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Research Article

Mediating Role of Mentoring between Job Stress and Job Satisfaction in Employees of an Iranian State Bank

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Abstract

A large number of research studies have been conducted on mentoring; however, a few of them have been done in developing countries (e.g., Iran). In addition, few researchers have investigated the mediating effect of mentoring functions on job stress and job satisfaction in bank staff. This study is aimed at exploring the mediating role of mentoring in the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction in employees. The study population consisted of all employees of state bank branches in Rasht city (north Iran). The participants of this study were 214 bank employees. The results revealed the mediating role of mentoring in the relationship of job satisfaction and job stress, showing that mentoring mediates the destructive effects of job stress and improves job satisfaction. The present study showed that mentoring is a general form of organizational support that can be effective in reducing job stress. Therefore, having a good mentor may act as a buffer against the destructive effect of job stress toward job satisfaction for employees within an organization. These results supported the proposed structural model.

Keywords: mentoring; job stress; job satisfaction; bank.

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In today's competitive world, job stress is a common and undeniable challenge for organizations and employees. A great deal of research works has studied the direct and indirect consequences of job stress. Results have shown that job stress reduces the employees' overall performance, decreases the quality of work, increases employee turnover and *absenteeism*, and generally reduces the organization's performance and effectiveness (Ajayi, 2018). Researchers consider job stress as harmful physical and psychological responses (Mursali et al., 2016), which has adverse consequences on the workplace (Hoboubi et al., 2017).

Among the most important factors affecting job stress, role conflict, role ambiguity, and work overload are notable (Shukla & Srivastava, 2016). Studies have shown that job stress impacts individual and organizational performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work engagement, and turnover intention (Beheshtifar et al., 2011). One of the most common and most important consequences of job stress is job dissatisfaction (Azad-Marzabadi & Tarkhorani, 2007). Halkos and Tzeremes (2008) stated that neo-classical theories have emphasized on the direct effects of job satisfaction on efficiency (Hoboubi et al., 2017). Other studies have also found that job stress can predict job satisfaction, and too much stress and job insecurity can reduce employees' job satisfaction (Smit et al., 2016).

The feeling of satisfaction with job is affected by various environmental, organizational, and individual factors (Lepojevic et al., 2018). Studies have shown that job satisfaction is one of the factors in turnover intention and organizational commitment (Azeez et al., 2016), organizational citizenship behavior (Swaminathan & Jawahar, 2013; Vatsa, 2013), and organizational performance (Bin, 2016). Additionally, a high level of employees' satisfaction has incremental effects on work engagement and efficiency (Pieters, 2017).

Studies have shown that mentoring can solve some of challenges in organizations, including job satisfaction and job stress. Mentoring is of paramount importance for organizations because it improves employees' organizational performance and transfer of experiences by experienced employees to less experienced ones (Illies & Reiter-Palmon, 2018; Shah et al., 2016).

To survive competitions, organizations increasingly need to acquire new knowledge and effectively share it with their employees throughout the organization (Harvey et al., 2009). Other research results have shown that mentoring causes a reduction in job stress and has significant impacts on improving job satisfaction (Kim et al., 2015; Lo et al., 2014; Robinson & Reio, 2012). Additionally, it increases work engagement and organization commitment (Illies & Reiter-Palmon, 2018) and reduces the rate of turnover in employees (Yun et al., 2016).

All jobs are potentially stressful to some extent; however, bank employees are under daily pressure and too much stress (Al-Alawi & Al-Alawi, 2014). Therefore, organizations need to take some measures to reduce job stress of their employees and increase their satisfaction since in a competitive environment, only organizations that have employees with positive attitude towards their jobs can survive (Pieters, 2017).

One of the essential parts of daily human life is occupation, which is generally associated with stress. Researchers believe that several factors contribute to the emergence and increase of job stress. Previous researches have demonstrated that conflict and ambiguity in the job are two significant stressors (Shukla & Srivastava, 2016). In addition, Greenberg and Baron (1995) stated that job stress has consequences, such as decreased efficacy, impaired functioning in the work environment, reduced creativity and interest in the job, and lack of the sense of responsibility and participation.

