



# STRUCTURAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS OF WORK SATISFACTION AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL FEMALE TEACHERS

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Abstract

*Work satisfaction among primary school female teachers is a critical determinant of educational quality, teacher retention, institutional effectiveness, and students' holistic development. In contemporary education systems, teachers are expected to perform diverse roles extending beyond classroom instruction to include administrative, emotional, and social responsibilities. Female teachers, particularly at the primary level, face additional challenges arising from gendered expectations, work-life balance pressures, and limited professional autonomy. These challenges significantly affect their psychological well-being and professional satisfaction.*

*The present paper examines the structural and psychological determinants of work satisfaction among primary school female teachers, focusing on the interaction between organizational conditions—such as institutional climate, workload, leadership practices, professional recognition, infrastructure, and policy frameworks—and psychological variables including self-efficacy, motivation, emotional intelligence, stress perception, and coping strategies. The study adopts a theoretical, analytical, and descriptive research design, synthesizing findings from national and international literature, educational psychology theories, and empirical research studies.*

*The analysis reveals that unfavorable structural conditions often intensify psychological stress, leading to role conflict, emotional exhaustion, and burnout among female teachers. Conversely, positive organizational support and strong psychological resources enhance resilience, commitment, and job satisfaction. The paper highlights significant implications for educational administration, teacher education, and policy formulation. It argues for a holistic framework of teacher support that integrates structural reforms with psychological empowerment to create sustainable, inclusive, and satisfying work environments for female primary teachers.*

**Keywords:** *Work Satisfaction, Female Primary Teachers, Structural Determinants, Psychological Determinants, Role Stress, Teacher Motivation, Occupational Well-being*

## 1. Introduction

Primary education represents the foundational stage of formal schooling and plays a decisive role in shaping children's intellectual, emotional, moral, and social development. Teachers at the primary level are instrumental in nurturing basic literacy, numeracy, social skills, and lifelong learning attitudes. Across many countries, particularly in developing contexts, female teachers constitute a substantial proportion of the primary



education workforce due to sociocultural perceptions that associate women with care, patience, and emotional sensitivity.

Despite their pivotal role, primary school female teachers often operate under structurally constrained and psychologically demanding conditions. These conditions include inadequate infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, excessive teaching and non-teaching workload, rigid bureaucratic control, limited opportunities for professional advancement, and insufficient recognition of their contributions. Simultaneously, female teachers experience psychological pressures arising from emotional labor, stress, self-doubt, and the challenge of balancing professional responsibilities with familial and social obligations.

Work satisfaction, broadly defined, refers to the degree to which individuals feel positively about their job roles and work environments. In the teaching profession, work satisfaction is a multifaceted construct encompassing satisfaction derived from instructional success, student progress, collegial relationships, leadership support, professional growth, autonomy, and social recognition. Research consistently indicates that low levels of work satisfaction among teachers are associated with burnout, absenteeism, reduced instructional effectiveness, and premature exit from the profession. Such outcomes adversely affect institutional stability and educational quality.

Given the strategic importance of primary education and the central role played by female teachers, it is imperative to understand the factors influencing their work satisfaction. This paper seeks to analyze the structural and psychological determinants shaping work satisfaction among primary school female teachers and to explore the dynamic interaction between these determinants in influencing professional well-being and performance.

## **2. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1 Concept of Work Satisfaction**

Work satisfaction is a complex psychological state resulting from an individual's evaluation of job experiences. Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. In teaching, satisfaction is not limited to tangible rewards but extends to intrinsic fulfilment derived from meaningful interactions with students, professional identity, and a sense of contribution to society.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation provides a foundational framework for understanding teacher satisfaction. According to this theory, motivators such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and personal growth lead to positive job satisfaction, while hygiene factors such as salary, working conditions, and administrative policies prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily motivate. In the context of primary



school female teachers, the absence of hygiene factors often leads to dissatisfaction, while limited access to motivators restricts professional fulfillment.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs further explains how unmet physiological, safety, and social needs—such as financial security, job stability, and collegial support—can hinder higher-level needs related to esteem and self-actualization. Teachers who struggle to meet basic professional needs are less likely to experience satisfaction or long-term commitment.

### **2.2 Structural Determinants of Work Satisfaction**

Structural determinants refer to organizational, institutional, and systemic factors that shape teachers' work environments. These determinants create the context within which teachers perform their roles and significantly influence their satisfaction levels.

Key structural determinants include:

1. **School Infrastructure and Physical Environment:** Availability of classrooms, sanitation, ventilation, teaching aids, and technological resources.
2. **Workload and Role Structure:** Teaching hours, class size, administrative responsibilities, and non-academic duties.
3. **Leadership and Administrative Support:** Leadership style, communication practices, and decision-making processes.
4. **Salary, Incentives, and Job Security:** Remuneration, benefits, and stability of employment.
5. **Professional Development and Career Advancement:** Training opportunities, promotions, and recognition systems.
6. **Organizational Climate:** Collegial relationships, trust, collaboration, and institutional culture.

Deficiencies in these areas often generate chronic stressors that undermine job satisfaction and psychological well-being.

