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Abstract

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Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Work Environment, Government Schools in Punjab, Pakistan

Authors:

Zermina Tasleem: (Corresponding Author)

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Punjab, Pakistan.

(Email: zerminatasleem@bzu.edu.pk)

Sohail Ayaz Muhammad: Assistant Professor, Hasan Murad School of Management, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Muqarrab Akbar: Professor, Department of Political Science, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Punjab, Pakistan.

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Teacher Performance in Punjab's Government Schools: The Role of Job Satisfaction and Workplace Conditions



Zermina Tasleem (Corresponding Author)¹ Sohail Ayaz Muhammad², Muqarrab Akbar³,

¹ Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Punjab, Pakistan. (Email: zerminatasleem@bzu.edu.pk)

² Assistant Professor, Hasan Murad School of Management, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

³ Professor, Department of Political Science, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Punjab, Pakistan.

Abstract

The quality and performance of education systems, especially the performance of teachers, influence the quality and effectiveness of educational systems especially in schools of the developing world that provide education in the public sector. Government schools within the Punjab province of Pakistan are still struggling with the factors of poor motivation of teachers, poor working conditions, and weak institutional support. Under the quantitative research design, data were gathered using 300 teachers who worked in government schools of Multan district using a structured questionnaire. The proposed relationships were tested by use of Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis. The results indicate that job satisfaction plays a great and non-negative role in the teacher performance, and positive work environment also plays a great role in the enhancement of the instructional performance. The findings reveal that intrinsic and extrinsic motivational elements should be considered in order to improve the performance of teachers.

Keywords: *Job Satisfaction, Work Environment, Government Schools in Punjab, Pakistan*

Introduction

It is a well-known fact that education is one of the primary sources of the national development, social cohesion, and economic prosperity. The teacher is at the heart of any given education system as his performance directly determines the students learning outcome, effectiveness of the institution and the overall development of a given society. The teachers in the government schools in developing nations like Pakistan have an exceptionally heavy duty since the public-sector institutions accommodate most students, even those who have disadvantaged socio-economic origins (UNESCO, 2021).

The most populous province in Pakistan is Punjab which is the central region of the education in the country. Although this has been largely reformed with the aim of enhancing access and enrolment, issues of quality of education in government schools have remained. Cases of poor performance of students, absenteeism of teachers, and deterioration of instructional standards have become common (World Bank, 2022). Some of the major causes of these concerns include poor level of job satisfaction and poor working conditions faced by teachers.

Job satisfaction is a general expression of emotional and cognitive judgments of a worker concerning his or her employment based on the pay, job safety, promotion, career development, and work-life balance (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2017). Job satisfaction is especially vital to teachers, who are emotionally taxed and socially important in the teaching practice. It has been repeatedly proven that motivated, committed, and effective teachers are more satisfied with their teaching work (Toropova, Myrberg, and Johansson, 2021). On the other hand, dissatisfaction may result in stress, burnouts, absenteeism, and low quality of teaching.

The work environment is also important in influencing teacher performance along with job satisfaction. The work environment refers to both physical factors, including the classroom size, the infrastructure, the



lighting, or the safety, and the psychosocial factors, such as the leadership support, the relationship with colleagues, or the organizational culture (OECD, [2020](#)). Teachers working in most government schools in Punjab teach in overcrowded classrooms using limited teaching materials and lack of administrative assistance, which makes the teaching and learning processes difficult (Shaikh et al., [2021](#)).

Recent literature stresses that job satisfaction and work environment are not two separate concepts, but they are strongly interdependent to affect teacher performance (Bibi and Kareem, [2021](#); Toropova et al., [2021](#)). Positive leadership, career growth, and provision of sufficient resources boost the value and effectiveness of teachers resulting in better classroom accomplishments. In addition, it has been established that compensation is another important extrinsic factor that can either enhance or undermine the relationship between job satisfaction and performance, especially in the case of the public-sector where financial limitations are a frequent occurrence (Khan et al., [2024](#)).

Although there has been increasing international research on teacher motivation and performance, little empirical studies have been conducted on the topic in government schools in Punjab. Numerous available studies prioritize student performance or concentrate on the privately-run educational institutions, which creates a gap in comprehending the institutional and motivational processes that influence the teachers of the public-sector. This gap needs to be addressed in the development of evidence-based policies that would help in bettering the quality of education in Pakistan.

Therefore, the current study's research problem aims to investigate how work environment and job satisfaction impact teacher performance in Punjab, Pakistan's government schools. Through the empirical investigation of these relationships and the mediating position of compensation, the study will offer viable information to the policy makers, school administrators and education stakeholders who want to maximize teacher performance and the overall performance of the educational system.

