

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL ON JOB SATISFACTION AMONG THE AGRICULTURE FACULTY MEMBERS IN UNIVERSITY OF TEHRAN, IRAN

Nader Naderi¹, Nematollah Shiri², Maryam Tatar², Amirhossin Pirmoradi²

1- Assistant Professor, Department of Entrepreneurship, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran.

2- Ph.D.Student, Department of Agricultural Extension and Education, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran.

Corresponding Author: Nematollah Shiri, Email: nshiri82@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: *The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of social capital dimensions on job satisfaction of the agriculture faculty members in university of Tehran (Iran). The statistical population consisted of all the agriculture faculty members in university of Tehran (Iran), (N=218), that 132 of them were selected for studying by proportionate stratified random sampling method. The main instrument of the study was a questionnaire that its validity and reliability were confirmed by panel of experts and calculation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient respectively. Data were analyzed by SPSS_{Win20} and LISREL_{8.54} software in two parts of descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings of the research revealed that the present situation of social capital and job satisfaction of faculty members was in an average level. According to results of structural equation modeling, social capital dimensions i.e. structural social capital, relational social capital and cognitive social capital had highly positive and significant effects on job satisfaction of faculty members, in such a way that they could determine 78 percent of variance changes in their job satisfaction. Finding of this study has appropriate achievements for manager, planners and policymakers of higher agricultural education system in order to improve the job satisfaction and human resources development of agricultural faculty members.*

Keywords: Social Capital, Job Satisfaction, Human Resources Development, Agriculture Faculty Members

INTRODUCTION

Competition is the most important feature in all fields of life in the world, so that each individual or group who wants to survive in this setting and achieve his goals should compete with similar individuals and groups. Competing with others is possible just when higher efficiency is achieved. The organization with higher efficiency is able to overcome his rivals and become the dominant in the competition field. Efficiency means optimum use of existing and available resources of organization. In the late twentieths, it was believed that human resource is the most important resource in every organization. Due to this issue, it should be said that an organization does not achieve appropriate efficiency unless its work forces increase their efficiency [1]. In this regard, universities and higher education institutes are considered as most inconsistent organizations which on the one hand, suffer from challenges and tensions that exist between their principals, faculty members and students. in the other hand, some changes happened in miscellaneous parts of society especially those related to political, social and cultural settings in many countries of the world during recent years, have created demands, expectations and new regulations for higher education followed by various challenges that higher education institutes have been faced with [2]. So, on the one hand, since higher education role is a determinant factor in social, economic and cultural development of each country and workforce for different sectors of society is trained by higher education system, it has a particular position, and on the other hand, the importance and position of agricultural sector is considered as a fundamental section achieving development. One of the basic factors in transition and development of agricultural sector is to promote training experts and educated workforce, and the faculty members of agriculture are among the main centers who are active in providing and

training workforce in agricultural sector [3]. The faculty members are the most important factors in higher education systems and the most basic elements in development and progress of each country and the more they fulfill their duties with higher quality, the more faster country will develop and progress [4]. Thus, if the faculty members wouldn't be satisfied with their job, the development process will face some problems [5]. Job satisfaction is known as positive or negative value judgment of individuals on job or their job position [6]. Job satisfaction is a personal attitude to the career and shows how much one's expectation is compatible with rewards which are provided by their organization and their job. Totally, job satisfaction means that one person feels he has achieved expected values and demands in his job and career [7]. Nowadays, the faculty members have a numerous educational, research duties and social tasks, it is necessary to consider all effective factors on their job satisfaction in order to enhance their job satisfaction [8]. In this regard, researchers have stated that as a useful issue, social capital plays an important role in physical and human capital of an organization and a society and is able to increase the satisfaction and effectiveness of individuals in organizations [9]. Social capital refers to the features of a social organization such as networks, norms and social trust which facilitates the coordination and cooperation to achieve bilateral advantages in the organization [10]. Overall, social capital is the sum of potential and actual interests existing in the organization which is obtained from the sum of structural, relational and cognitive dimensions and decreases the costs of information exchange and shortens the communication paths in the organization through mutual understanding, common values and behaviors and also facilitates the achievement of goals and collective benefits in the organization by synergistic effect [11]. Knowledge management facilitation, team work

improvement, organizational commitment and quality improvement of services are of the most important effects of social capital in an organization. In this regard, very few studies are conducted in various organizations about relation and effect of social capital and its dimensions on job satisfaction of individuals, which are briefly mentioned below:

In a research, Ebrahimian Jolodar [12] indicated that social factors have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction of individuals. Yamaguchi [13] indicated, in his study, that there is a positive and significant relationship between relational and cognitive social capital and job satisfaction of individuals in organizations. Zhuo [13] confirmed the positive and significant effect of social capital on job satisfaction in his research. Takashi et al. [14] stated that the dimensions of social capital have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Ommen et al. [15] stated that social capital have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Thus, according to the literature of subject, the conceptual framework of this research is classified as follows (Fig.1):

