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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Teacher Job Satisfaction and Working Environment: A Systematic Review of Recent Studies

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ABSTRACT

Teacher job satisfaction is widely acknowledged as a cornerstone of educational effectiveness, influencing teacher retention, professional engagement, and student outcomes. This systematic review explored the role of the working environment in shaping teacher job satisfaction. Using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework, the review synthesized evidence from 22 empirical studies published between 2019 and 2024. The findings reveal that satisfaction is closely linked to infrastructure, instructional resources, workload management, supervision, recognition, and staff welfare. Well-resourced schools with manageable workloads and supportive supervision were consistently associated with higher satisfaction, whereas resource shortages, authoritarian leadership, and limited recognition contributed to dissatisfaction. Recognition of individual and collective achievements, coupled with welfare initiatives addressing both financial and emotional needs, fostered loyalty and strengthened long-term professional commitment. These results suggest that improving the working environment is critical to sustaining motivated teachers and ensuring educational quality. The review calls for future research comparing different contexts to deepen understanding of how workplace conditions influence teacher satisfaction.

Keywords: Teacher job satisfaction; working environment; supervision; workload; staff welfare; recognition

INTRODUCTION

Teacher job satisfaction can be understood as the sense of fulfillment that arises when teachers feel their work aligns with their personal and professional expectations. According to Toropova (2019), satisfaction is closely tied to teachers' experiences of school working conditions and their professional roles. In supporting this perspective, Viotti (2020) notes that both motivating factors, such as work meaning, and hygiene factors, such as superior support, play a central role in shaping satisfaction. Similarly, Ker (2022) explains that satisfaction is more strongly influenced by environmental and professional development factors

than by teachers' demographic attributes. In the same line, Ortan (2021) emphasizes that collaboration with colleagues, student behavior, and supportive leadership are central elements that foster satisfaction among teachers, demonstrating its multidimensional nature.

The importance of teacher job satisfaction extends well beyond individual well-being, influencing the broader educational process. Lopes (2020) observes that satisfied teachers contribute to improved student achievement and overall school effectiveness. Building on this, Jentsch (2022) explains that supportive environments reduce teacher stress, strengthen self-

efficacy, and enhance long-term professional commitment. In another context, Mgaiwa (2021) shows that job satisfaction reduces turnover intentions in Tanzanian universities, helping retain experienced academic staff. Fang (2023) adds that in vocational education, satisfaction is especially critical in ensuring stability of the teaching force and strengthening the attractiveness of the profession. Collectively, these perspectives affirm that teacher job satisfaction plays a vital role in sustaining educational quality and institutional stability.

Strategies adopted to enhance teacher satisfaction vary across educational systems, reflecting contextual realities. For example, Toropova (2019) found that in Sweden, cooperative practices among teachers, balanced workloads, and effective discipline management were central to teacher satisfaction. In supporting this, Enwezor (2022) reported that Nigerian colleges of education benefitted when professional development and mentorship programs were prioritized. Similarly, Habibi (2024) showed that in Indonesia, teacher self-efficacy and supportive school climates were the most influential predictors of job satisfaction and performance. In another example, Hee (2020) observed in Malaysia that leadership approaches and workload management shaped satisfaction among academic staff in private institutions. These international accounts reveal that while strategies differ, the creation of supportive environments is consistently associated with higher satisfaction among teachers.

The working environment itself emerges as a recurrent determinant of teacher satisfaction across multiple settings. In the case of Pakistan, Muhammad (2022) found that teachers in private schools who experienced a positive and supportive workplace reported greater satisfaction with their jobs. Similarly, Fang (2023) demonstrated in China that participatory school climates combined with teacher self-efficacy improved vocational teachers' satisfaction levels. In another context, Viotti (2020) in Italy revealed that psychosocial factors such as job demands, role clarity, and superior support influenced teacher satisfaction in enduring ways. Supporting this view, Mgaiwa (2021) confirmed in Tanzania that teamwork, participatory decision-making, and resource availability were central predictors of academic staff satisfaction, demonstrating that workplace conditions often outweigh personal attributes in shaping professional contentment.

