software and Lisrel V7.80. Also, structural equation modeling was applied to test the research hypothesis.

Findings

Now, it is essential to provide a structural model in order to show the relationship among the variables of the research. The research hypothesis can be examined using the structural model. The research model is provided in the form of standard coefficients in the following figure:

Figure 2

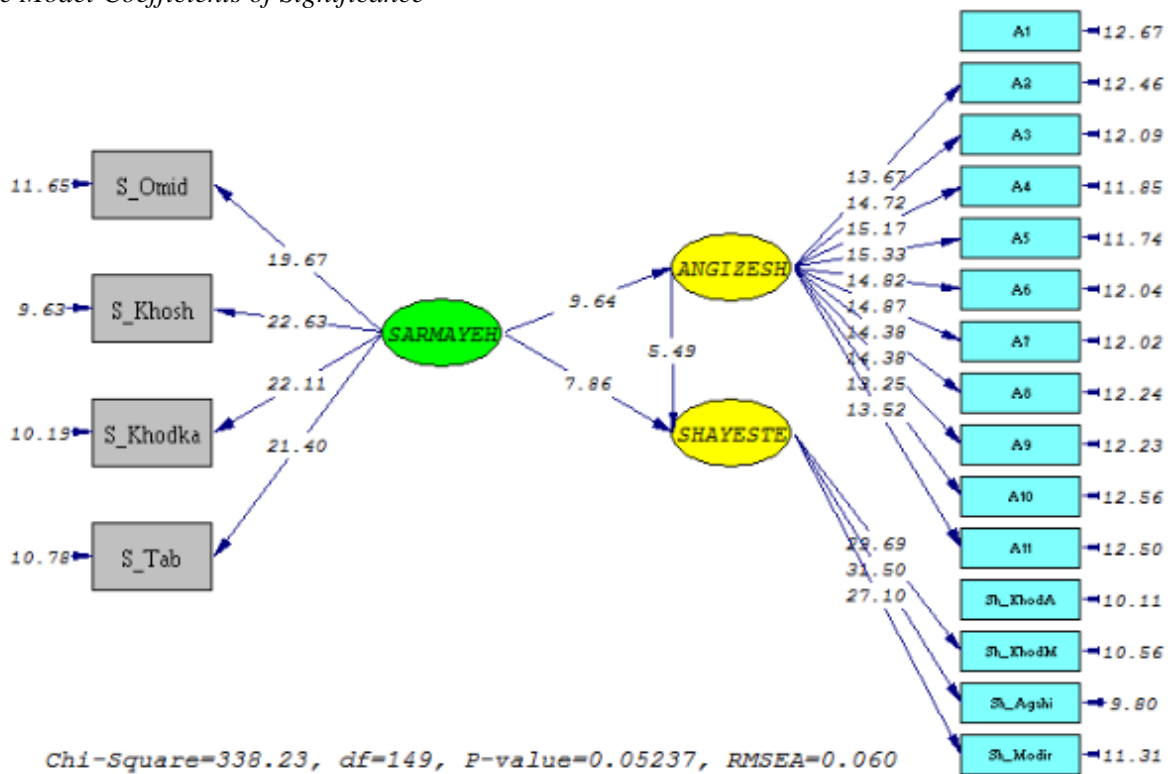
The Structural Model of Research in the Estimation of Standard Coefficients



The research model is provided in the mode of significant coefficient in the following figure where all obtained coefficients are significant as the significance

test value of each path is higher than 2.58 and lower than 2.58.

Figure 3
The Model Coefficients of Significance



According to the obtained values, the research hypothesis was examined. The results of the model test are provided in the following Table.

Table 1
Path Coefficients and T Values for the Research Hypothesis

Path	Path Coefficient	T value	State
Psychological capital → Career motivation	0.69	9.64	acceptable
Career motivation → Social-emotional competencies	0.39	5.49	acceptable
Psychological capital → Social-emotional competencies	0.56	7.86	acceptable

Therefore, it can be concluded that psychological capital influences indirectly on primary teachers' career motivation. To examine the direct and indirect effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables, it

is essential to provide the total, direct and indirect effects of the model internal variable which is presented in the following Table.

Table 2
Path Coefficients and T Values for the Research Hypothesis

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Effect		
		direct	indirect	total
Psychological capital	Career motivation	0.69		0.69
Career motivation	Social-emotional competencies	0.39		0.39

As it can be observed from the above Table, the indirect effect of psychological capital on social-emotional competencies is 0.83 through career motivation.

