

A Qualitative Research Study on the Professional Job Satisfaction of Secondary School Teachers in Various Fields

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Abstract

The present study aims to reveal the views of secondary school teachers in various fields about their job satisfaction and highlight the factors affecting their job satisfaction. The study was conducted in some public secondary schools in the central districts of Diyarbakir province in the fall semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. There were 25 teachers in the participant group, of whom 7 were female and 18 were male. The data in this study, in which a phenomenological design was used, were collected using the semi-structured interview technique. The data analysis, which employed two different methods, namely descriptive and content analysis, was completed with a computer-aided qualitative analysis program. As far as the results obtained in the study are concerned, it can be said that the teachers predominantly had negative views about their job satisfaction. The outstanding factors for teachers' job satisfaction were intrinsic motivation, physical conditions of the school, communication with the school administration, socio-economic level, and respect for the profession. In this sense, it is believed that strong communication established between the school administration and teachers, the improvement of the physical conditions in schools, and fair wage policies will contribute positively to the job satisfaction of teachers.

Introduction

Job satisfaction refers to the positive emotion and attitude that an individual feels as a result of his/her job-related experiences (Locke, 1976, p. 97). Job satisfaction, which is a result of the relationship between an individual's expectation from his/her job and working situation, is a product of attitudinal and affective reactions (Ho and Au, 2006). In other words, job satisfaction is the individual's feeling of feeling good about his/her job (Gibson et al., 1991). When we strive to find an answer to the issue from another angle, it is possible to define job satisfaction as the feelings of an employee about his/her job (Smith et al., 1983). It is also possible to define job satisfaction as an emotional response to the value judgments made by the employee (Henne and Locke, 1985).

Previous studies demonstrated that individuals who are satisfied with their jobs are more committed to their jobs, work more productively and efficiently, and participate more both physically and emotionally, so that their performances are superior (Arches, 1991; Uslu, 2020). Furthermore, there are numerous factors that directly and indirectly affect one's job satisfaction. These factors can be considered independent of as well as dependent on the individual. For instance, elements such as gender, age, educational status, socio-cultural environment,

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expectations from the work environment, marital status of the individual, and tenure affect the job satisfaction of employees (Atabay, 2020).

Considering the relevant literature, it is clear that there is a relationship between job satisfaction and many fields. For instance, lifelong learning (Torun and Seçkin, 2020), organizational commitment (Eskibağ, 2014; Polat, 2019), professional burnout (Çelik and Üstüner, 2018), teachers' participation in school decisions (Demirtaş and Alanoğlu, 2015) and their professional development (Kızılkaya, 2012) are some of these relationships. Given these relationships, it is possible to say that job satisfaction, as is the case in all professions, affects teachers' intrinsic motivation and eliminates some concerns about their jobs.

Theoretical Framework

The concept of job satisfaction, which was introduced in the 1920s, started to be considered as a theory and to draw attention only after the 1930s and 1940s (Sevimli and İşcan, 2005). The most important reason for this interest was the "happy-productive worker hypothesis". This hypothesis is based on the assumption that "a satisfied worker is a happy worker, and a happy worker is a successful worker" (Aziri, 2011; Wright and Cropanzano, 2000, p. 84). After 1943, even though more than one theorist who was interested in the subject came to the fore, the pioneers of the concept were mostly Maslow and Herzberg. With his theory of "hierarchy of needs", Maslow stated that human needs were a key element affecting organizational behavior (Maslow, 1954). These needs are physiological, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. In the prediction of the model, the needs are complementary to each other. According to the "double factor theory" developed by Herzberg, employees feel positive emotions when their psychological needs, such as gaining success, being appreciated, and being helpful to people are met. On the other hand, they have negative feelings toward their job in terms of so-called hygiene factors such as poor workplace conditions and low wages (Herzberg et al., 1959, p. 59).

An individual's job satisfaction depends on some specific factors. Some of these are individual factors (gender, age, education, needs and desires, etc.), while others are organizational factors (the nature of the job, wages, promotion, colleagues, physical conditions, management, etc.) (Arabacı et al., 2010; Başaran and Güçlü, 2018; Luthans, 2011). Scores of studies conducted on the subject in different educational organizations indicate that these factors affecting job satisfaction impact the job satisfaction levels of employees (Ayan et al., 2009; Bilge et al., 2005; İmamoğlu et al., 2004; Şahin, 2013; Toropova, et al., 2021). The institutions where these factors affect the job satisfaction of employees are educational organizations, which are structures consisting of teachers, students, parents, administrators, and many other factors. This holistic structure, in which educational objectives are materialized, has an impact on the formation and shaping of organizational behavior and thus the job satisfaction of teachers (Hoy and Miskel, 2008).

Nevertheless, the issue of whether teachers, who have an active role in student outcomes, are satisfied with their work environment and the factors affecting their job satisfaction have not been sufficiently emphasized (Merrill, 2021). The fact that teachers develop sincere and personal relationships with students, that teaching is intellectual work, and that the teaching profession provides autonomy and independence are factors that positively affect their

job satisfaction (Torun and Seçkin, 2020). A teacher with high job satisfaction has a significant and comprehensive influence on these and many other factors associated with him/her. For instance, it has been shown that a teacher with high job satisfaction is less sensitive to stress and burnout (Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 1977; Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2011) and can establish cordial relationships with students (Collie et al., 2012). One previous study revealed that satisfied teachers offered higher education quality and better learning support to their students (Klusmann et al., 2008). A school where teachers have high job satisfaction is expected to provide quality education and train successful students. Teachers with high job satisfaction can attain very important achievements with balanced efforts involving administrators, students, and parents.