In a study on bank employees, Ajayi (2018) emphasized that some interventions at the organizational level are needed to prevent and manage job stress at the workplace because often it is the organizations and the work conditions that create stress. Abdolshah et al. (2018) studied bank employees and showed that interpersonal relationships between colleagues, the possibility to progress, promote, and receive rewards had the greatest impact on employees' satisfaction. Results of other research studies have shown that people who experience more stress in their job have lower job satisfaction (Pathak, 2012). Some researchers have emphasized that job stress is a vital factor for job satisfaction and job

satisfaction can protect employees against stressful factors. In other words, stress and job satisfaction affect each other inversely (Hoboubi et al., 2017; Sinha & Sinha, 2018; Verma, 2008).

Tsai (2018) and Oosthuizen et al. (2016) emphasized job satisfaction as a powerful predictor in the likelihood of staff turnover; so that when staffs are satisfied with their job, there is less probability of leaving the organization. Other researches have shown that intrinsic factors have a *bigger influence* on job satisfaction *than* extrinsic ones. Furthermore, job satisfaction is a key factor in increasing employees' motivation (Garg et al., 2018), and employees who had higher levels of job satisfaction felt happier at the workplace (Ozel & Bayraktar, 2018; Pathak, 2012; Smit et al., 2016). They also have a better performance and greater effectiveness (Pang & Lu, 2018; Wu et al., 2013).

Job stress and job satisfaction are two vital and determining psychological elements of organization employees' performance and efficiency. Therefore, organizations must pay attention to these factors and use interventions to control them. Given the expansion of organizations and their subsidiaries and the necessity of learning and using new technologies for employees (Jyoti & Sharma, 2017), mentoring can significantly help employees attain their goals. Researchers believe that organizations should apply mentoring as the main strategy for training and helping employees (McCarthy & Sheehan, 2014; Stuart & Wilson, 2015).

Several definitions have been presented for mentoring. These definitions refer to one thing: mentoring is a mutual relationship between a more knowledgeable person (mentor) who teaches and supports the less knowledgeable person (protege) in an organization. Given the above definition, mentoring is primarily an extremely developed socialization for staff (Madan & Srivastava, 2017). Unlike coaching, mentoring is a long-term committed relationship between mentor and employee (Coleman, 2016). Kram (1988) divided mentoring functions into two types: career-related and psychosocial functions. Today, many organizations are aware of the potential benefits of mentoring relationships, including psychological effects, such as positive entrepreneurial behaviors, desirable behaviors at work, and professional progress (Hu et al., 2016).

In particular, researchers have highlighted the positive effects of mentoring on increasing the level of self-efficacy (Lejonberg & Tiplic, 2016); job success and development (Doran et al., 2018; Jyoti & Sharma, 2015; Parsa et al., 2016); professional and personal growth of

employees, raising skill levels and improving employee attitudes (Nkomo et al., 2017); organizational learning (Simmonds & ZammitLupi, 2010); increasing job satisfaction (Eby et al., 2013; Jyoti & Sharma, 2015; Hatam et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2015; Yun et al., 2016); reducing work-related stresses (Kim et al., 2015; Tewari & Sharma, 2014; Lankau et al., 2006); reducing organization turnover rate (Kim et al., 2015; Lejonberg & Tiplic, 2016; Park et al., 2016; Yun et al., 2016); organizational commitment (Kim, 2014); perceived organizational support (Dawley et al., 2010); and increasing work engagement (Young & Perrewe, 2000).

Morton (2016) maintained that experiential learning and transfer of knowledge that takes place through mentoring process can help developing employees' organizational growth, increase efficiency and job satisfaction, and reduce job stress. Additionally, mentoring process seems to be necessary for organization survival and readiness to compete with other rivals (Morton, 2016).