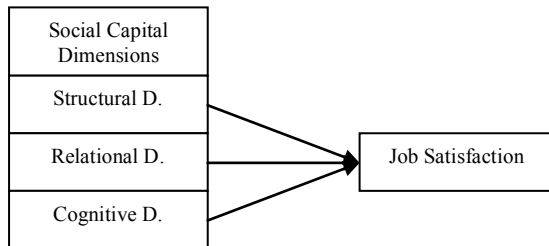


Fig.1. Conceptual Framework of Research

Hence, despite the importance and role of social capital in job satisfaction of individuals in organizations, empirical evidences indicate that the studies about the role of social capital in job satisfaction of higher education faculty members are weakness and there is no comprehensive and specified research about the mentioned issue in agriculture. So, the main purpose of this investigation the influence of social capital dimensions on job satisfaction of the

agriculture faculty members in university of Tehran (Iran) and its objectives are:

- 1-Investigation the personal and professional characteristics;
- 2-Investigation the amount of social capital and job satisfaction;
- 3-Investigation the relationship between social capital dimensions and job satisfaction;
- 4-Determination the influence of social capital dimensions on job satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

This research is paradigmatically of quantitative research; it is an applicable research due to its goals and a descriptive-correlative research regarding the data collection procedure. The statistical population consisted of all agriculture faculty members in university of Tehran (Iran), (N=218). Using Cochran formula, 132 of these faculty members were selected as the study sample by proportionate stratified random sampling method (according to educational group). The questionnaire was the main instrument used for collecting data. This questionnaire consists of three parts. First part was related to personal and professional characteristics, second part of questionnaire was designed for evaluating the social capital. In this part, everything is based on Nahapiet and Ghoshal's social capital model [11] and according to this model, 14 items were prepared in format of 5-point Likert Scale (1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree) in which three dimensions of social capital i.e. structural, relational and cognitive dimensions are evaluated according to Nahapiet and Ghoshal's model. Finally, the third part of questionnaire evaluated the level of job satisfaction. In this part, studying the job satisfaction literature, 5 terms were prepared in format of 5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree) to evaluate the level of job satisfaction of faculty members. The validity of questionnaire was obtained by faculty members' opinions and suggestions in departments of management and agriculture extension and education, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient is applied to evaluate the reliability of research tool (Table 1). SPSS_{win20} and LISREL_{8.54} Software are applied to analyze the data in both descriptive and inferential statistics

Table 1. Calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient

Variables	N. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
Structural Social Capital	5	0.90
Relational Social Capital	4	0.75
Cognitive Social Capital	5	0.91
Job satisfaction	5	0.76

Table 2. Mean of social capital and job satisfaction of respondents

Variables	Mean	S. D.	Minimum	Maximum
Structural Social Capital	3.28	0.76	1	5
Relational Social Capital	3.36	0.63	1	5
Cognitive Social Capital	3.28	0.81	1	5
Job Satisfaction	3.06	0.76	1	4.6

*Mean is out of 5

Table 3. Relationship between social capital dimensions and job satisfaction of respondents

Social Capital Dimensions	r	Sig
Structural Social Capital	0.356	0.000
Relational Social Capital	0.463	0.000
Cognitive Social Capital	0.634	0.000

** significance at 1% level

Findings

The personal and professional characteristics:

The results indicated that the mean age of studied faculty members was 42.56 years old with standard deviation of 8.05 years old and they range from 29 to 67 years old. Also, the mean of job tenure of studied faculty members was 14.16 years with standard deviation of 7.47 years and their job tenure ranges from 1 to 30 years. The results of research revealed that 124 faculty members (93.9%) are male and only 8 ones (6.1%) are female. Among the studied faculty members, 112 of them (84.8%) are married and only 20 of them (15.2%) are single. According to the results of descriptive statistics, 7 individuals (5.3% of the studied faculty members) are in agriculture extension and education department, 29 of them (22%) in agronomy and plan breeding department, 11 of them (8.3%) in phytopathology department, 13 of them (9.8 %) in irrigation department, 31 of them (23.5%) in animal sciences department, 8 of them (6.1%) in mechanical engineering and agricultural machinery department, 7 of them (5.3%) in horticultural sciences department, 10 of them (7.6%) in agricultural economics department and finally, 3 of them (2.3%) are in food industry department.

- The amount of social capital and job satisfaction:

In order to investigation the level of social capital and job satisfaction of studied faculty members, the mean descriptive statistics is applied (Table 2).