Even with these contributions, there remain clear gaps that necessitate a systematic review. For instance, Bahtilla (2021) established that collaboration, motivation, and decision-making opportunities affect teacher satisfaction, yet the interactions among these factors are not well explained across contexts. Similarly, Manap (2023) found that workplace conditions strongly influence job satisfaction in Islamic private schools, but this work was limited to a narrow institutional scope. In another case, Syafii (2020) observed that university lecturers' satisfaction in Indonesia was linked to workplace conditions, but evidence from other educational levels was fragmented and inconsistent. In supporting this observation, Dewi (2021) confirmed that involvement and morale enhanced teacher satisfaction in Indonesian schools, yet such findings lacked broader comparative analysis. Consequently, there is a pressing need for the present systematic review, which seeks to synthesize evidence across countries and contexts to provide a comprehensive understanding of how working environments shape teacher job satisfaction and to identify directions for future research.

METHODOLOGY

This review adopted a systematic literature review design in line with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. The use of the PRISMA framework ensured transparency, rigor, and reliability in identifying, screening, and synthesizing studies that investigated the role of the working environment in shaping teacher job satisfaction.

Search Strategy

An extensive search was carried out in major academic databases, including Elsevier, Emerald, Sage, Springer Link, Taylor & Francis, Wiley, Frontiers, and MDPI. Boolean operators were applied to refine search terms, combining keywords such as "job satisfaction," "teacher," "working environment," and "education." For example, one search query was formulated as ((job satisfaction) AND (teacher) AND (working environment)). The search was limited to peer-reviewed journal articles published in English between 2019 and 2024 to ensure recency and relevance.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The eligibility of studies was determined using predefined criteria. Inclusion criteria required that studies: (i) focused on teachers in schools, colleges, or universities; (ii) employed empirical designs based on primary data; (iii) examined either antecedents or

outcomes of teacher job satisfaction in relation to the working environment; and (iv) were accessible in full text. Exclusion criteria ruled out studies that were: (i) comparative without environmental emphasis, (ii) limited to measurement or validation of job satisfaction instruments, (iii) reliant solely on secondary or meta-analytic data, and (iv) non-empirical works such as reviews, proceedings, editorials, or dissertations.

Screening Process

The initial search produced 198 records. After removing duplicates, book chapters and inaccessible full texts, 99 studies remained for screening based on titles and abstracts. At this stage, 41 articles that did not directly address teacher job satisfaction within the working environment were excluded. A detailed eligibility assessment was then carried out and 36 articles were excluded for quality purposes resulting into 22 studies

that fully met the inclusion criteria and were used in the study.

Data Extraction and Analysis

Relevant information was systematically extracted into a matrix to ensure consistency and comparability. Extracted data included author(s), publication year, country of study, sample size and characteristics, theoretical framework, research design, antecedents and outcomes of teacher job satisfaction, and stated limitations. Descriptive synthesis was used to summarize publication patterns by year, geography, and methodology, while thematic analysis enabled the categorization of antecedents (individual, organizational, environmental) and outcomes (individual and institutional).

