

“Collaborative school culture and educators’ job satisfaction relationship: gender as a moderator”

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COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL CULTURE AND EDUCATORS' JOB SATISFACTION RELATIONSHIP: GENDER AS A MODERATOR¹

Abstract

Job satisfaction is an important attitude of employees toward work contexts, which measures the effectiveness of various individuals in the workplace. Not surprisingly, studies on this topic were obtained by researchers on organizational behavior. This study deals with the association between collaborative school culture (CSC) and job satisfaction. In addition, gender is considered as a moderator. In total, 221 educators from high schools and universities took part in this study. It was revealed that CSC and its dimensions were positively associated with the educators' job satisfaction. The moderating effect of gender on CSC and job satisfaction was partial. Gender was found to moderate the effects of teacher collaboration and unity of purpose learning on job satisfaction, namely, the impact of the variables on job satisfaction were lower for women respondents than for men respondents. This study contributes to theory by giving evidence on the importance of each specific cultural dimension for job satisfaction and the possible impact of gender on the relationships. Education practitioners should consider introducing such a culture into their institutions to increase educators' job satisfaction.

Keywords

Collaborative School Culture (CSC), collaboration,
professional development, learning, partnership, job
satisfaction, gender

JEL Classification

M12, M14, J53

INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction, which relates to the employee's attitude towards his/her job attributes, is a main determinant influencing his/her performance (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001; Shore & Martin, 1989). Job satisfaction was also found to attenuate some undesirable behaviors in the workplace, for example, intention to leave (Kim & Brymer, 2011; Shore & Martin, 1989) and absenteeism (Steel & Rentsch, 1995). Considering the magnitude impacts of employees' job satisfaction, researchers have been continuing to discover various factors impacting job satisfaction. Most of them have studied job-related variables, such as job complexity, pay, leadership, and ethical climate (Kim & Brymer, 2011; Okpara & Wynn, 2008), personal attributes, such as intelligence and personality (Ganzach, 1998; Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000; Judge, Heller, & Klinger, 2008). However, since scholars believe that school culture may contribute to the members' job satisfaction (Masum, Azad, & Beh, 2015), extant research focusing on investigating the impacts of school culture and its dimensions on educators' job satisfaction has been ignored. The present study focuses on the effect of collaborative school culture and its dimensions (i.e., leadership collaboration, teacher collaboration, professional development, collegial support, unity of purpose learning, and learning partner-

¹ The earlier version of this paper was presented at the 4th Asia International Conference (AIC) in 2018, Langkawi, Malaysia.

ship) on job satisfaction. This culture is specific, and it is considered as an effective culture for educational institution to embed, while job satisfaction of educators is a crucial factor for enhancing their roles as knowledge disseminators, the success of students, and the performance of institutions. In addition, extant research has also revealed that the levels of job satisfaction may vary across genders, namely men and women may respond differently to various job contextual factors. These were rare, if any, studies on the impact of gender on the relationships between the culture and its dimensions on educators' job satisfaction.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

1.1. Organizational culture, collaboration theory and collaborative school culture (CSC)

As previously mentioned, the current study examines the impact of collaborative school culture (CSC) and its dimensions on educators' job satisfaction. Gender is considered as a moderator. Many scholars have already proposed different definitions of organizational culture and their dimensions (de Jong, 2010). A widely used definition was, however, proposed by Schein (2004) who defined organizational culture as "a pattern of shared basic assumption that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceived, think and felt on relation to those problems" (see also Bland, 2012). Organizational culture, therefore, influences all aspects of business and life in organizations, including their members' attitudes and behaviors (Shah, 2015).