The satisfaction of individuals working in social institutions with their working conditions has been highlighted as a topic that has attracted attention in recent years. In schools, which are one of these institutions, the implementation of a more effective and productive educational activity is enabled by teachers with high job satisfaction. The job satisfaction of teachers achieved through factors related to both themselves and the environment has an instrumental function in achieving quality education. In this context, the main research problem of the study is as follows: “What are the views of teachers on their job satisfaction in Turkey?” Within the framework of this basic problem, the following question was also addressed: “How do factors related to the teachers themselves, such as the school they teach at, the students, and their financial situations affect their job satisfaction?”

Method

In the present study, an attempt was made to reveal the views of teachers teaching at secondary schools in Turkey on their job satisfaction and the circumstances that affect it. A phenomenological design was used in the study since the teachers’ experiences with parents, students, school, etc. were explained in terms of their job satisfaction. The difficulty of gathering common or different experiences of teachers in different fields convinced the researchers to use a phenomenological design (Kocabıyık, 2016). Phenomenological studies are carried out by defining the phenomenon or experience, revealing the unchanging themes in the definitions, and identifying the framework of the themes with personal reflections and experiences (Ersoy, 2017, p. 85). In this design, which is recognized in qualitative research, the focus is on the interpretations that individuals attach to social and human problems (Creswell, 2017, p. 4). In this study, it was ensured that the teachers expressed the details of how they interpreted their job satisfaction; in other words, how they agreed on a particular meaning and how this meaning affected teachers’ professional motivation, social environment, status, and financial situation.

Participant Group

The participant group consisted of 25 secondary school teachers from 10 different fields teaching at public schools in Turkey. The study, which was implemented in the fall semester of the 2022-2023 academic year, was conducted at secondary schools, with students coming from different socio-economic levels and a certain number of students located in the central districts of Diyarbakır. Criterion sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods, was used in the study. In this sample type, the criteria are created by the researchers or a previously prepared list of

criteria is used (Marshall and Rossman, 2014). The criteria in the present study were that the teachers taught at a secondary school and had worked as a teacher for at least five years. The personal information of the participant group is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Personal information of the participant group

Participants	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Field	Teaching Duration	Weekly Course Hours
DK1	F	27	Married	Religion and Ethics	7	16
MK2	F	36	Married	Music	11	24
FE1	M	36	Married	Science	11	30
RE2	M	30	Married	Counseling	9	30
BE3	M	35	Single	Science	11	25
FE18	M	36	Married	Physical Education	10	24
BK3	F	37	Married	Technology Design	8	24
RE4	M	32	Married	Counseling	8	30
FK4	F	37	Single	Science	10	28
BE5	M	40	Married	Technology Design	13	30
SE6	M	40	Married	Social Sciences	12	24
IE7	M	39	Married	English	10	22
TE8	M	43	Single	Turkish	18	24
DE1	M	40	Married	Religion and Ethics	7	22
FE9	M	35	Married	Science	11	26
FE10	M	39	Married	Science	16	22
SE11	M	39	Married	Social Sciences	17	25
FE12	M	46	Married	Science	20	20
ME13	M	42	Married	Mathematics	19	24
IE14	M	35	Married	English	19	17
SE12	M	39	Married	Social Sciences	17	16
TE16	M	42	Married	Turkish	17	26
DK5	F	31	Single	Religion and Ethics	9	24
MK6	K	42	Single	Mathematics	20	21
FK7	K	38	Married	Science	9	17

As far as Table 1 is concerned, 7 teachers were female and 18 males. The professional seniority (tenure) of teachers varied between 7 and 20 years. They were aged between 27 and 43. When evaluated in this way, the maximum sampling rule was also followed. This was simply because, in line with the problem of this study, teachers with very different experiences related to job satisfaction were required (Patton, 2014).

Data Collection Tool and Process

To elicit the basic structure underlying the meaning of experience, a phenomenological interview emerges as the