Fogarty et al. (2017) indicated that in order to realize goals and have a more efficient educational programs, mentoring should concentrate on creating more solidarity between organizational and individual values. Employees who emulate their mentors and try to become like their mentors have a higher chance of becoming more professional and successful in their job. Nasser-Abu Alhija and Fresko (2014) stated that mentors have also emphasized on the similarity between mentor and mentee. Generally, people are interested in individuals who have something in common with them. Therefore, similarities in the culture, attitude, beliefs and behavior of mentor and employees can increase the likelihood of this modeling (Eby et al., 2013; Low et al., 2018; Mitchell et al., 2015). In this regard, Illies and Reiter-Palmon (2018) stated that some factors may reduce the effects of mentoring, including the inconsistency and the difference between the employee and mentor concerning personality, gender, values, ethnicity, and age. They also showed that the greater the similarity between mentor and employee, the more efficient and successful the relationship between them. Furthermore, organizational characteristics, such as the structure of mentoring and culture and the relationships of the mentor with novice employee strengthen job satisfaction (Jyoti & Sharma, 2015).

Given the above mentioned theoretical and research foundations, it could be stated that many studies have been conducted on mentoring, while a few of them have been done in the developing countries (e.g., Iran), and a few researchers have investigated the mediating

effect of mentoring functions on job stress and job satisfaction in Iranian bank employees. For reasons such as poor job security, low living standards, and economic problems, the level of job satisfaction and job stress is low in the developing countries (Lepojevic et al., 2018). Therefore, conducting researches of this kind are necessary. The purpose of the current research is to study the mediating role of mentoring in the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction.

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Job stress has a negative effect on job satisfaction in bank employees.

Hypothesis 2: Mentoring has a positive effect on job satisfaction in bank employees.

Hypothesis 3: Job stress has a negative effect on mentoring in bank employees.

Hypothesis 4: Mentoring has a mediating role in the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction in bank employees.

Method and Measures

The study population consisted of all employees of a state bank branches in Rasht City (the north Iran) in 2018. The bank studied in this research is one of the largest economic centers in Iran and also the largest bank in the Middle East. This bank has 50 branches and 1200 employees only in Rasht city (northern Iran). In present research, eight branches were randomly selected.

In order to determine the optimal sample size, Klein's recommendation (Kline, 2016) of "the ratio of 20 samples per parameters (not including the variables) in the model" was used. Additionally, in order to handle missing data and the possible lack of cooperation by some subjects, the total sample size was increased to 225 considering a dropout rate of 25%. The participants were selected using census sampling method. Totally 225 questionnaires were administered and out of which 214 were returned. Nine questionnaires were dropped out due to insufficient and corrupted data and the rest were processed using correlation methods and structural equation modeling (SEM).

The participants' age range was 23 - 56 years with 1-30 years of work experience. Totally, 185 men and 29 women participated in the study including 172 married individuals and the rest were unmarried. All of these personnel were counter employee and their main tasks included opening or closing accounts, depositing and withdrawing money for clienteles, fixing the faulty forms, matching signatures and authenticating customers, answering to the

chief supervisor, the vice president, and chief of the branch, and controlling the turnover at the end of the business day.

Instruments

Mentoring Functions Questionnaire (MFQ-9): This questionnaire was designed by Scandura and Ragin's in 1993. Its short form contains nine items and three subscales of psychological support, career support, and role modeling. The items are designed based on a 5-point Likert's scale (1 = "Strongly Disagree" to 5 = "Strongly Agree"). The questionnaire assesses how mentoring works from employees' perspective. The higher the score obtained the higher the level of mentoring functions. Rezaei et al. (2016) reported Cronbach's alpha value of this tool equal to .94 and in the present work, this value was equal to .72.