This study includes the conception and theory of collaboration. Kożuch (2009) has discussed two categories of collaboration: first, which labeled as "collaboration" referred to any actions connected with cooperative attitude and expectation of mutuality, and, second, which labeled as confrontation referred to any actions consisting in rivalry or battle, which in practice take different forms of competition. Furthermore, Kożuch strongly argues that positive collaboration, as opposed to negative collaboration (i.e., battle or confrontation), is robust to enhance the organizational functionality (to note that the term collaboration used in this

paper is associated with the positive connotation of the terminology). In addition, collaboration is not merely driven by profit-oriented drivers, but it much relies on the need of persons for building interactions with counterparts and the interaction are implemented within formal and informal setting of relationships. Such collaboration will be connected with social exchange theory (Banks, Batchelor, Seers, O'Boyle, Pollack, & Gower, K., 2014; Kożuch, 2009), according to which the collaboration is developed mainly to increase mutual and communal benefits through more effective people connections shared in the networks. Kożuch (2009) states that an organization has to move from parochial (i.e., emphasizing on dominating opinion) to ethnocentric (i.e., accepting other's concern but still relying on his/own belief), and to synergic orientation (i.e., believing in the effectiveness of the openness and each opinion or concern may be a useful element for organizational operation and action). Colbry, Horwitz, and Adair (2014) have proposed a collaboration theory that consists of six themes. The first three themes are grouped as individual first, namely turn-taking (i.e., an agreement of one involving the acknowledgement of others), observing or doing (i.e., a passive-active dimension of participation, when participants have various reasons to give focus to personal or group benefit), and status seeking (i.e., refers to how others will perceive the interactions or contributions given). The second three themes within the team first category are building group cohesion (i.e., a leadership responsibility for team effectiveness), influencing others (i.e., leadership and membership responsibility to influence each other), and organizing work (i.e., management of activities within the group).

A more specific definition of the organizational culture for educational organizations is collaborative school culture (hereafter abbreviated as CSC in most parts), which is used in this study, name-

ly a cultural concept specifically implemented in school institutions (i.e., a topic that narrows to “organizational culture at schools,” Gumuseli & Eryilmaz, 2011). CSC refers to a school’s culture that emphasizes the importance of conducting complex problem solving and extensive sharing of knowledge, building a professional network to share knowledge, being willing for risk-taking, putting efforts on transmitting knowledge promptly, enhancing educators’ identification with their schools, and improving continuously the schools (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Gumuseli & Eryilmaz, 2011). CSC includes six dimensions, namely *collaborative leadership* (i.e., the extent to which the leaders of educational institutions establish and maintain collaborative relationships with educators, i.e., lecturers or teachers), *teacher collaboration* (i.e., the extent to which teachers are involved in constructive talks to build up the vision of their schools), *professional development* (i.e., the extent to which an educator can seek ideas from seminars, coworkers, and any other professional sources), *collegial support* (i.e., the extent to which educators can work together, trust and help each other to complete their tasks), *unity of purpose learning* (i.e., the extent to which the teachers understand their common missions), and *partnership* (i.e., the extent to which educators and parents can share with each other to enhance students’ performance) (Bland, 2012). Bland (2012) strongly argues that collaboration among educators in a school or university may improve shared knowledge, understanding the intentions of others’ actions, as well as allows for mutual inspiration. In similar vein, Kożuch (2009) argues that since very person brings his/her own patterns and norms of action, teacher collaboration may lead to the standardized action of participants.

1.2. CSC and job satisfaction

This study departed from a point of view that collaboration is organization rather than competition (Bland, 2012; de Jong, 2010; Kożuch, 2009). Extant literature has demonstrated the positive effect of organizational culture on job satisfaction of the members (e.g., Okta, Nimran, Musadiq, & Hamidah, 2015). Similarly, this study believes that the six CSC dimensions may also lead to the enhancement of members’ job satisfaction. Masum, Azad, and Beh (2015) showed that there were posi-

tive impacts of career growth, supervisory support, and team cohesion on job satisfaction among academic staffs, including full-time lecturers and professors from ten private universities in Bangladesh.