primary data collection method (Merriam, 2013). In this regard, the semi-structured interview technique was used as the data collection tool in the study, since it was intended to obtain in-depth information about the job satisfaction of the participants. The researchers conducted field surveys on the subject and prepared an interview form with 12 questions and a personal information form, taking into account the previous studies. Interviews were conducted face-to-face at the participating schools through a prior appointment with the school administrations. The participants were interviewed voluntarily in places where they felt comfortable in the schools where they taught. Some sample questions in the interview form were: "What are your expectations from the school administration where you work as a teacher?" "How do you feel about the school you work for?" "Do you find your salary sufficient?" etc. In accordance with the ethical rules, different codes were utilized while mentioning the participants in the study. It is possible to say that the researchers had the opportunity to make sufficient observations at the schools in question during the interview period, which spanned approximately thirty days. In this process, no contradictory statements were encountered in the statements of the participants regarding the physical conditions of the schools.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data analysis process in qualitative studies is described as the researcher's attempt to attach meaning to the phenomenon he/she investigates within the scope of the study (Stake, 1995). In this regard, in the present study, semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed with a voice recorder and coded. In the analysis of the data, descriptive analysis and content analysis, which are suitable for the nature of the phenomenological design, were utilized. The data collected during the descriptive analysis process were summarized under the factor themes related to the phenomenon in question and coded according to their suitability (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In this way, the main themes were identified. In the next step, the words, concepts, phrases, and sentences in the texts were represented as frequencies and percentages under certain codes and categories according to their similarities (Baş and Akturan, 2017). Content analysis was carried out in an attempt to obtain systematic and unbiased results for the coded texts (Stone et al., 1966). In this way, it was revealed with which categories the created categories overlapped and which sub-categories were related to which sub-categories of the themes. The analysis process of the data was completed with a computer-assisted qualitative analysis program. The hierarchical code models created as a result of the analyses and the code co-occurrence models formed between the categories are supported by certain figures.

Credibility

Credibility aims to build confidence that the collected data are correctly interpreted semantically (Whittemore et al., 2001). In this context, the techniques of triangulation and peer debriefing recommended by Patton (2014) were used in this study. Within the scope of the triangulation technique, the codes and categories identified by the researchers were presented by supporting the results from different sources. For the peer debriefing technique, the views and suggestions of an academician with a PhD were consulted during the preparation of the research questions and the analysis of the data. In the presented data, the question, "Are the theory and theories put forward well associated with their categories?" is focused on (Eisner, 1991). The statements of the participants were

transcribed verbatim, and it was emphasized whether these statements had semantic integrity (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). Furthermore, to support the consensus among the coders (Silverman, 2005), the consistency between two expert coders who were unaware of one another was examined. Since this consistency was over 80%, it was considered sufficient (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In the interviews with participants, by asking follow-up questions such as “*Did you mean this?*” or “*What do you mean by this statement?*” in addition to the main questions, the researchers demonstrated a supportive attitude. To allow for generalization in the study, interviews were conducted with teachers in almost every field. The fact that the teachers emphasized certain issues arising from themselves, as well as those related to external elements, made it necessary for the researchers to use an encompassing tone of language to a large extent. In this sense, it was ensured that the objectivity of the researcher was kept at the maximum level, and therefore, the participants were able to express their feelings and views without being subjected to any pressure.

Findings

In this part of the study, the themes, categories, and sub-categories obtained as a result of the analysis are presented using the MAXQDA 2020 program. Accordingly, the descriptive hierarchical code model of the 5 main themes was obtained, and then the frequency and percentage analyses were presented. According to the analysis, code co-occurrence models were used to find out which categories overlapped with other categories with the highest frequency and percentage. In this way, an attempt was made to find out which theme(s) the sub-categories were associated with.

Table 2. Factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction

Teacher's Job Satisfaction	Student-Related Job Satisfaction	School-Related Job Satisfaction	Job Satisfaction Related to Financial Adequacy
✓ Branch	✓ Conflict of generations	✓ Physical Conditions	✓ Lesson Hours
✓ Professional development	✓ Cultural Proximity	✓ Administration	✓ Income Justice
✓ Professional Satisfaction	✓ Financial support	✓ Socio-Economic Status	✓ Need fulfillment
✓ Practical use of the profession	✓ Parents	✓ Class size	✓ Taking Time for Themselves
✓ Use of Technology	✓ Student-Teacher Communication		✓ Monetary Value Given to the Profession
✓ College Education			

Teacher

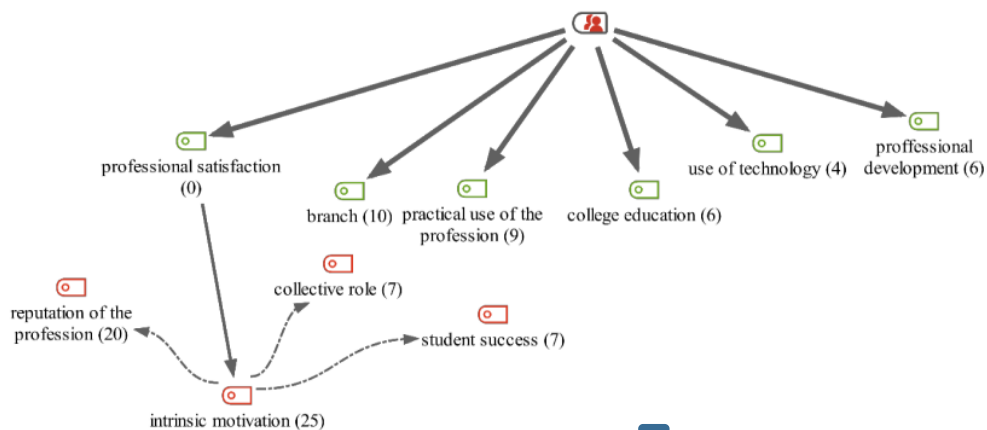


Figure 1. Hierarchical code model for teacher's job satisfaction

According to Figure 1, teachers' job satisfaction is divided into the categories of *professional satisfaction*, *branch*, *practical use of the profession*, *college education*, *professional development*, and *use of technology*. When the *professional satisfaction* category is evaluated as the *intrinsic motivation* sub-category, it is divided into the codes of *reputation of the profession*, *social role*, and *student success*. Moreover, as a result of frequency analysis, while the *intrinsic motivation* category was mostly included in the discourses of the teachers, the category they mentioned the least was the *use of technology*.