According to results given in Table 2, it is observed that the level of all social capital dimensions among studied faculty members was in average mode (roughly 3 out of 5), which means social capital owns an average mode among studied faculty members. Also, according to results given in Table 2, it is observed that the level of job satisfaction of studied faculty members is in average mode, so that the mean is 3.06 out of 5.

The relationship between social capital dimensions and job satisfaction:

In this research, Pearson correlation coefficient is used to study the relationship between social capital dimensions and job satisfaction of studied faculty members (Table 3).

According to results given in Table 3, it is observed that there is a positive and significant relationship between all social capital dimensions, i.e. structural, relational and cognitive dimension of social capital and job satisfaction with significance of 1%. On the other hand, by 99% possibility, it can be stated that social capital has positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction of mentioned faculty members.

- Determination the influence of social capital dimensions on job satisfaction:

In this research, the method of structural equation modeling by software LISREL is applied to determination the

influence of social capital dimensions on job satisfaction of studied faculty members. Therefore, social capital dimensions including structural social capital (SSC), relational social capital (RSC) and cognitive social capital (CSC) and job satisfaction (JS) were entered as inputs in software LISREL. In addition, the structural model of relationships between latent variables of research (dimensions of social capital and job satisfaction) are shown with standardized factor loadings and fit indexes (Fig. 2) and brief information of path analysis related to effect of exogenous latent variables of researches (structural, relational and cognitive social capital) on endogenous latent variables of research i.e. job satisfaction of studied faculty members (Table 4).

There are several fit indexes to evaluate the structural modeling of fitting. In this research, according to Baumgartner & Homburg [16] and Shook et al. [17] suggestions, we used Chi-Square (χ^2) indexes with its significance (P), goodness of fit index (GFI), non-normed fit index (NNFI), incremental fit index (IFI), comparative fit index (CFI), the root square error of approximation (RMSEA) and root mean square residual (RMSR) for evaluation of structural modeling of fitting. Now, there is no accurate criterion for these indexes. However, the total instruction given below is mentioned in the literature: if χ^2 quantity is not significant, the amount GFI, NNFI, IFI and CFI indexes will be greater than 0.9 and the quantity if RMSEA and RMR will be lower than 0.05 and 0.1 respectively, the fitting model will be appropriate and acceptable. According to this, because of reported amount of fitting indexes (Fig.1), structural modeling of latent variables has an appropriate and acceptable fitting. Results given in Table 4 indicate that standardized path coefficient between structural social capital and job satisfaction is 0.49, the significance is in 1% level ($t=3.74$, $\gamma=0.49$). Also, according to results given in Table 4, it is observed that standardized path coefficient between relational social capital and job satisfaction is 0.56, the significance is in 1% level ($t=4.01$, $\gamma=0.56$). These results are also applied about cognitive social capital. According to results given in Table 4, it is observed that standardized path coefficient between cognitive social capital and job satisfaction is 0.65, the significance is in 1% level ($t=4.53$, $\gamma=0.65$). In addition, results given in Table 4 indicate that coefficient of determination (R^2) for job satisfaction equals with 0.78, i.e. 78% of variance changes related to job satisfaction of studied faculty members are determined by dimensions of social capital i.e. structural, relational and cognitive social capital. Thus, conceptual framework of research is confirmed.