Job Stress Survey (JSS): Turnage and Spielberger (1991) designed the questionnaire with 30 items and three stress scales and eight sub-scales. The scales of stress are Job Stress Frequency, Job Stress Severity, and Job Stress Index and the items are designed based on a 9-point Likert's scale. So that, nine is the highest level of stress with regard to each event. This questionnaire describes various stressful events at the workplace (Ghanbari, 2006). For this scale, the Cronbach's alpha value was reported .90 in Holmström (2008). The subscales of the Persian version of JSS included Duty, Participation and Decision Making, Responsibility, Workplace, Protection, Competition, Relationships, and Promotion and Reward. Ghanbari's (2006) supported validity and reliability for these subscales. In the present research, the Cronbach's alpha for the scale was 0.88.

Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ): This questionnaire, initially consisted of 100-item, was presented by Minnesota University (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951), later modified and truncated it to a 20-item questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1967). According to many research studies, this questionnaire has 2 sub-scales of intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction (Martins & Proença, 2012). The items are designed based on a 5-point Likert's scale (from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree"), where higher scores mean a better job satisfaction. In the study conducted by Khosrozadeh et al. (2016), the value of Cronbach's alpha for this scale was reported .80. In this research, Cronbach's alpha was .69.

Statistical analysis

First, the variables were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Then, correlation matrix of the research variables was reported. Finally, structural equation modeling (SEM) was applied for

fitting the structural model and testing the suppositions. To conduct descriptive and correlation analyses, SEM, SPSS-24, and AMOS-24 software were used.

Results

Descriptive indices, such as mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis are presented in Table 1. Kline (2016) stated that the variables must be normally distributed in causal modeling. He argued that the absolute value of kurtosis and skewness should not be higher than 3 and 10 respectively. According to Table 1, the absolute value of kurtosis and skewness of variables are less than the proposed by Kline (2016); thus, the presupposition of causal modeling i.e. univariate normality - holds true.

Table 1.
Variables' descriptive indices (N=214)

	M	*SD*	Skewness		Kurtosis	
			Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Job Satisfaction (total score)	60.24	7.78	0.064	0.172	0.874	0.342
Internal satisfaction	37.05	5.37	-.195	.166	.420	.331
External satisfaction	17.34	3.63	.145	.167	.721	.332
Job Stress (total score)	160.94	33.02	-0.479	0.172	1.834	0.342
Duty	28.52	6.68	-.395	.166	.841	.331
Participation and Decision making	16.14	4.46	-.017	.166	.290	.331
Responsibility	16.74	5.05	-.237	.166	.106	.331
workplace	22.02	6.52	-.377	.166	.354	.331
Protection	11.81	3.852	-.434	.166	-.148	.331
Competition	4.94	2.41	.080	.166	-.779	.331
Relationships	9.66	3.82	-.070	.166	-.483	.331
Promotion and reward	11.00	3.78	-.083	.166	-.423	.331
Mentoring (total score)	29.02	4.88	0.35	0.172	0.290	0.342
Vocational support	8.77	2.396	.275	.166	.145	.331
Psychosocial support	8.50	2.377	.155	.166	-.140	.331
Role modeling	7.98	2.281	.181	.166	.836	.331

Table 2 lists the correlation matrix of the research variables. According to this table, a significant negative relationship exists between job satisfaction and job stress ($p < .01$). The relationship of job satisfaction with mentoring is significantly positive ($p < .01$). The relationship of job stress with mentoring is significantly negative ($p < .01$).