Discourses of teachers about their fields were coded as *branch*. Discourses about their branches varied according to the fields of the teachers. For example, a religious culture and moral knowledge teacher said that as an advantage of her branch, she had good personal communication with the students:

Well, I love my profession. I come here every day to teach the child something different. I am not hopeless. I've been doing this for nine years. Every day feels like it's just begun. So no problem for me. Because I love my branch, I come here with pleasure (DK5).

The advantageous situations of teachers regarding their branch or profession which are reflected in their daily lives were coded as *practical use of the profession*. This situation also differed according to the branches. For example, a Turkish teacher stated that he benefited from his professional knowledge of self-expression.

At least for my department, I am a Turkish teacher, maybe this helps me to express myself sometimes in life outside. I'm talking about life outside. There is a language problem in the region. Our children can speak neither Turkish very well nor Kurdish very well (TE16).

Teachers' job satisfaction related to their higher education, in general, was coded as *college education*. The teachers stated that the education they had received at university was theoretical but did not work very well in practice.

The courses we took at university were mostly theoretical. When you meet a student, you see that the situation is different, so it takes time to get down to the student's level. This, of course, is something that

comes with experience. In the first years, for example, I had some difficulties. You cannot establish good dialogues with the student, it is a little difficult to enter the student's spiritual world. Over the years, you better understand how to do it by trial and error. This is the year he wants, not a college education (TE8).

After completing their higher education in various branches, the need for teachers to apply for research or education related to their profession over time was coded as *professional development*.

For example, we can do a master's degree other than teaching, or something different. I also think that I need to do different things to improve myself. I don't think that teaching is enough (DK1).

Teachers' job satisfaction also includes the use of technology-related resources within the school. Statements related to this were coded as *use of technology*.

The student already perceives technology as a whole, especially nowadays. Technology should be included in education (SE11).

As for the factors that motivated them about their profession, teachers described teaching as loving children and the school environment. Teachers' statements on this subject were coded as *intrinsic motivation*:

I love kids. I love being at the board, so explaining something and students' seeing what I'm talking about is an intrinsic motivation for me. That's why I come with such enthusiasm (SE6).

Teachers also attributed their intrinsic motivation to different elements. These were *social role*, the *reputation of the profession*, and *student success*. The teachers emphasized that they had a life outside of school and that they should behave responsibly toward their families. These expressions were coded as *social role*. All of the statements were to the effect that professional life and work life were not synchronized and that this role had a negative effect:

I'm home tonight. There are also two children. We cannot spare time for their needs, which is the disadvantage of teaching. While it benefits everyone, it cannot benefit your child. We are but we cannot bear it (SE15).

Teachers stated that they should be respected based on the importance of their profession. These statements were coded as the *reputation of the profession* in the study. In general, they thought that they had lost the dignity of their profession.

The child does not look at us as a teacher... .. The student speaks to you in vulgar language. They don't respect us. It is as if he is talking to us, not with a teacher but with a friend (FK7).

Intrinsic motivation of teachers was seen in the performance of students in exams or their profession. This situation was coded as *student success* in the study:

Of course, seeing them graduate one-on-one with them, seeing them in beautiful places. Even after they graduate from school... For example, it was very nice of my student who won a doctorate one morning to remember me by sending a message and telling me this (FK4).

In general, it can be said that teachers regarded their intrinsic motivation as a determining factor and determined

more than one criterion related to their job satisfaction as a basis. They described negatively a significant part of the conditions affecting their job satisfaction.

School

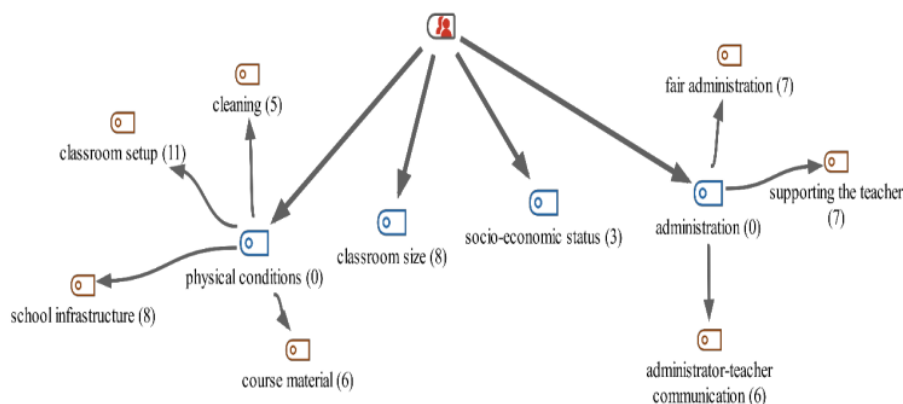


Figure 2. Hierarchical code model for school-related job satisfaction

According to Figure 2, school-related job satisfaction is divided into the categories of *classroom size*, *socio-economic status*, *physical conditions*, and *administration*. Moreover, based on the teachers' discourses, the *physical conditions* of the school category is divided into the sub-categories of *classroom setup*, *school infrastructure*, *course material*, and *cleaning*. School *administration*, on the other hand, is divided into the sub-categories of *supporting the teacher*, *fair administration*, and *administrator-teacher communication*. In terms of frequency analysis, the teachers mostly talked about the *classroom setup* and talked the least about the *socio-economic situation* as a category.