Based on collaborative theory, this study expects CSC and its six dimensions to have a positive impact on job satisfaction. When leaders of the organizations advocate collaborative relationships, members believe that this is the norm to obey. When everyone in the organization shares a common norm, it will improve harmonious interpersonal relationships, which in turn lead to higher satisfaction (McKinnon, Harrison, Chow, & Wu, 2003). Teacher collaboration will increase a sense of unity among educational members and in turn, their job satisfaction (Scarpello & Campbell, 1983). When the members of organizations have opportunities to increase their professional development, their job satisfaction will also be developed, because they are equipped with useful properties needed to survive in the highly competitive professional environment (Masum et al., 2015; Scarpello & Campbell, 1983). Collaboration theory suggests that collaborative working environment will lead to positive attitude of organizational members (Kożuch, 2009). There was collegial support at the workplace to foster cohesiveness among members and pleasant environment (Scarpello & Campbell, 1983), which, in turn, could increase their job satisfaction. When common vision and mission are shared among organizational members, a sense of oneness may be increased. The openness toward different ideas for the goodness of overall organizational effectiveness should become a norm (Kożuch, 2009); in turn, this condition may be expected to increase job satisfaction. Finally, a pleasant environment may arise due to opportunity to share with many parties concerned (i.e., learning partnership with leaders, school administrators, parents, etc.) (Bland, 2012) so that in teaching purposes also improves a sense of togetherness and, in turn, job satisfaction. Taken together, when every teacher in an institution perceives CSC as the rules that must be observed, a culture must maintain the stability and dynamic of organizations in the work process (Okta, Nimran, Musadiq, & Hamidah, 2015); it must enhance positive attitude among the members, including their job satisfaction. Therefore, the following set of hypotheses is proposed:

H1: (a) Leadership collaboration, (b) teacher collaboration, (c) professional development, (d) collegial support, (e) unity of purpose learning, and (f) learning partnership – all this is positively associated with educators' job satisfaction.

Many studies have demonstrated the impact of organizational culture on job satisfaction (e.g., Kavyalova & Kucherov, 2010; Masum et al., 2015; McKinnon, Harrison, Chow, & Wu, 2003; Okta et al., 2015). McKinnon et al. (2003), for example, revealed that organizational culture consisting of respect for people, team orientation, innovation, and stability was related to employees of a company in Taiwan. Similarly, Masum et al. (2015) showed that several dimensions of organizational culture were positively related to members' job satisfaction. Taken together, first, in accordance with previous hypotheses, which argue that all CSC dimensions are positively associated with educators' job satisfaction, and second, with the previous works, it can be expected that overall CSC is also positively related to job satisfaction. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: CSC is positively associated with educators' job satisfaction.

1.3. Moderating effect of gender

Gender (i.e., male or female) is a one's geographical attributes that influence how people perceive an event or a situation. Most studies have shown that women were mostly more satisfied with work than men, but the results are inconsistent (e.g., Bönthe & Krabel, 2014; Hauret & Williams, 2017). Bönthe and Krabel (2014) reported that although women were more satisfied than men, there was no significant difference found. Moreover, they stated that this finding indicates a paradox, given that women are generally given less favorable treatment in the labor market, for example, in terms of wages and career opportunities. Using graduates of a German university as a sample, it was found that women showed less satisfaction with the extrinsic dimension of job attributes (e.g., income, career opportunity), but greater satisfaction with intrinsic dimensions (e.g., applying their own ideas, tasks that challenging) than men (Bönthe & Krabel, 2014). Using data from several countries, Hauret and Williams (2017) found that female were more satisfied in all countries studied; however, the

difference was not significant in some countries (e.g., Belgium, Germany). In some countries, women reported to be less satisfied than men, but the difference was insignificant (e.g., in Czech Republic, Portugal). Recently, a survey on job satisfaction difference based on gender, in which nurses from municipal and private hospitals in Mumbai took part, found a negative and significant impact of intrinsic satisfaction among female respondents (a negative but insignificant impact was found among male respondents). Moreover, a positive impact of extrinsic satisfaction on job satisfaction among male respondents and a negative impact among female respondents were found (both insignificant) (Iyer, 2017).