Table 2.
Correlation matrix of research variables (N=214)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1-Job Satisfaction (total score)	1															
2-Internal satisfaction	.864**	1														
3-External satisfaction	.740**	.350**	1													
4-Job Stress (total score)	-.193**	-.035	-.292**	1												
5-Duty	-.136*	.024	-.264**	.776**	1											
6-Participation and Decision making	-.065	.072	-.164*	.697**	.589**	1										
7-Responsibility	-.189**	-.044	-.267**	.728**	.536**	.431**	1									
8-workplace	-.170*	-.042	-.244**	.777**	.513**	.478**	.633**	1								
9-Protection	-.080	.039	-.167*	.686**	.564**	.483**	.394**	.424**	1							
10-Competition	-.152*	-.098	-.163*	.495**	.275**	.423**	.295**	.414**	.287**	1						
11-Relationships	-.118	-.057	-.150*	.600**	.381**	.354**	.434**	.350**	.426**	.219**	1					
12-Promotion and reward	-.117	.010	-.184**	.622**	.665**	.405**	.506**	.457**	.458**	.132	.284**	1				
13-Mentoring (total score)	.321**	.098	.481**	-.327**	-.315**	-.206**	-.217**	-.185**	-.341**	-.118	-.211**	-.202**	1			
14-Vocational support	.274**	.064	.425**	-.289**	-.284**	-.211**	-.220**	-.154*	-.294**	-.086	-.137*	-.222**	.762**	1		
15-Psychosocial support	.218**	.105	.275**	-.241**	-.248**	-.218**	-.110	-.128	-.235**	-.126	-.187**	-.134	.749**	.339**	1	
16-Role modeling	.234**	.053	.389**	-.209**	-.179**	-.031	-.162*	-.136*	-.241**	-.053	-.154*	-.099	.753**	.374**	.351**	1

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

The maximum probability method (MaxProb) was used for SEM test and to fit it to collected data. The removal of outliners, multivariate normalization, sample logical volume, and sampling adequacy are needed to use this method. In order to investigate multivariate outliers, Mahalanobis distance index was used. Mahalanobis distance values are calculated using AMOS software for each sample, and two significance levels (p-value1 and p-value2) are reported for this index. In the case that the both significance levels for the Mahalanobis index are less than .01 for a participant, the participant's responses are significantly different from those of other respondents.

Based on this analysis, there were nine outliners excluded from SEM test, and the analyses were carried out on the basis of the remaining samples. In order to investigate multivariate normality in this research, normalized multivariate kurtosis value of Mardia was applied. In this research, this value was equal to 2.659 which is less than 12 calculated using p (p+2) formula, where p is the number of latent variables in the model (*n* = 3) (Teo & Noyes, 2012). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was applied to compute the statistical power and confirm sample size adequacy prior to performing factor analysis and KMO value was more than .70 for all variables (job satisfaction = .753, job stress = .827, and mentoring = .724); Therefore, sampling is adequate to conduct the SEM analysis.

To evaluate the model fit, indices suggested by Gefen et al. (2000) were applied. These indices consist of χ^2/df (Goodness of Fit Index (GFI); Comparative Fit Index (CFI); Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI); Parsimony Fit Index (PNFI); and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). These indices are reported in Table 3.

Table 3.
Goodness of fit indices of tested model

χ^2	Df	χ^2/df	GFI	CFI	AGFI	PNFI	RMSEA
135.96	62	2.19	.90	.91	.925	.595	.075

According to table 3, except for PNFI, other fit indices including GFI, AGFI, and CFI are in the accetable ranges proposed by Gefen et al. (2000). In addition, the RMSEA and χ2/df values are in the acceptable range. Given these findings, the tested model fits the data properly. Table 4 shows direct, indirect, total effects, and explained variance of the variables.

Table 4.
Direct, indirect, total effects, and explained variance of variables

Variable	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Explained Variance
On Job Satisfaction From				0.17
Job stress	-0.04	-0.17**	-0.21**	
Mentoring	0.39**		0.39**	
On mentoring From				0.19
Job stress	-0.44**		-0.44**	
* 0.05, ** 0.01				

As presented in Table 4, the direct effect of job stress on job satisfaction is negative which is not significant ($p > .05$). Therefore, the first hypothesis is not confirmed. The indirect effect of job stress on job satisfaction is significantly negative ($p < .01$). Therefore, the total effect is significantly negative ($p < .01$). Mentoring's direct effect on job satisfaction is significantly positive ($p < .01$). Therefore, the second hypothesis is confirmed.

The direct effect of job stress on mentoring is significantly negative ($p < .01$). Therefore, the third hypothesis is confirmed. Given that the indirect effect of job stress on job satisfaction by "mentoring" is significant, the mentoring variable has a mediating role between job satisfaction and job stress. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis was confirmed. Figure-1 illustrates the research tested model.