Literature Review

The teacher performance needs to be looked at comprehensively through the lens of both individual and organizational factors. The review is a synthesis of the empirical research and theoretical advances on the topic of job satisfaction, work environment, and teacher performance with emphasis on the recent literature (2019-2024).

Job Satisfaction: Dimensions and Definitions.

The satisfaction with the job of people loosely refers to the emotional and cognitive assessment of their work experiences (Locke, [1976](#)). Job satisfaction by teachers in education is intrinsic (e.g., professional fulfillment, student progress), but also extrinsic (e.g., pay, promotions, job security). Modern literature confirms the fact that the sense of job satisfaction is one of the strongest predictors of organizational commitment, performance outcomes, and the well-being of employees in educational institutions (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, [2017](#); Toropova et al., [2021](#)).

Recent studies in the international arena emphasize the fact that job satisfaction is complex, and it depends on workload, supervisor support, salary, and career growth (Nguyen, [2020](#); Yin et al., [2021](#)). Specifically, intrinsic factors (meaningful work and recognition) have been associated with the increased teacher engagement and classroom performance (Darling-Hammond et al., [2017](#); Ali et al., [2022](#)).

In Pakistan, research has shown that the job satisfaction of government school teachers is often moderate to low in this country, mainly because of the poor remuneration package, the absence of career advancement, and institutional acknowledgment (Bibi and Kareem, [2021](#); Khan et al., [2024](#)). The findings align with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which distinguishes between motivators (such success and recognition) and hygiene factors (like pay and working circumstances). Hygiene factors may not be sufficient, leading to more job dissatisfaction: even in the event of motivators (Herzberg, [1966](#)).

Teacher performance and Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been found to be at the center of teacher performance. Not only classroom behaviours and quality of instructions are affected, but also the commitment, attendance, and the inclination to innovate are associated with job satisfaction (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, [2017](#); Toropova et al., [2021](#)). A higher level of teacher

satisfaction tends to lead to more involvement, reduced burnout, and more productive outcomes of teachers in developing positive student results (Yin et al., [2021](#); Ali et al., [2022](#)).

According to a recent meta-analysis study, researchers discovered that there exists a strong positive relationship between job satisfaction and academic achievement of students in various countries (Karimi and Bae, [2023](#)). The research indicated that when teachers feel respected and appreciated, the pedagogical effectiveness, classroom management skills, and student engagement are high.

In the Pakistani context, the study of job satisfaction and its effect on teacher performance is scant in comparison to the studies conducted around the world but the findings are always positive, indicating that job satisfaction has positive influence on teacher performance. Indicatively, Bibi and Kareem ([2021](#)) indicated that better instructional practices and lower absenteeism amongst teachers in the public schools were linked to higher satisfaction levels with pay, professional autonomy, and recognition. Likewise, Khan et al. ([2024](#)) established that teacher commitment and job performance among government schools in Punjab were highly predicted by job satisfaction.

Work Environment: Boundaries Conceptual

The work environment comprises physical, social, and organizational factors under which teachers are working. Physical factors include the infrastructure in a classroom, instructional resources, cleanliness, security, and school amenities (OECD, [2020](#); Earthman, [2004](#)). The social and organizational factors are leadership practices, collegial relationships, administrative support, institutional culture, and opportunities to collaborate (Byrne, [2019](#); Torres et al., [2022](#); Tasleem, Muhammad, & Tasleem, [2023](#)).

The recent studies suggest that supportive working conditions facilitate teacher efficacy and resilience. Specifically, trust, mutual respect, and professional collaboration in particular positive school climates have been associated with increased job satisfaction and better instructional quality (Toropova et al., 2021; Zembylas and Lasky, [2022](#)). Moreover, environments that are rich in resources alleviate stress, increase the ability of the teachers to plan, to innovate, and to interact with students.

Teacher Performance and Work Environment

There is also empirical evidence to indicate that the work environment is a significant issue determining teacher performance. Poor physical environments (crowded classrooms, poor lighting, and lack of teaching materials) deteriorate concentration, reduce the effectiveness of instruction and cause teacher stress (Earthman, [2004](#); Chiriac & Granstrom, [2020](#)). On the other hand, facilities and resources maintained in a good condition promote teacher satisfaction and confidence as well as professional autonomy (Tasleem, [2025](#)).