In this study, the *physical conditions*, the infrastructure of the school with the building, the physical appearance of the building, etc. were referred to. Teachers thought that the change in conditions was directly related to school management and financial opportunities. Therefore, the need to divide the physical infrastructure of the school into sub-categories arose. One of these sub-categories is *classroom setup*. It is striking that classroom equipment affected teachers' job satisfaction:

As a science teacher, you cannot give the student anything because there is no laboratory. You can only show the photo of the microscope from the book, it passes for what you can do in the lesson. You cannot do an activity (FK7).

Some of the participants evaluated the conditions in their classrooms positively. However, these assessments also compared the schools they worked at:

It's not like it used to be. When I was first appointed, we had a map room. There would have been fifty or sixty maps, now we have all the materials. There is an interactive whiteboard. Instead of any map, we can choose the image we want on the interactive whiteboard. We can work on it. In this sense, it is better than many village schools (SE6).

Another situation that teachers evaluated negatively was the physical infrastructure of the school. Situations such as the location of the classes in relation to each other and the location of the school were coded as *school infrastructure* in this study:

As I said, it was roughly said that we should divide the school into two from here, and it was divided into two. The expectation of the primary school child was not considered in terms of which part of this building, part a or part b, which has more space, could be of more benefit. So this is a bad thing and not just related to the school I work at, but a problem of the region and the city (TE16).

The participants stated that the course materials in their schools were lacking and that this affected their job satisfaction. These statements were coded as *course material* in the study:

After making an interactive whiteboard, national education informatics classes were neglected. This machine has been used for 15-16 years. So it's not up to date. I don't know if the Ministry of National Education is aware of this, but it is not possible for me to teach subjects in the program with these machines (BE5).

The cleanliness of the school and the cleaning routines were among the ¹ factors affecting the job satisfaction of the teachers. These statements were coded as *cleaning* in the study.

There are 42-43 students in each class. In other words, no matter how much cleaning is possible, we are still experiencing difficulties due to the present. No matter how much the staff are interested... (DK5).

According to the statements of the participants, another factor affecting their job satisfaction was the school administration, in other words, the administrators. The attitudes of administrators are divided into sub-categories, namely *fair administration*, *supporting the teacher*, and *administrator-teacher communication*. Teachers' desire to cooperate with administrators was coded as *supporting the teacher* in this study.

In my opinion, one of the most basic duties of the school administration is to make efforts to keep the motivation of the teacher high (SE6).

What participants expected from managers was to be treated without discrimination among their colleagues. This and similar expressions in the study were coded as *fair administration*.

In general, the school management should be fair towards teachers. I have no complaints about that, as far as I can see, it is fair. I mean, a school administration must be fair (BE5).

I mean, consulting the teachers and obtaining the opinions of the teachers while making any decision. In other words, carrying out the activities together and meeting the expectations of the teachers in the activities (TE8).

The teachers emphasized that they engaged in dialogues with the administrator and that the same condition should apply to them also. In the study, these statements were coded as *administrator-teacher communication*.

They say this book was distributed to the other class, it was distributed to other schools, why didn't you distribute it? I don't know about that book. In other words, there is a communication problem between

the administration and the teacher (DK5).

As a general evaluation, school-related job satisfaction is divided into more than one sub-category. Besides, these sub-categories are related to both positive and negative characteristics of the school. For example, it involves a fair administrator or an insufficient school infrastructure.

Student

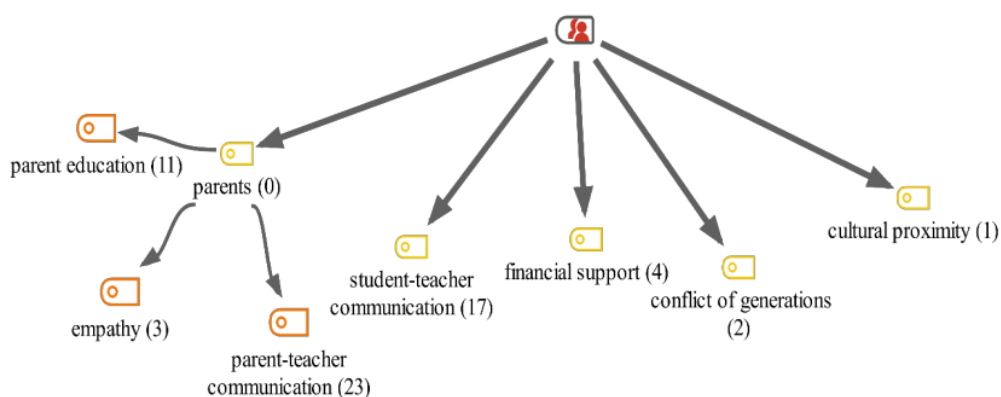


Figure 3. Hierarchical code model for student-related job satisfaction

According to Figure 3, the main theme of *student-related job satisfaction* is divided into the categories of *student-teacher communication*, *financial support*, *conflict of generations*, *cultural proximity*, and *parents*. In addition, the *parents* category is divided into three sub-categories: *parent-teacher communication*, *parent education*, and *empathy*.