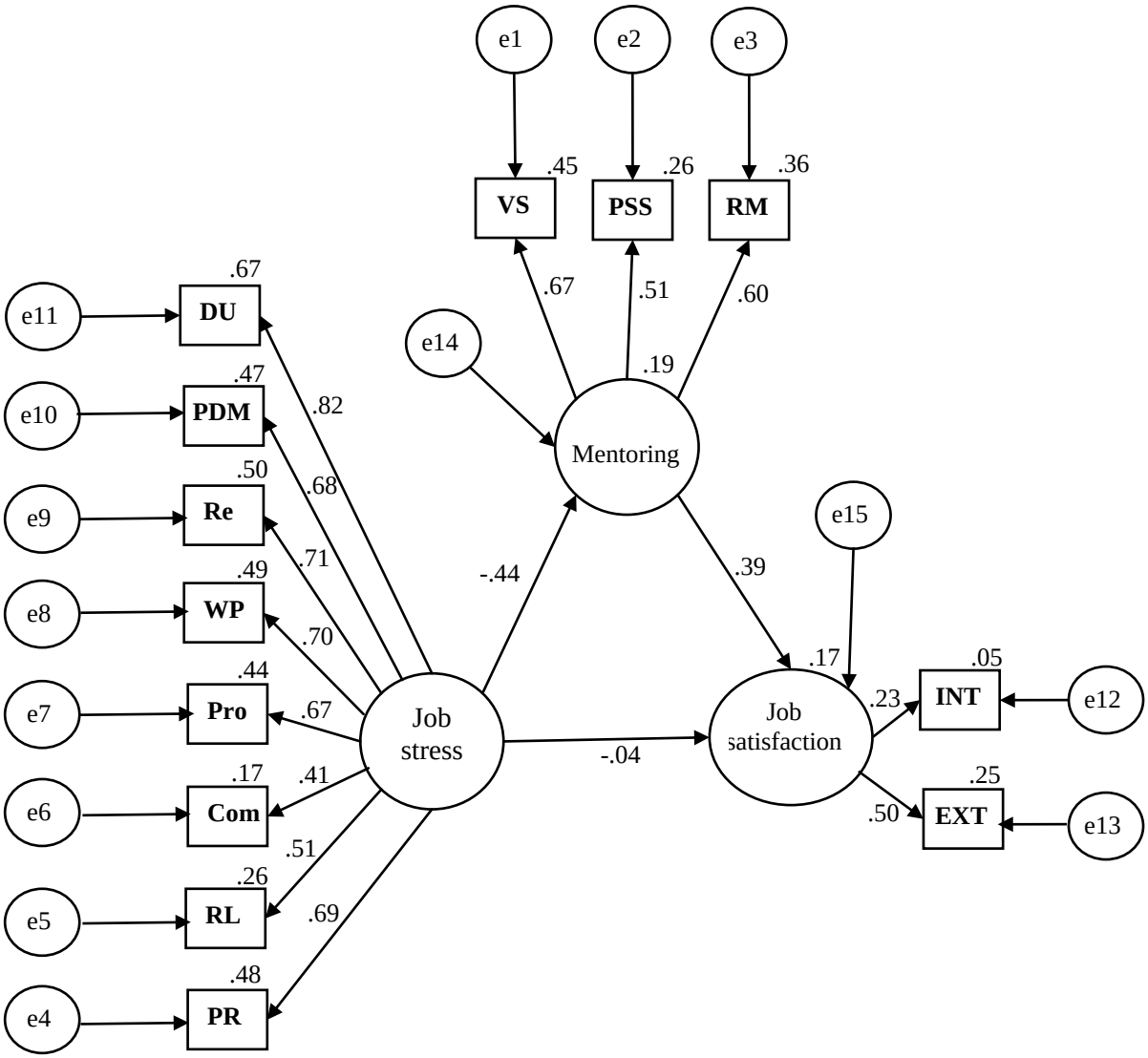

Figure 1: *Structural relationships of job satisfaction and job stress with mentoring mediation**
***Note:** **DU**: Duty, **PDM**: Participation and Decision making, **Re**: Responsibility, **WP**: workplace, **Pro**: Protection, **Com**: Competition, **RL**: Relationships, **PR**: Promotion and reward, **VS**: Vocational support, **PSS**: Psychosocial support, **RM**: Role modeling, **INT**: Internal satisfaction, **EXT**: External satisfaction.