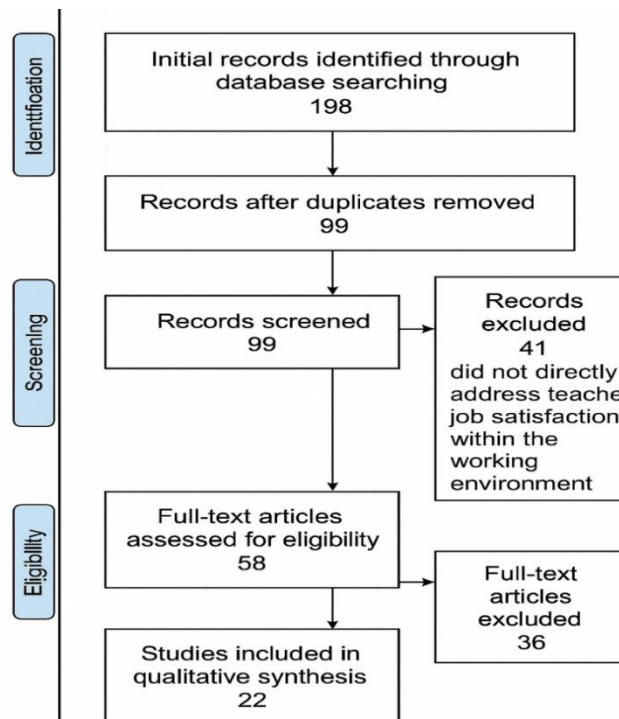


Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram

Limitations

While this methodology ensured rigor, limitations must be acknowledged. Restricting the search to English-language articles may have excluded relevant non-English studies. Additionally, the temporal restriction to 2019–2024 may have omitted earlier but still influential contributions. Nevertheless, the focus on recent literature provides a current and comprehensive understanding of the working environment's role in teacher job satisfaction.

RESULTS

Infrastructure and Resources

The literature review found out that school infrastructure forms a fundamental aspect of teacher job satisfaction. Studies indicate that when teachers operate in well-constructed classrooms, laboratories, and libraries, they perform their duties more effectively and with greater enthusiasm. Adequate facilities reduce daily frustrations and provide conditions necessary for effective delivery of lessons (Bahtilla & Hui, 2021; Ker,

Lee & Ho, 2022; Mgaiwa, 2021; Lopes & Oliveira, 2020). In contrast, poor physical environments with limited facilities often generate dissatisfaction and demotivation among teachers, which can affect retention. The reviewed studies consistently show that infrastructure contributes directly to teachers' ability to achieve instructional goals and sustain motivation.

In addition, the literature demonstrates that access to instructional resources such as textbooks, ICT equipment, and laboratory supplies has a significant effect on teacher satisfaction. Teachers with sufficient materials report higher morale and confidence in fulfilling their responsibilities, while shortages tend to create stress and dissatisfaction (Manap, 2023; Jentsch et al., 2022; Toropova, Myrberg & Johansson, 2019; Viotti et al., 2020). Several studies also confirm that resource availability encourages the adoption of innovative methods in teaching, further strengthening teachers' engagement with students. Evidence from different contexts therefore supports the view that infrastructure and resources are not only supportive but essential determinants of satisfaction in the teaching profession.

Workload

The literature review found out that workload is a major factor influencing teacher job satisfaction. Teachers who face excessive teaching assignments, administrative duties, and extracurricular responsibilities are more likely to experience fatigue and burnout, which lowers their satisfaction levels (Ortan, Simut & Simut, 2021; Nalipay, 2023; Fang & Qi, 2023; Dewi, Rodli & Nurhidayati, 2021). Several studies confirm that workload pressures make it difficult for teachers to balance professional and personal life, which often results in stress and a decline in motivation. Such conditions contribute to dissatisfaction and increase the chances of turnover among teachers.

Balanced workloads, however, provide a pathway to enhanced teacher morale. Studies reveal that manageable class sizes, fair allocation of tasks, and reasonable teaching schedules are directly associated with higher satisfaction (Zakariya, 2020; Habibi et al., 2024; Enwezor & Obi, 2022; Jentsch et al., 2022). Teachers working under supportive workload management policies have more time to prepare for lessons, engage with students, and participate in professional growth activities. Evidence from international contexts further indicates that schools with fair workload practices experience stronger commitment and lower attrition rates. These findings

establish workload as a central element shaping teachers' willingness to remain in the profession.

Supervision

The literature review found out that supervision strongly influences teacher job satisfaction. Studies demonstrate that teachers who receive supportive supervision from principals feel more confident and motivated in their work. Constructive feedback, guidance, and mentoring approaches foster professional growth and reduce stress associated with classroom responsibilities (Muhammad, Ishrat & Afridi, 2022; Juprizon, Chandra & Komardi, 2021; Sriadmitum, Sudarno & Nyoto, 2020; Nalipay, 2023). In contrast, authoritarian and unsupportive supervisory practices lead to frustration and diminish teachers' enthusiasm for their duties.