Supportive leadership, positive collegial relationship and collaborative culture are the organizational factors that are also very powerful in determining the performance of the teacher (Tasleem & Muhammad, [2025a](#), [2025b](#)). According to Kirkman et al. ([2021](#)), transformational leadership practices had a positive effect on teacher retention, job satisfaction and classroom performance in various education systems. On the same note, Torres et al. ([2022](#)) found that high levels of peer collaboration in schools allowed better teacher performance and student learning outcomes.

In Pakistan, Shaikh et al. (2021) reported that the presence of poor physical infrastructure in the government schools including lack of proper classrooms, teaching materials and sanitation adversely impacts on the teacher morale and the quality of education. Qureshi and Aslam ([2023](#)) also have similar conclusions, as they discovered that improvement of psychosocial and physical environment has a vital influence on the teacher pedagogical practice in public schools.

Theoretical Perspectives

The conceptualization of this study is based on two major theories:

Two-Factor Theory of Herzberg (1966): Herzberg identifies two distinct groups of factors: hygiene (e.g., pay, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., recognition, achievement). When the two sets of factors are dealt with, job satisfaction is maximized and hence improves performance.

Maslows Hierarchy of Needs (1943): According to Maslow, people should fulfill their lower needs (such as security, remuneration, etc.) before they can fulfill their higher needs (self-esteem, self-actualization etc.). Maslows framework can be applied in the education sector to understand the reasons behind poor teacher performance due to unfavorable conditions and poor remunerations.

Collectively, the theories can be used as a strong basis to analyse the interaction of job satisfaction and work environment to determine how they may affect the performance of teachers, and why compensation could act as a moderating factor.

Research Gap and Justification

Although the literature has demonstrated a significant amount of research on job satisfaction and teacher performance in developed settings, there are distinct gaps in literature that investigate the topic of government schools in Pakistan, particularly in Punjab (Khan et al., 2024). A significant number of the existing studies use small samples, derive the analysis through descriptive or qualitative methods, which restricts the generalization. Moreover, not many studies have been able to address the joint impact of job satisfaction and work environment on teacher performance or the modifying position of pay. In this research, the gaps are filled through a quantitative design, involving hypothesis testing, which is quite and clear.

Methodology

In order to examine the impact of job satisfaction and working environment on teacher performance in government schools in Punjab, Pakistan, a quantitative cross-sectional research methodology was employed in this study. The quantitative method was deemed suitable because it enables testing hypothesized relationships statistically and quantitative measurement of the key constructs (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

The sample population was teachers working in government primary, middle and secondary schools in Punjab. Sampling was done on 300 teachers in Multan district government schools. Simple random sampling was used in selecting this sample because all the teachers had an equal opportunity to participate and minimized selection bias (Etikan and Bala, 2017). The sample size chosen was suitable to perform regression and moderation analysis and achieve suggested levels of social science research (Hair et al., 2022).

A structured self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data. This has been done with prior permission of the appropriate school authorities with the participants being made aware of the purpose of the study. Involvement was voluntary and the confidentiality guaranteed.

The questionnaire had 4 sections. The instrument was an adapted version of the Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ) used to measure job satisfaction regarding issues like salary satisfaction, job security, professional growth, recognition, and work-life balance. The work environment was evaluated based on the items of both physical aspects (classroom facilities, infrastructure, safety) and psychosocial ones (leadership support, collegial relationships, and administrative practices). The teacher performance was assessed using a self-reported scale that included instructional delivery, classroom management, lesson planning and student engagement. Each of the items has been rated on a 5-point Likert scale with the values of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The Statistic package of Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to perform the data analysis. In the study, descriptive statistics were employed to report the demographics of the respondents as well as a general trend of study variables. The Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the relationships between job satisfaction, work environment and teacher performance. To determine the direct correlations between job satisfaction and work environment and teacher performance, the multiple regression analysis was applied. In order to evaluate the moderating effect of compensation, an interaction term was added according to the accepted procedures of moderation analysis (Hayes, 2018).

During the study, ethical principles were adhered to to the letter. All participants gave informed consent, anonymity was ensured and the respondents were told that they could withdraw without being penalized at any point. The usage of data was academic in nature. h theoretically and empirically to the literature on education.

Results and Discussion

It describes the analysis of the data in correlation and descriptive statistics and presents correlation analysis outcomes.

To analyze the overall tendencies of job satisfaction, the work environment, and the teacher performance of the respondents, descriptive statistics were calculated. On the whole, the amount of job satisfaction and quality of the working environment was moderate to high in the teacher questionnaires, which indicated the opportunity to improve the situation in government schools. table 1.