In Figure 1, mentoring is pictured as a mediating variable. Job satisfaction and job stress are endogenous and exogenous variables, respectively. The large circles represent the latent variables and squares represent sub-scales for the same latent variables. The small circle also represents error variances. The unidirectional arrows from large circles to squares indicate which factor the item is loaded on. The values written on the arrows indicate the correlation coefficient of the items with each factor and the numbers on the squares represent the amount of variance of each item that can be explained by the factor. According

to this figure, 18% of job stress variance is explained by job stress and mentoring and 25% of mentoring variance is predicted by job satisfaction.

Discussion

The mediating role of mentoring in the relationship of job stress with job satisfaction in employees of an Iranian state organization was examined. The initial results showed that job satisfaction is negatively associated with mentoring, which is in line with the results obtained by Illies and Reiter-Palmon (2018). Additionally, they showed job stress was negatively associated with mentoring. This finding is also in agreement with those obtained by Smit et al. (2016). Over the recent decades, banking system has undergone major changes in its structures and the customers' use of banking services has significantly increased. Therefore, due to high work pressure, banking is classified as a highly stressful job, which has negative impacts on mental and physical health. Giorgi et al. (2017) conducted a meta-analysis on research papers from different regions worldwide, including five papers from European countries (Spain, Netherlands, Cyprus, Italy, and Iceland), nine papers from Asian countries (India, China, Pakistan, and Malaysia), four from Brazil, and two from African countries (South Africa and Nigeria). This meta-analysis revealed that mental health issues had increased in banking sector and the main cause was stress. In addition, 32% of bank employees had developed depression symptoms justifying the diagnosis of clinical depression. Additionally, the authors found a strong association between the low social support and depression symptoms, confirming earlier findings (Wang et al., 2010; Yu et al., 2013). Therefore, job stress is known as a serious risk factor of mental and social health of bank employees. The findings showed that the effects of long-term ongoing stresses are far more destructive and dangerous than an acute stress during a specific time (Brewer & McMaha-Landers, 2003; Spielberger & Vagg, 1999). Moreover, exposure to long-term stress may result in job burnout (Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993). Excessive cortisol secretion caused by ongoing stresses may interfere with the regulation of the negative feedback of hypothalamus–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) system, increase the level of epinephrine, and lead to long-term activation of sympathetic nervous system (SNS) (Sara et al., 2018).

International Labour Organization (ILO) in Switzerland reported several concerning factors for bank employees; these factors include time pressure, ergonomic problems, conflicting roles, and beyond role expectations that increasingly raise stress in employees (Giga & Hoel, 2003). The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has also

stated that stress plays an important role in chronic health problems, especially cardiovascular diseases, musculoskeletal disorders, and mental disorders; and the most common of them are depression and job burnout (NIOSH Working Group, 1999). Job stress occurs when the organization managers expect employees to do beyond their capability and ability. The imposed stress reduces the desirable performance, concentration, and effectiveness of employees, and on the other hand, the organization's dissatisfaction with the results of employees' performance leads to a reduction in employees' confidence. All these lead to more stress and this cycle continues so that it eventually reduces job satisfaction.