Research further shows that supervisory practices which encourage teacher autonomy and participation in school decision-making enhance job satisfaction. Studies confirm that teachers feel more respected and valued when their input is considered in school management and when supervision balances accountability with encouragement (Bahtilla & Hui, 2021; Mgaiwa, 2021; Fang & Qi, 2023; Enwezor & Obi, 2022). Such practices promote collaboration and build trust between teachers and school leaders, which fosters a professional culture conducive to retention. Evidence across contexts therefore indicates that effective supervision remains a strong predictor of teacher satisfaction.

Recognition

The literature review found out that recognition of teachers' work has been consistently linked to higher satisfaction levels. Teachers who feel appreciated through both formal and informal means report greater motivation and commitment to their profession. Studies across different contexts demonstrate that recognition enhances morale, increases loyalty, and improves the overall school climate (Basalamah & As'ad, 2020; Syafii et al., 2020; Ortan, Simut & Simut, 2021; Nurna Dewi, Rodli & Nurhidayati, 2021). Conversely, lack of recognition leads to dissatisfaction and disengagement among teachers, diminishing their willingness to invest effort in their duties.

Recognition also operates at a collective level, where acknowledgment of team achievements contributes to a supportive environment that strengthens satisfaction. Evidence shows that schools which celebrate collaborative success report stronger collegiality and job satisfaction among staff (Manap, 2023; Toropova,

Myrberg & Johansson, 2019; Viotti et al., 2020; Türker & Kahraman, 2021). Recognition therefore serves both as an individual motivator and a collective reinforcement of teaching staff morale. Literature from diverse settings confirms that acknowledgment of contributions, whether material or symbolic, remains a vital factor influencing satisfaction.

Staff Welfare

The literature review found out that staff welfare initiatives are closely tied to teacher job satisfaction. Studies demonstrate that welfare provisions such as healthcare, housing allowances, and retirement benefits provide a sense of security that enhances satisfaction (Mgaiwa, 2021; Dewi, Rodli & Nurhidayati, 2021; Syafii et al., 2020; Lopes & Oliveira, 2020). Welfare programs reduce personal stressors that might otherwise hinder teaching effectiveness, thereby allowing teachers to focus on their professional duties. Teachers who benefit from comprehensive welfare support express greater contentment and show stronger commitment to their institutions.

Beyond financial welfare, attention to emotional and professional well-being also contributes to job satisfaction. Research indicates that welfare programs promoting counseling services, work–life balance, and professional development have significant positive effects on satisfaction (Ortan, Simut & Simut, 2021; Zakariya, 2020; Viotti et al., 2020; Nalipay, 2023). These studies reveal that when teachers feel supported holistically, they are more motivated to contribute positively to student learning. Evidence further shows that institutions prioritizing staff welfare achieve higher retention rates, as teachers are more loyal to organizations that care for their overall well-being.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings indicate that infrastructure and resources constitute fundamental determinants of teacher job satisfaction. Well-constructed classrooms, laboratories, and libraries create an environment conducive to effective teaching, reducing daily frustrations and enhancing instructional delivery (Bahtilla & Hui, 2021; Ker, Lee & Ho, 2022; Mgaiwa, 2021). Similarly, access to sufficient teaching materials, including textbooks, ICT tools, and laboratory supplies, is associated with higher teacher morale and confidence, while shortages contribute to stress and demotivation (Manap, 2023; Jentsch et al., 2022; Toropova, Myrberg & Johansson, 2019). Evidence further suggests that the availability of resources promotes the use of innovative pedagogical

approaches, strengthening engagement with students. Collectively, these findings indicate that adequate infrastructure and instructional resources are critical for both teacher satisfaction and professional effectiveness.

Analysis of workload demonstrates that the distribution and intensity of professional responsibilities significantly influence teacher well-being and job fulfillment. Teachers facing heavy teaching assignments, administrative duties, and extracurricular obligations report fatigue, stress, and lower motivation, which increase the risk of attrition (Ortan, Simut & Simut, 2021; Nalipay, 2023; Fang & Qi, 2023). Conversely, manageable workloads, fair allocation of tasks, and reasonable class sizes provide teachers with time to prepare lessons, engage with students, and pursue professional development, contributing to enhanced morale (Zakariya, 2020; Habibi et al., 2024; Enwezor & Obi, 2022). Evidence from multiple contexts suggests that effective workload management strengthens teacher commitment and supports sustained professional performance.