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N = 300)***

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Satisfaction	3.62	0.71
Work Environment	3.55	0.68
Teacher Performance	3.74	0.66
Compensation	3.21	0.73

The average scores show that teachers perceived their performance in a positive manner, and compensation was rated rather lowly. This conclusion can be associated with the past research on Pakistani schools of the public sector (Bibi and Kareem, 2021; Khan et al., 2024).

The study variables have been discussed using Pearson correlation analysis to determine the relationships between them.

Table 2

*Correlation Matrix***

Variable	1	2	3
1. Job Satisfaction	1		
2. Work Environment	0.58**	1	
3. Teacher Performance	0.63**	0.60**	1

Note: $p < .01$

The findings show a strong and positive correlation between job satisfaction and teacher performance ($r = .63$, $p < .01$), work environment and teacher performance ($r = .60$, $p < .01$). The presented results are in line with the international evidence indicating that teacher satisfaction with the working conditions, as well as the performance of such teachers in favorable settings, results in a greater level of instructional effectiveness (Toropova et al., 2021; Karimi and Bae, 2023).

The proposed hypotheses that were tested using multiple regression analysis were on the impact of job satisfaction and work environment on teacher performance.

Table 3

*Regression Analysis Predicting Teacher Performance***

Predictor	β	t-value	Sig.
Job Satisfaction	0.41	7.82	.000
Work Environment	0.36	6.94	.000

$R^2 = 0.52$

The regression model describes 52% of the variance in teacher performance; this shows that it has a good explanatory power. Teacher performance is significantly predicted by job satisfaction ($b = 0.41$, $p < .001$) and work environment ($b = 0.36$, $p < .001$).

These results affirm H1 and H2 as work environment and job satisfaction had positive significant impacts on teacher performance. The findings can be attributed to the Two-Factor theory of Herzberg that highlights the overall significance of motivation and hygiene factors in improving the performance of employees.

In order to test the moderating effect of compensation, an interaction term (Job Satisfaction x Compensation) was added to the regression model.

Table 4

Moderation Analysis: Compensation as a Moderator

Predictor	B	Sig.
Job Satisfaction	0.34	.000
Compensation	0.22	.002
Job Satisfaction × Compensation	0.18	.004

The interaction term was not statistically significant ($b = 0.18, p < .01$), which means that the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance is moderated by compensation. This supports H4.

Educators who felt that they were adequately paid showed a greater positive correlation between job satisfaction and performance. This observation supports the Hierarchy of Needs proposed by Maslow with the view that the satisfaction of lower order financial needs amplifies the effects of the higher rank motivational variables.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

The paper has investigated the relationship between job satisfaction and work environment and teacher performance in government schools in Punjab, Pakistan. The results show that the non-material factors (work environment) and the material ones (job satisfaction) are important predictors of teacher performance. The teachers with the high scores on the job satisfaction scale displayed better instructional performance, involvement in the classroom, and professional commitment. On the same note, the favourable work environment with resources provided played a great role in ensuring that teachers could carry out their roles well. The findings also indicated that compensation moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance, which enhances it. The good effect of job satisfaction in performance was more vivid when teachers felt that they were fairly and adequately paid. The results are also consistent with the existing motivational theories, especially the Two-Factor Theory by Herzberg and the Hierarchy of Needs by Maslow, which focuses on the joint significance of intrinsic and extrinsic variables in the increase of employee performance.

The research has significant policy implications to the education authorities in Punjab and other developing countries in general. Job satisfaction of teachers must be regarded as a strategic issue and clear procedures to promote and recognise good performance as well as job security must be implemented to increase morale and devotion. It is also necessary to enhance the working conditions, such as investment of immediate school environment, educational resources and materials, safety and supportive leadership among others. Moreover, the compensation practices should correspond to workload and professional responsibility of the teachers, and the competitive salaries, benefits in good time, and incentives based on the performance should be introduced to motivate the teachers and enhance their responsiveness to the institutional changes.

Practical Recommendations

According to the results, some practical suggestions are suggested to make the performance of teachers in the public-sector schools better. To begin with, the compensation structures ought to be reviewed periodically to bring sanity and sufficiency, especially in comparison to inflation and cost of living. Second, the school working conditions ought to be enhanced through sufficient teaching materials, good learning facilities and secure learning environments that facilitates the teaching process. Third, to improve a positive school climate, the training of school leadership should be ongoing and focused on the development of leadership, communication, and staff handling. Fourth, institutionalization tools such as regular training programs and workshop must be

put in place in order to improve the skills, confidence and career advancements of teachers. Lastly, regular monitoring systems ought to be adopted to determine teacher job satisfaction and work conditions so that there can be evidence-based policy-making and sustained reform of education.

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