Chang and Oswari (2011) believed that stress affects the attitudes and psychological states of employees (e.g., job satisfaction as one of the significant factors) prior to behavioral outcomes. In their view, stress, at first, weakens psycho-emotional energy and attitudes of an individual, and then, gradually leads to a reduction in job satisfaction (Golparvar et al., 2012). Due to stress imposed on them in the organization, employees try to avoid workplace annoyances by absenteeism and turnover, which are both important signs of job dissatisfaction. The behavioral symptoms of stress at individual level include lack of interest in job, undesirable interpersonal behavior; and at organizational level they are absenteeism, turnover, deviant workplace behavior, and organizational non-commitment.

The SEM results showed that mentoring has a mediating role in the relationship of job stress with job satisfaction and can result in a decrease in stress adverse effects on job satisfaction. The results showed that direct effects of job stress on job satisfaction was insignificant; however, the indirect effects of job stress on job satisfaction became significant with mentoring as mediator variable. This is in line with the results of other researches including Kim et al. (2015). These results suggest that mentoring has a key role in reducing the destructive effects of job stress. In other words, managers' mentoring role toward bank employees (job support and psychosocial support) can improve the employees' job satisfaction and reduce the adverse effects of job stress. Job satisfaction is an important issue in all organizations; however, it is more important in organizations like banks where employees' commitment and performance are very important and critical. In line with results by Al-Alawi and Al-Alawi (2014), results obtained by the current research show that bank employees experience a significant level of job stress, and more than one half of the respondents reported time pressure, work overload, long hours of work, and new and unfamiliar tasks as stressors.

Today, the use of mentoring relationships with the aim of developing employees in organizations is rapidly increasing (Nkomo et al., 2017). Research studies have revealed a strong correlation between mentoring and human resources development. On the other hand, mentoring is one of the best methods of knowledge sharing and learning among individuals of an organization and results in intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction of individuals by providing a friendly work environment. Therefore, teaching managers to act as a mentor in organizations is a kind of investment on human resources. Research studies in this regard, have shown that mentoring increases staff's value and positively affect the overall performance of employees and organization (Shah et al., 2016). It also makes staff feel that the organization is willing to invest in their staff; therefore, the sense of loyalty and commitment to the organization is strengthened in them and leads to a reduction in organization turnover. This, also, save organizations the costs of recruiting and new workforce training. On the other hand, often it is the organizations themselves and their conditions that create stress; therefore, stress prevention and management at workplace needs interventions at the organizational level. Researchers have suggested that organizations must have an arranged program to help employees to adapt to the organization (Egan & Song, 2008) and control and reduce the stress of their employees. Mentoring is one of the potential ways to achieve this purpose (Ajayi, 2018). Other methods suggested for stress reduction are redesigning tasks, more accurate placement of employees based on their capabilities, reducing workload, explaining roles to employees, creating more flexible work plans, and providing employees social support and proper rewarding and encouraging systems.

Limitations and future orientations

One of the limitations of this research was its limitation to one organization, so generalizing the results to other organizations and industries should be done with caution. Moreover, the research data were gathered from the organization's employees, not coaches and supervisors. In addition, further research is needed to perform a longitudinal plan to further explore the effects of stressors that often occur over long periods of time. Managers can use educational programs, including time management and relaxation exercises to decrease stress. However, it should be borne in mind that if the main causes of stress in organizations are not eliminated, the effects of these trainings will be short; therefore, as a general rule, measures should be taken at the organizational level to reduce job stress.

Conclusion

Stress is the basis of all psychological problems and affects all aspects of life. Among psychological consequences of job stress are negative attitude and decreased job satisfaction. In addition to focusing on the organization efficiency, managers should put emphasis on improving individuals' attitudes toward organization and working conditions. There was an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and job stress and also an inverse relationship between job stress and mentoring. However, it turned out that there was a direct relationship between job satisfaction and mentoring. It is inferred from the results of this research that mentoring is a general form of organizational support that can be effective in reducing job stress and job burnout. Therefore, a mentor may act as a buffer for employees. Multilateral support from mentors reduces stress and leads to optimum performance of employees. The improved performance can, in turn, result in the organization satisfaction with individual as well as the individual self-satisfaction.

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