### **2.3 Psychological Determinants of Work Satisfaction**

Psychological determinants are internal factors related to teachers' emotional, cognitive, and motivational states. These determinants mediate how teachers perceive and respond to structural conditions.

Major psychological determinants include:

1. **Self-Efficacy:** Belief in one's ability to manage classroom tasks and influence student learning.
2. **Motivation:** Intrinsic passion for teaching and extrinsic incentives.
3. **Emotional Intelligence:** Ability to recognize, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively.
4. **Stress Perception:** Individual appraisal of work-related demands.
5. **Sense of Purpose and Professional Identity:** Meaning attached to teaching roles.



6. Coping Strategies: Methods used to manage stress and challenges.

Psychological resilience can buffer the negative impact of adverse structural conditions, while psychological vulnerability amplifies dissatisfaction.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study are to:

1. Examine the structural determinants influencing work satisfaction among primary school female teachers.
2. Analyze the psychological determinants affecting their work satisfaction and occupational well-being.
3. Explore the relationship between structural conditions and psychological health.
4. Investigate the role of role stress in contributing to dissatisfaction and burnout.
5. Suggest institutional, administrative, and psychological strategies to enhance work satisfaction.

### 4. Methodology

#### 4.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive, analytical, and theoretical research design, suitable for synthesizing existing research and developing conceptual insights into teacher work satisfaction.

#### 4.2 Sources of Data

Secondary data were collected from:

1. Peer-reviewed national and international journals
2. Government and policy documents
3. Educational reports (OECD, UNESCO)
4. Books on educational psychology and organizational behavior
5. Research studies on teacher stress, motivation, and satisfaction

#### 4.3 Data Analysis Procedure

The collected literature was systematically organized and analyzed using qualitative content analysis and thematic synthesis. Themes such as workload, leadership, emotional well-being, motivation, role stress, and organizational climate were identified and interpreted through relevant theoretical frameworks, including Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress.

### 5. Analysis and Discussion

#### 5.1 Structural Determinants of Work Satisfaction

##### 5.1.1 Workload and Role Overload

Female primary teachers frequently experience excessive workload due to large class sizes, lesson planning, assessment responsibilities, administrative documentation, and non-teaching duties. Such role overload leads to chronic fatigue, reduced instructional effectiveness, and emotional exhaustion, thereby diminishing work satisfaction.



### **5.1.2 Institutional Climate and Leadership**

A positive institutional climate characterized by trust, respect, collaboration, and participative leadership enhances teachers' sense of belonging and satisfaction. In contrast, authoritarian leadership and lack of teacher voice create alienation and stress.

### **5.1.3 Salary, Incentives, and Job Security**

Inadequate remuneration and delayed benefits undermine teachers' sense of professional worth. For female teachers managing household responsibilities, financial insecurity significantly intensifies stress and dissatisfaction.

### **5.1.4 Professional Development and Career Growth**

Opportunities for training, promotion, and recognition enhance professional identity and motivation. Absence of career progression leads to stagnation and disengagement.

### **5.1.5 Infrastructure and Teaching Resources**

Insufficient teaching materials, overcrowded classrooms, and lack of technological facilities hinder effective pedagogy and increase frustration.

## **5.2 Psychological Determinants of Work Satisfaction**

### **5.2.1 Self-Efficacy**

Teachers with high self-efficacy demonstrate confidence, adaptability, and resilience, which enhance satisfaction and reduce stress.

### **5.2.2 Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence enables teachers to manage interpersonal conflicts, regulate emotions, and maintain psychological balance.

### **5.2.3 Motivation**

Intrinsic motivation sustains long-term commitment, while extrinsic rewards reinforce morale and recognition.

### **5.2.4 Stress Perception and Coping**

Teachers' appraisal of stressors determines emotional outcomes. Adaptive coping strategies improve well-being, whereas maladaptive strategies increase burnout.

## **5.3 Role Stress and Burnout**

Role conflict, role ambiguity, and role stagnation are major sources of stress among female teachers. These stressors contribute to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced professional efficacy.

## **6. Implications**

### **6.1 Educational Implications**

Improved teacher satisfaction enhances student engagement, classroom climate, and learning outcomes.

### **6.2 Administrative Implications**

Participative leadership, workload rationalization, and support systems improve morale and retention.



### 6.3 Policy Implications

Policies must prioritize teacher welfare, mental health support, fair compensation, and professional development.

### 7. Strategies for Enhancing Work Satisfaction

1. Improvement of school infrastructure
2. Reduction of non-teaching workload
3. Emotional wellness and counseling programs
4. Teacher autonomy and participative governance
5. Stress management and mindfulness training
6. Collaborative professional culture
7. Recognition and reward systems
8. Leadership training for administrators

### 8. Conclusion

Work satisfaction among primary school female teachers is a multidimensional and dynamic construct shaped by the interaction of structural conditions and psychological processes. Structural inadequacies intensify psychological stress, while psychological resilience can mitigate organizational challenges. Sustainable improvement in teacher satisfaction requires a holistic and integrated approach that combines institutional reform, supportive leadership, professional growth opportunities, and psychological empowerment. By prioritizing teacher well-being, education systems can strengthen the foundation of quality education and long-term institutional effectiveness.

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