Participants claimed that their interaction with the student affected their job satisfaction. These statements were coded as *student-teacher communication* in the study:

Probably because of my facial disposition, the students think I am an angry person at first sight. So they are afraid. Seeing that I'm not actually like that, I think that love solves everything. Especially when teaching a language, the student says that the teacher should love the teacher, even if it is very difficult (IE14).

Teachers stated that families experienced financial inadequacy due to the socio-economic conditions of the school environment in which they worked. For this reason, they provided the necessary financial assistance themselves. These statements were coded as *financial support* in the study:

Our teacher friends are among us. We need to do this because most of the children lack clothes, shoes, or now that winter will come, they will not have coats on them. Again, our teacher friends create a fund and support from outside, we help with the contribution of teachers, because parents are also not very educated (SE6).

The participants thought that the deficiencies arising from the communication between them and the students were caused by the difference between the generations. These statements were also coded as a *conflict of generations* in the study:

Well, I'm teaching 8th and 5th grades. Both are at the extremes, however. Somewhat because their behavior gets in the way of classes when they reach grade 8... They're in adolescence. I'm trying to make some resistance to it, because we see features of generation z. Their wishes are emotional. I guess I can explain. But at grade 5, I feel like I'm going to pick them up and hug them. It's nicer and nicer with them. It gets better. They are having trouble because I am at two extremes (MK6).

Some teachers thought that communication and rapprochement with students had a cultural effect. These expressions were coded as *cultural proximity*:

I am a person of this region. I do not distinguish between my children to see the children in the best places. So I'm trying to make sacrifices (MK6).

Since teachers said that relations with students were affected by parents' communication, it was necessary to create separate categories and sub-categories in the study. The first of these sub-categories; was coded as *parent-teacher communication*.

Sometimes I feel helpless and I don't know what to do at that moment. At such moments, I try to solve it directly with the parent. Why would you say? In our society, when the parents are a little more interested, the student takes a step back. That's why I think there is a problem at that moment. Immediate contact with the parent should be established and I think this is a deterrent. I have solved it many times, both as an administrator and a teacher, because if the student thinks that he/she can get away with wrong behavior, he/she will continue with that behavior (SE11).

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The statements of the participants who stated that the socio-economic status of the parents directly affected their job satisfaction were coded as *parent education*:

Without knowledge, they don't know how to do it. They don't understand what the sourcebook says. I ask him to solve the question on the internet, they cannot sit with him and do it next to the student. He cannot take the student to the computer and tell him to solve it. This time the student becomes addicted to the computer. In that sense, it cannot provide good guidance (FK5).

The statements that the participants expected understanding from the parents were coded as *empathy* in this study:

Some parents even interfere with where their children will sit. If there are 40 people in the class, they want 40 to sit in the front. There is no understanding among the parents right now (FK7).

In general, teachers said that they were affected by conditions related to parents. It is important that parents, depending on schools' socio-economic conditions, consider their children and their communication.

Financial Adequacy

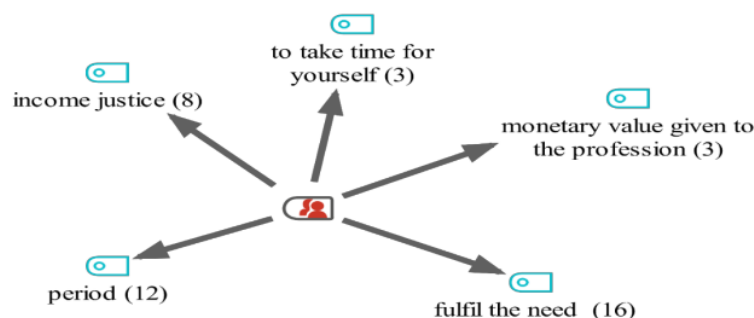


Figure 4. Hierarchical code model based on financial adequacy

According to Figure 4, the job satisfaction of the participants based on financial adequacy is divided into 5 categories: *need fulfillment*, *lesson hours*, *income justice*, *monetary value given to the profession*, and *taking time for themselves*. According to the frequency analysis, while the participants expressed their opinions about the *need fulfillment* category the most, they talked the least about the categories of *monetary value given to the profession* and *taking time for themselves*.

Participants' statements about meeting their financial needs were coded as *need fulfillment* in this study:

So, I think the teacher should be comfortable. He should not have to think about anything financially. For example, the teacher should not have to think 'Could I pay my credit this month?'. Otherwise, when he/she worries about his/her kids the teacher loses professional development. Instead of thinking about how he/she can be useful to a student, he/she thinks about how he/she can pay the installments this month (IE14).