Regarding supervision, the results reveal that leadership practices play a key role in shaping teacher satisfaction. Supportive supervision, including constructive feedback, mentoring, and guidance, enables teachers to navigate classroom responsibilities with greater confidence and professional growth (Muhammad, Ishrat & Afridi, 2022; Juprizon, Chandra & Komardi, 2021; Sriadmitum, Sudarno & Nyoto, 2020). Supervisory approaches that promote teacher autonomy and participation in decision-making foster respect, trust, and collaboration, creating a positive professional culture (Bahtilla & Hui, 2021; Mgaiwa, 2021; Fang & Qi, 2023). Conversely, authoritarian or unsupportive supervision diminishes engagement and enthusiasm. These findings demonstrate that effective supervision contributes directly to teacher satisfaction and institutional commitment.

The study further demonstrates that recognition of teachers' efforts is strongly associated with higher levels of motivation and job satisfaction. Both formal and informal acknowledgment enhances morale, loyalty, and commitment to professional responsibilities (Basalamah & As'ad, 2020; Syafii et al., 2020; Ortan, Simut & Simut, 2021). Recognition at both individual and team levels encourages a supportive working environment, strengthens collegiality, and fosters a sense of shared accomplishment (Manap, 2023; Toropova, Myrberg & Johansson, 2019; Türker &

Kahraman, 2021). Lack of acknowledgment, however, is associated with reduced engagement and diminished willingness to invest effort in professional duties. These results confirm that recognition operates as both an individual motivator and a collective reinforcement for teacher satisfaction.

With respect to staff welfare, the findings indicate that comprehensive welfare initiatives positively influence teacher satisfaction and institutional loyalty. Programs providing healthcare, housing allowances, retirement benefits, and support for work–life balance reduce personal stressors, enabling teachers to focus on professional responsibilities (Mgaiwa, 2021; Dewi, Rodli & Nurhidayati, 2021; Zakariya, 2020; Viotti et al., 2020). In addition, attention to emotional well-being through counseling services and professional development opportunities contributes to a motivated workforce. Teachers experiencing holistic support express greater commitment and demonstrate enhanced focus on student learning. These findings suggest that schools prioritizing staff welfare achieve higher retention and promote sustained professional performance.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The findings have significant implications for education in Tanzania, particularly in enhancing teacher performance and improving learning outcomes. Ensuring well-constructed classrooms, equipped laboratories, libraries, and sufficient teaching materials can create a conducive environment that motivates teachers and supports innovative pedagogical practices. Managing teacher workloads effectively and providing fair task allocation can reduce stress, prevent burnout, and increase commitment, which is crucial in a context where teacher shortages and large class sizes are common. Promoting supportive supervision and participatory leadership can foster professional growth, respect, and collaboration, thereby strengthening institutional culture and reducing turnover. Recognition of teachers' efforts, both individually and collectively, can enhance morale, loyalty, and engagement, creating a more positive and productive school climate. Finally, implementing comprehensive staff welfare programs that address both financial and emotional well-being can improve teacher satisfaction and retention, ultimately contributing to more consistent, quality education delivery across Tanzanian schools.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings demonstrate that teacher job satisfaction is shaped by multiple interconnected factors, including infrastructure and resources, workload, supervision, recognition, and staff welfare. Adequate facilities and access to instructional materials create a supportive environment that enhances teaching effectiveness and engagement. Balanced workloads and fair task allocation reduce stress and promote professional commitment, while supportive supervision and participatory leadership strengthen trust, collaboration, and confidence among teachers. Recognition of individual and team efforts further reinforces motivation and loyalty, contributing to a positive school culture. Finally, comprehensive staff welfare initiatives addressing both financial and emotional well-being ensure sustained teacher satisfaction and retention. Collectively, these factors provide a foundation for improving educational quality and promoting consistent, effective learning outcomes in Tanzanian schools.

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