Based on the previous discussion, it seems likely that the effect of gender on the relationships between various job elements and job satisfaction requires further investigation. An educator is a profession that relies on a high quality standard of the expertise needed. In particular, people who want to become educators (teachers or lecturers) must have higher educational background (undergraduate, master's, or doctoral degree). In universities, individuals are eligible to teach after finishing master's degree or even doctoral degree when they teach in higher levels of degree. Women are in the same condition, and in order to have the same career opportunities as men, they have to sacrifice more than men, e.g., to balance the role of wife, mother and educator. According to value-percept theory (Locke, 1976), satisfaction is a function of want, having and importance. One has his/her own expectation toward the job, perceives what he/she has (satisfaction = (want – have) x importance) (Judge & Klinger, 2008). Job satisfaction is a subjective measure of one (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; Judge & Klinger, 2008). Assuming that women and men perceive all job attributes as equally important, with the same results and the perceived higher sacrifices, it will be difficult for women to be satisfied, or they will be less satisfied than men. Therefore, the following set of hypotheses is formed:

H3: The impact of (a) leadership collaboration, (b) teacher collaboration, (c) professional development, (d) collegial support, (e) unity of purpose learning, and (f) learning partnership on job satisfaction is moderated by gender, namely the impact is weaker for female respondents.

H4: *The impact of CSC on job satisfaction is moderated by gender, namely the impact is weaker for female respondents.*

2. METHODS

2.1. Participants and procedure

Since this study focused on finding a level of educators' job satisfaction as result of CSC practice, teachers or lectures were targeted. Data for this study were taken from paper-based and online-based surveys among members of six high schools and 12 universities in Indonesia. A total of 300 participants were asked to complete the survey questionnaires, and 221 returned back, showing 74% of the responses. All returned responses were usable.

2.2. Measures

Collaborative School Culture (CSC). The Learning Community Culture Indicator (LCCI) developed by Williams, Matthews, Stewart, and Hilton (2007) was adopted to measure CSC. This scale consists of six dimensions comprising 30 items. Response options ranged from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5). CSC was the average score of dimensions. The alpha for this scale was .88. First, the leadership collaboration dimension consists of four items, $\alpha = .91$. Second, the teacher collaboration dimension consists of five items, $\alpha = .82$. Third, the professional development dimension consists of seven items, $\alpha = .85$. Fourth, the

collegial support dimension consists of five items. One item was dropped due to low loading score. The alpha for collegial support with four items was .77. Fifth, the unity of purpose learning dimension consists of five items, $\alpha = .88$. Finally, the learning partnership dimension consists of four items, $\alpha = .88$.

Job Satisfaction. A five-item scale from Brayfield and Rothe (1951) was used to assess job satisfaction. A sample question is "I feel quite satisfied with my current job." Response options also ranged from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5). The alpha for this scale was .90.

Gender. This study treats gender as a moderator (male = 1, female = 2).

Control variables. Gender was also treated as a control variable. Other control variables were age (in years; 30 or less = 1, more than 30-40 = 2, more than 40-50 = 3, and more than 50 = 4), marital status (married = 1, unmarried = 2), and income (in million rupiahs; up to 5 = 1, more than 5-10 = 2, more than 10-20 = 3, and more than 20 = 4).