The statements of the participants about the course load were coded as *lesson hours* ²⁸ in this study:

I don't have a lot of lecture hours right now. With fewer lessons, more efficiency can be achieved in the lessons. But we have to do this because of financial means (FE1).

Comparing the salaries of the participants with other sectors was coded as *income justice* in this study:

Now teachers' salary is the same as the lowest civil servants' salary. A nurse earns less than a watchman. In this respect, it may even be almost at par with the minimum wage in January (SE6).

Participants discussed whether their profession was valued by others. These statements were coded as the *monetary value given to the profession* in the study:

I went to the barber's the other day and he said that you did not misunderstand, but if you also get close to the minimum wage, there is no need for a person to go to any university. I think the reputation of teaching is over (FE18).

The statements about the participants spending time and money on their social activities were coded as *taking time for themselves* in this study.

I can't take a vacation properly, but the reason why I can't do it is a bit of a necessity. If I had a salary of twenty-five thousand TL I would not have to come to school for more courses on the weekend (FE18).

In general, when this theme is evaluated, it can be said that their profession is important financially for teachers. Teachers whose job satisfaction is related to financial they are happier.

Table 3. Statements of participants according to frequency analysis

Categories and sub-categories	f	%	Categories and sub-categories	f	%
intrinsic motivation	25	9.69	student success	7	2.71
parent-teacher communication	23	8.91	college education	6	2.33
reputation of the profession	20	7.75	professional development	6	2.33
student-teacher communication	17	6.59	course material	6	2.33
need fulfillment	16	6.20	administrator-teacher communication	6	2.33
lesson hours	12	4.65	cleaning	5	1.94
parent education	11	4.26	financial support	4	1.55
classroom setup	11	4.26	use of technology	4	1.55
branch	10	3.88	monetary value is given to the profession	3	1.16
practical use of the profession	9	3.49	empathy	3	1.16
income justice	8	3.10	socio-economic status	3	1.16
classroom size	8	3.10	taking time for themselves	3	1.16
school infrastructure	8	3.10	conflict of generations	2	0.78
supporting the teacher	7	2.71	cultural proximity	1	0.39
social role	7	2.71	teacher's job satisfaction	0	0.00
fair administration	7	2.71	Total	258	100.00

According to Table 3, the highest frequency is in the sub-category of intrinsic motivation under the *professional satisfaction* category of the teacher's job satisfaction theme. Besides, the second highest frequency is in the sub-category of *parent-teacher communication*. This category is under the *parent* category of the student-job satisfaction theme. According to these frequency results, the researchers created a code co-occurrence model to see the relationship between the categories. This model is shown in Figure 5.

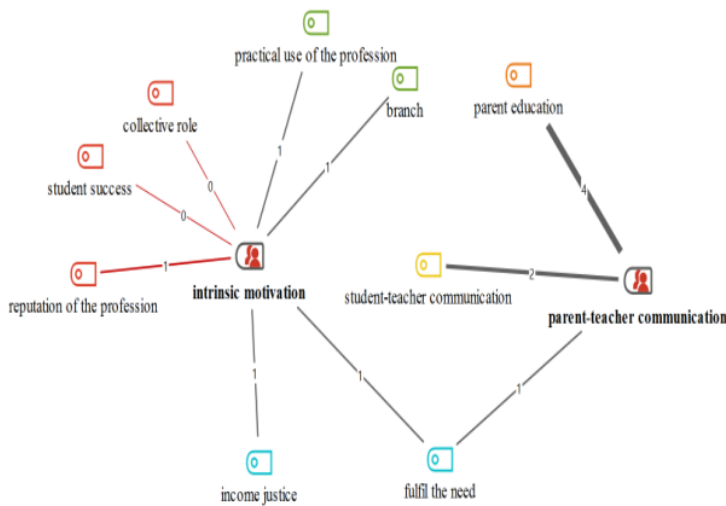


Figure 5. Code co-occurrence model between the categories of intrinsic motivation and parent-teacher communication

According to Figure 5, there is a link between *intrinsic motivation* and *parent-teacher communication*. This link is in the *need fulfillment* category. In other words, teachers stated that they were motivated in their work when they met their basic needs. In addition to this, the *parent* category has a stronger link with the *parent education* category than the other categories. Normally, there are connections with sub-categories, but it is shown that *intrinsic motivation* is connected to the other categories in Figure 5. For example, the *income justice* category is under the *financial adequacy* theme of job satisfaction. It can be said that teachers thought that ensuring fairness between salaries in other sectors and teachers' salaries affected their intrinsic motivation.

According to Table 3, in the *financial adequacy* theme of job satisfaction, the highest frequency is in the categories of *need fulfillment* and *lesson hours*. So, the researchers agreed with the connection between the categories. Figure 6 shows a code co-occurrence model related to this connection.