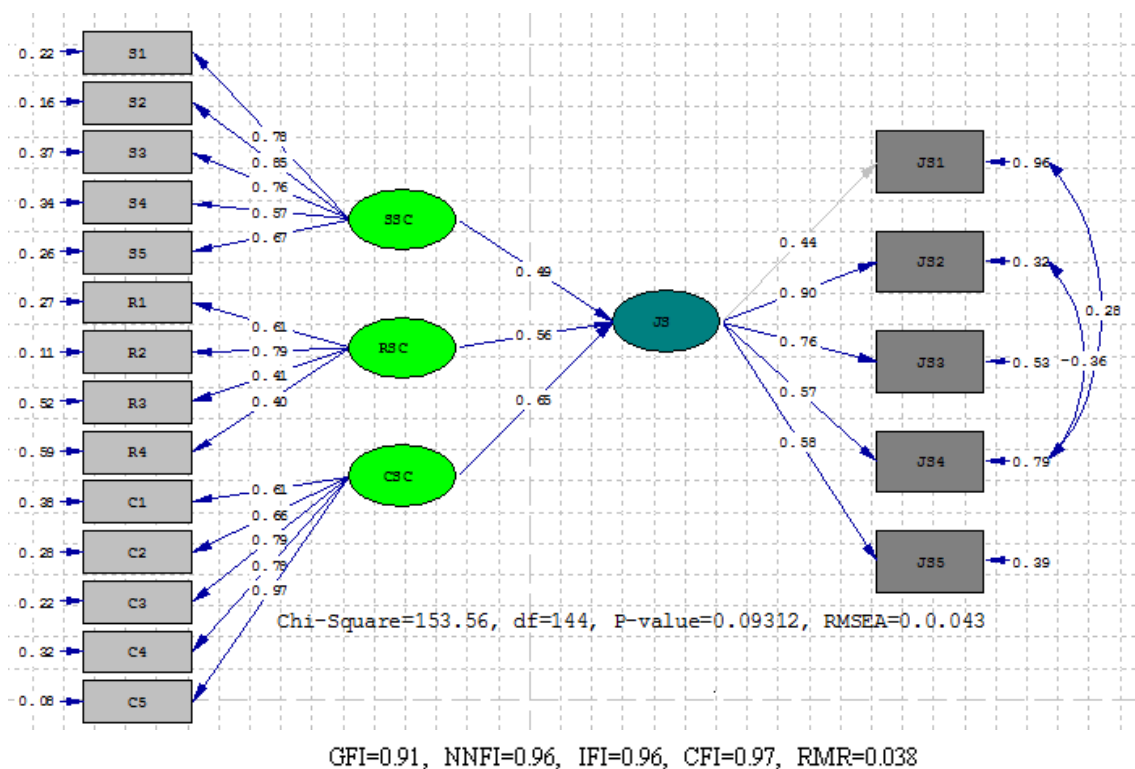


Figure 2. Structural model of research by indicating standardized factor loadings and fitting indexes

Table 4. Brief of information of path analysis

Exogenous Variables	Endogenous Variables	Standardized Coefficient	Standard Error	t	R ²
SSC	JS	0.49	0.11	3.74**	0.78
RSC		0.56	0.13	4.01**	
CSC		0.65	0.15	4.53**	

**significance at 1% level

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

As an economic sector, agriculture plays an important role in the development Iran's economy, so that, it is accounted as the second economic source in the country, after petroleum. Therefore, considering the development of agriculture sector and effective factors contributes to develop the economic of country and nation. The agriculture faculty members play an important and undeniable role in development of agriculture sector; so, due to different changes and transformations in organizations, human resources development is important and essential to develop the agriculture sector in universities and higher agriculture education. In this regard, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of social capital dimensions on job satisfaction of the agriculture faculty members in University of Tehran (Iran) and obtained the results as follows:

The results of correlation analysis indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between social capital dimensions i.e. structural, relational and cognitive social capital and job satisfaction of the agriculture faculty

members in University of Tehran (Iran). It means that social capital and its dimensions are related to improvement of job satisfaction between the agriculture faculty members. Investing the area of social capital development among the agriculture faculty members, we are able to improve job satisfaction and finally develop the human resources in higher agricultural education system. The mentioned finding is compatible with the results of Yamaguchi's research [13] which confirmed the significant and positive relationship between relational and cognitive social capital and job satisfaction.

Also, results of structural equation modeling showed that the social capital dimensions i.e. structural, relational and cognitive social capital can predict job satisfaction between the agriculture faculty members. Thus, it can be mentioned that how much faculty members, working in a department or faculty, have a more facilitating organizational structure and total communications (structural social capital), become trustful, respectful, friendly and honest with each other through developing the interactions and communications in the department or faculty (relational social capital), and try

to develop values, goals and common views in the department or faculty (cognitive social capital). Also, they will have higher social capital and job satisfaction and the human resources development will be increased to improve the performance and efficiency in higher agriculture education system. This result is compatible with findings in researches of Ebrahimian Jolodar [12] and Zhuo [14] Takash *et al.* [15], Ommen *et al.* [16] which have confirmed the effect of social capital and the effect of social capital and its dimensions on job satisfaction respectively.

It can be stated that, it has a great importance to pay attention to the social capital and its dimensions in order to improve job satisfaction for human resources development among the agriculture faculty members. Thus, the results of this research can help managers, planners and policymakers of higher agriculture education system of Iran to empower and develop the eligibilities of agriculture faculty members by investing into the reinforcement and improvement of social capital and its dimensions among them. It is recommended that managers, planners and policymakers of higher agricultural education system of Iran trend toward the improvement of social capital and its dimensions that finally lead to improvement of job satisfaction and as a result, it leads to the human resources development and achievement of higher performance and efficiency to compete with modern changing world. The investment by agriculture universities and higher education institutes in developing social capital through training effective communications, improving communicational processes and interactions between faculty members and managers inside and outside the universities, creating a culture and environment full of cooperation, mutual trust and team work, lead to develop the social capital and its dimensions in agriculture universities and higher education institutes and will accelerate the movement toward a university with higher performance and efficiency to maintain the existence of that university.

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