3. RESULTS

Table 1 shows means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients. As presented, job satisfaction is positively correlated with CSC and all of its dimensions. The CSC dimensions were also positively correlated with CSC and they have positive and significant correlations with each other.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Age	2.72	1.06													
2. Marital status	1.10	.29	-.39**												
3. Education	1.43	.65	.16*	.00											
4. Income	1.63	.80	.35**	-.18	.36**										
5. Gender (men =1, women = 2)	1.52	.50	-.13*	.07	.02	.03									
6. Leadership collaboration	3.70	.87	-.01	.05	-.18**	-.02	-.10	(.91)							
7. Teacher collaboration	4.10	.55	.07	.00	.20**	.23**	-.05	.35**	(.82)						
8. Professional development	4.00	.51	.12	.02	.16*	.21**	.01	.50**	.72**	(.85)					
9. Collegial support	3.93	.54	.05	-.02	.03	.09	-.04	.38**	.65**	.69**	(.77)				
10. Unity of purpose learning	3.76	.71	.13	.01	-.05	.06	.00	.68**	.47**	.64**	.54**	(.88)			
11. Learning partnership	4.13	.58	.12	-.01	.19**	.22**	.14*	.49**	.67**	.75**	.59**	.64**	(.88)		
12. CSC	3.94	.50	.09	.01	.04	.14*	-.02	.76**	.76**	.86**	.76**	.85**	.84**	(.88)	
13. Job satisfaction	3.93	.61	.22**	-.03	.20**	.23**	.01	.41**	.53**	.67**	.54**	.53**	.77**	.70**	(.90)

Note: N = 221. CSC = collaborative school culture, all dimensions combined. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed). Cronbach's alphas are shown in the parentheses.

Table 2. Direct relationship testing

Variable	Job satisfaction							
	Model 1	Model 2 (H1)	Model 3 (H2)	Model 4 (H3)	Model 5 (H4)	Model 6 (H5)	Model 7 (H6)	Model 8 (H7)
Age	.18*	.17*	.19**	.14*	.17**	.10	.12	.14*
Marital status	.06	.03	.05	.05	.06	.03	.03	.03
Education	.12 [†]	.21**	.05	.06	.12*	.16**	.03	.13*
Income	.14 [†]	.11 [†]	.04	.03	.09	.11 [†]	.03	.05
Gender (men =1, women =2)	.02	.07	.05	.01	.04	.01	-.09	.03
Leadership collaboration		.45***						
Teacher collaboration			.51***					
Professional development				.66***				
Collegial support					.52***			
Unity of purpose learning						.51***		
Learning partnership							.75***	
CSC								.68***
F-value	4.39**	14.32***	17.49***	35.83***	20.39***	19.18***	56.22***	41.24***
R ²	.09	.29	.33	.50	.36	.35	.61	.54
Adjusted R ²	.07	.27	.31	.49	.35	.33	.60	.52

Note: N = 221; [†] $p < .1$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

3.1. Testing the direct relationship hypotheses

A series of hierarchical regression analyses using the SPSS statistical program were used to examine the direct relationships. Table 2 summarizes results. This study suggested that collaborative leadership (*H1a*), teacher collaboration (*H1b*), professional development (*H1c*), collegial support (*H1d*), unity of purpose learning (*H1e*), and learning partnership (*H1f*) were positively associated with educators' job satisfaction. As expected, the six dimensions were all positively associated with job satisfaction at $p < .001$ (see Models 2-7). Therefore, *H1a-f* were all supported. Furthermore, this study also suggested that there was a direct and positive impact of CSC on job satisfaction (*H2*). As shown, CSC was positively associated with job satisfaction (at $p < .001$, Model 8). *H2* was supported.

3.2. Testing the moderation relationship hypotheses

This study also suggested that the relationships, as stated in *H3a-f*, were moderated by gender, namely the effects of leadership collaboration (*H3a*), teacher collaboration (*H3b*), professional development (*H3c*), collegial support (*H3d*), unity of