Discussion

The present study was conducted in order to provide a structural model of social-emotional competence based on psychological capital with the mediation of career motivation among elementary school teachers. The results showed that psychological capital impacts directly on the social-emotional competencies of elementary school teachers. The results are in the line with those of Taghvaie (2021), Ebrahimzade Zavashti (2021) and Abidi Horiler et al. (2021). To explain the obtained results, it can be stated as follows. Psychological capital, as a positive construct, is generally aimed at the success of the goal through the individuals' ability to find various paths to success (i.e. hope). Some of these ways may be creative and hence they are not considered as a part of the official roles and duties. Such creative ways include resilience as necessary to achieve the goal (hope) persistently with confidence in one's ability, no fear to try new ways (self-efficacy) and optimism about the future.

Also, employees who evaluate their future optimistically (psychological capital) are more willing to adjust their data for the organization's social-emotional

competencies. People with higher level of psychological capital may use their ability to apply psychological forces to cope with obstacles at work and engage in more insightful behaviors such as organizational civil behaviors. In particular, employees who evaluate their future in an organization with more optimism are more likely to attempt harder to make a beneficial future for the organization by engaging in organizational civil behaviors (Hemmati et al., 2021).

Moreover, the results showed that psychology capital has an indirect effect on career motivation of elementary school teachers. This result is in line with that of Palos et al. (2020), and Sabot and Hicks (2020) which showed that psychological capital increases career motivation and career performance. Career motivation in the field of management is considered a main factor in the development and advancement of organizational targets. It is a knowledge that measures how to achieve the targets of an organization or institution (Abbas & Raja, 2015).

The results obtained in the examination of the research hypothesis can be explained more precisely by relying on the components of psychological capital. Self-confidence means an individual's belief in his abilities to find the solutions required in order to successfully perform tasks. It is an important waiting element to improve people's performance in their work environments. This promotion makes the process of implementing a task more successful which in turn leads

to the feeling of satisfaction and career motivation. Hope is a cognitive state that enables people to codify real and predictable goals and achieve these goals through perceived will and energy. It also helps teachers define achievable goals within the framework of their tasks and move toward achieving them. This ability reduces the possibility of failure in performing tasks and negative experiences.

As another element of psychological capital, 'optimism' means a style of interpretation that attributes positive events to permanent, personal and pervasive causes while it attributes negative events to external and temporary causes and special conditions. And finally, 'resilience' is considered a psychological capacity by which people can successfully deal with crisis, risk, and problems. Resilience helps teachers cope with the feeling of failure and depression in difficult and stressful conditions of workplaces and maintain their motivation to work and perform their duties. Therefore, teachers with high psychological capital can be more motivated towards their job and organization than their colleagues and work with more enthusiasm at workplace.

Also, the results showed that career motivation has an indirect effect on the social-emotional competencies of elementary school teachers. The results of this research are in line with those of Alhija (2015), Pang and Lu (2018), and Paek et al. (2015). They believed that influencing teachers' motivation directly and indirectly predicts their educational cooperation and attitudes in the future. The research results of Probst et al. (2017) showed that career motivation, environmental factors and locus of control are related to teachers' career satisfaction. Rivaldo (2021) in a research on the effect of career motivation on job satisfaction and competence of teachers found that motivation has a positive effect on career competence and satisfaction and low motivation leads to low career satisfaction. Sojusi et al. (2019) in a research on the effect of motivation on career satisfaction of employees demonstrated that there is no direct relationship between motivation and career satisfaction of those who had a long history in executive management. It has also been shown that motivation was an important predictor of career satisfaction.

Conclusion

People with intrinsic motivation tend to comply with personal standards and pursue activities that require their unique skills. When people engage in behaviors consistent with their self-concept, they are more likely to adhere to high standards of performance. If these standards reflect a strong work ethic, they will pursue activities that help other people who have high career motivation.

Generally, the results of this research showed that psychological capital is one of the variables related to

social-emotional competence of teachers and it is suggested that educational managers attempt to improve the required conditions in order to increase teachers' career motivation. To this end, regarding the trainability of psychological capital workshops, it is suggested that social-emotional competence evaluation tools be applied to select the most qualified people in terms of social-emotional skills to teach in schools. It is also better to consider these types of competencies as the performance evaluation criterion of managers in their performance evaluation. It is useful to conduct in-service training courses to develop the social-emotional competencies of teachers and managers and also to inform them about the significance of the social-emotional competencies' role in creating a satisfactory and optimal organizational environment and ultimately the success and efficiency of the organization.

Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest declared.

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