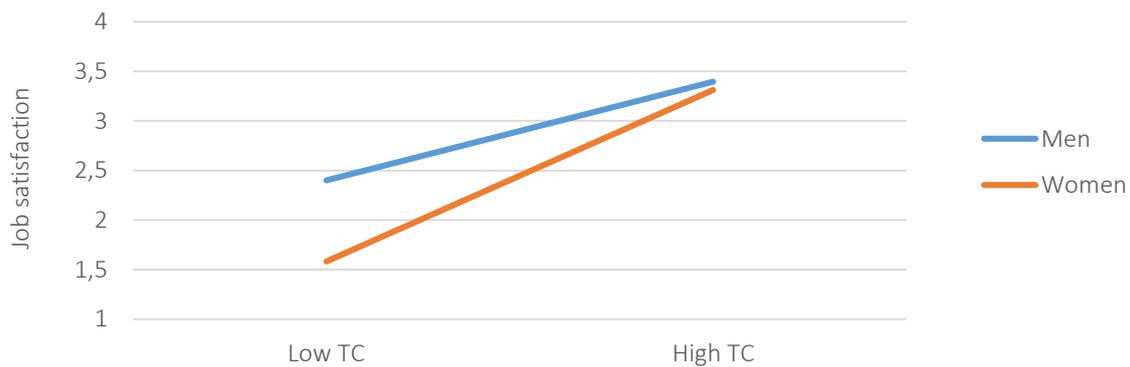
purpose learning (*H3e*), and learning partnership (*H3f*) on job satisfaction was each moderated by gender. The relationships would be weaker for women. This analysis involved control variables, which showed relatively significant effects on job satisfaction (i.e., age, education, and gender). As Table 3 shows, negative interaction effects were shown in all models indicating that the effects of those dimensions on job satisfaction were weaker for women respondents; however, there were only two significant interaction terms demonstrated, namely teacher collaboration \times gender and unity of purpose learning \times gender. Therefore, *H3b* and *H3e* were supported, whereas, *H3a*, *H3c*, *H3d*, *H3f* were not. Lastly, this study also suggested that the effect of CSC on job satisfaction was moderated by gender, as relationships would be weaker for women respondents (*H4*). The interaction term was negative, but not significant. Thus, *H4* was not supported.

The following figures were made to validate support for *H3b* and *H3e*. It was found that at both lower and higher level of teacher collaboration, women exhibited a lower degree of satisfaction than men (see Figure 1). In term of the slope of the line, it was shown that the line for men was flatter than the line for women. In Figure 2, however,

Table 3. Moderation relationship testing

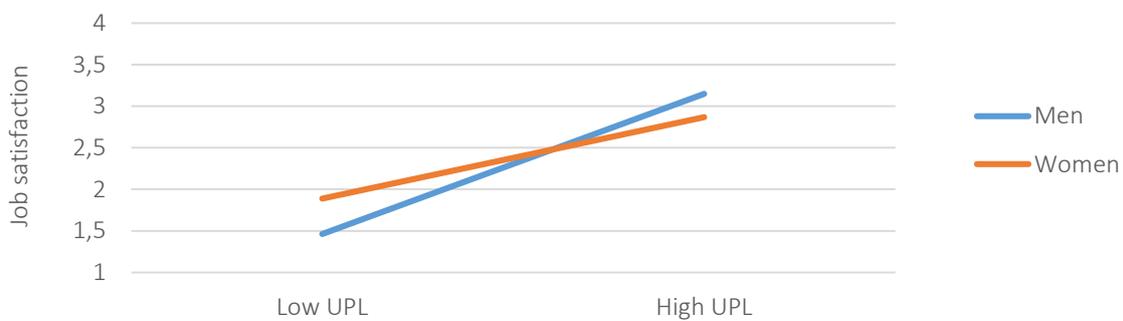
Variable	Job Satisfaction						
	Model 9 (H8)	Model 10 (H9)	Model 11 (H10)	Model 12 (H11)	Model 13 (H12)	Model 14 (H13)	Model 15 (H14)
Age	.19**	.16**	.13**	.16**	.11 [†]	.11*	.13**
Education	.25***	.07	.07	.15**	.19**	.03	.14**
Gender (men =1, women = 2)	.04	1.02	.04	.66	.73*	.14	.42
Leadership collaboration	.44*						
LC x Gender	.04						
Teacher collaboration		.88***					
TC x Gender		-1.03*					
Professional development			.67***				
PD x Gender			-.03				
Collegial support				.78***			
CS x Gender				-.67			
Unity of purpose learning					.92***		
UL x Gender					-.83*		
Learning partnership						.85***	
LP x Gender						-.26	
CSC							.82
CSC x Gender							-.41
F-value	16.43***	22.34***	42.78***	24.32***	23.90***	67.73***	49.78***
R ²	.28	.34	.50	.36	.36	.61	.54
Adjusted R ²	.26	.32	.49	.35	.34	.60	.53

Note: N = 221; [†] p < .1, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.



Note. TC = teacher collaboration.

Figure 1. Moderating effect of gender on the teacher collaboration-job satisfaction link



Note: UPL = unity of purpose learning.

Figure 2. Moderating effect of gender on the unity of purpose learning-job satisfaction link

women showed a higher level of job satisfaction at a lower level of the unity of purpose learning, vice versa. In term of the slope of the line, it was indicated that the line for women was flatter than the line for men. Overall, the results indicated gender moderated the relationships in slightly different ways. Therefore, H3b and H3e were confirmed.

4. DISCUSSION

The current study investigates the relationship between collaborative school culture (CSC) and job satisfaction. Gender is treated as a moderating variable. It was found that leadership collaboration, teacher collaboration, professional development, collegial support, unity of purpose learning, and learning partnership were positively related to job satisfaction. CSC had a positive effect on job satisfaction. Gender moderated the teacher collaboration → job satisfaction and unity of purpose learning → job satisfaction relationships. The study contributes to theory in several ways. First, it continuously validates the importance of organizational culture for job satisfaction (e.g., Masum et al., 2015; Okta et al., 2015; Shah, 2015). Second, more specifically, the study gives empirical evidence on the ability of CSC to increase educators' job satisfaction. Third, it indicates that women tend to report less job satisfaction than men. In practice, the findings suggest that educational institutions may increase their effectiveness if they wish to implement CSC. Since female educators for the most part may feel less satisfied with

work, their institutions may continue to practice women-friendly environments. For example, collaborative environment may be combined with more flexible job design, since by their nature they should foster the roles of other areas. For women, as compared to men, it was found that participation in building school visions and understanding of organizational common missions is less related to job satisfaction. Organizations may need to inform female employees about how the organizational visions and missions can be closely related to their personal visions and missions. In addition, another supporting effort is that managers need to improve the perceived justice in their organization, since women are generally treated unfavorably in the labor market (Bönte & Krabel, 2014).

This study has some limitations. First, a cross-sectional design was used, which can cause a general dispersion of the method. CSC can be better if it is assessed by unit supervisors. Second, a general measure of job satisfaction was used. It should not cover the job attributes of the educators. Future research should consider using more specific job satisfaction measurements. Further research can also broaden the findings by employing non-educational staffs within educational organizations, because their attitudes, such as job satisfaction, will lead to various forms of behavior (T. A. Judge & Klinger, 2008), and thus to organizational effectiveness. Further research should also investigate the moderating effects of the justice dimensions (Colquitt, 2001). This may depict a different understanding of the relationships.

CONCLUSION

This study develops a link between collaborative school culture (CSC), which includes its dimensions, and job satisfaction. The findings suggest that CSC and its dimensions are positively associated with job satisfaction. Leaders of educational institutions are encouraged to strengthen the practice of this culture in their organizations through adjustments related to internal situation, e.g., organizational culture, HRM policies and practices. The findings also suggest a moderating effect of gender on the relationship between teacher collaboration and job satisfaction and the relationship between unity of purpose learning and job satisfaction. The leaders of educational institutions should continue "gender equity policies" to increase perceived justice in their organizations. Another effort can be made by institution leaders. For example, women may need special treatments, e.g., more intensive communication about how the visions and mission of an institution can be closely related to their own visions and missions. This may increase job satisfaction of female employees.

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