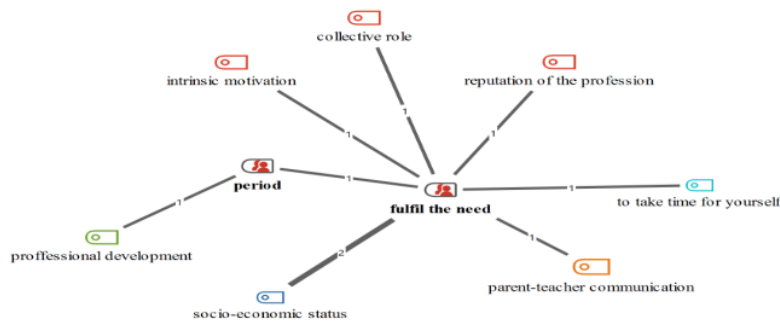


Figure 6. Code co-occurrence model between categories of need fulfillment and lesson hours

According to figure 6, the categories of *need fulfillment* and *lesson hours* are connected. Furthermore, there is a stronger connection than other categories between *need fulfillment* and *socio-economic status*. Teachers thought that their status in society depended on the basic fulfillment of their needs. The other categories that connect with *need fulfillment* are the *reputation of the profession*, *social role*, *intrinsic motivation*, *taking time for themselves*, and *parent-teacher communication*. The *lesson hours* category is also connected with the *professional development* category. The teachers thought their professional development depended on the number of hours of lessons that they taught.

16 Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

Considering the results of this study, which examined the job satisfaction of teachers, initially, the intrinsic motivation for the profession emerged as a distinct element. The teachers predominantly associated their motivation for their profession with individual and spiritual elements. Furthermore, they characterized their profession as the love of teaching, children, and the school environment and emphasized that this did not have a materialistic value. It is possible to say that intrinsic motivation had an active role in the motivation of teachers toward their profession. Having a high level of motivation enhanced the teachers' job performance and satisfaction and provided positive reflections on the organization (Akin, 2022; Altun and Sarpkaya, 2021). In the relevant literature, it was recognized that employees who loved their job and could take initiative in their profession contributed to their profession more effectively (Atabay, 2020; Bozbayındır, 2019; Toropova et al. 2021).

7
In the study, it was concluded that the teachers were 38 affected by the physical conditions of the schools where they taught. Another result was that teaching at schools with the essential teaching materials and laboratories had a 1 positive effect on teachers' job satisfaction. The teachers who taught at schools with a low number of students were more easily able to meet the demands and requirements of the administration, parents, and students (Üstündağ and Altun, 2021).

The teachers stated that the attitude and administrative mentality of school administrators directly affected their job satisfaction. The fact that administrators demonstrated a supportive attitude towards the teachers in their decisions emerged as a significant factor. This 21 particular finding illustrated that job satisfaction had an organizational functionality (Spector, 1997). With the increase in job satisfaction, the quality of the job also 27 increased, and so its reflections on the organization were positive as well (Dağlı and Kalkan, 2021; Karagözoğlu and Boydak, 2022). The school administration had a wide impact on teachers' job satisfaction. Previous studies demonstrated that the leadership styles, humor skills, and affective qualities of school principals affected teachers' job satisfaction (Canlı and Sindi, 2021; Madenoğlu et al., 2014). Therefore, the administrator's efforts to create a positive school climate and enable teachers to feel like they were an integral part of the organization increased the teachers' level of job satisfaction.

It is a common desire for individuals to be respected and expect their achievements to be recognized in business life. The social roles of teachers in society, who have stated in this study that their profession is a respectable one

and that everyone who is affected directly or indirectly by this profession should respect them, affect their professional lives. As far as their job satisfaction is concerned, it is possible to conclude that the teachers described this social role negatively. In the present study, the teachers stated that the respect for their profession was gradually decreasing year after year and further stated that the social role imposed on them was excessive. Previous studies on the subject also support this particular finding (Akın, 2022; Başturan and Görgü, 2020; Turhan and Muhammed, 2021).

It was clear that the teachers who had a certain teaching experience regarding their professional lives in teaching did not seem to have benefited much from the education they had received at university. It was stated that teacher training programs should be based on both theoretical and applied knowledge in order to foster teacher competencies and that pre-service teachers should also be assisted to acquire and develop qualities such as interpersonal communication, social skills, and teaching skills (Ashton, 1984). It is commonly recognized that theoretical study programs combined with observational and experiential practices lead to more productive results in terms of teacher education (Frijhoff, 2012). A study conducted in Turkey on this subject also supports this finding. It was revealed that teachers in various fields could not benefit in their professional lives from the knowledge of teaching approaches, strategies, methods, techniques, and many of the measurement and evaluation tools they had gained during their undergraduate education (Üstündağ and Altun, 2021). Moreover, in one study conducted with classroom teachers, the teachers stated that they could not benefit from some of the teaching methods and techniques they had learnt during their undergraduate education (Arısoy et al., 2023).

In this study, the parental element that affected job satisfaction was directly related to both the educational status and financial adequacy of the parents. The fact that the professional respectability of teachers was linked to the parent profile is supported by some studies as well (Esen et al., 2017). Moreover, as another study reported, the parent profile directly affected the school culture (Erdoğan, 2017).

Another dimension of the study, on the other hand, was the effect of teachers' salary on job satisfaction. The participants made a comparison of themselves with those working in similar institutions by emphasizing the unfair wage distribution throughout the study. At this point, it is possible to say that these attitudes and views of the teachers who stated that they experienced victimization negatively affected their job satisfaction. Previous studies on this issue support this view of the participants as well. For instance, teachers' salaries in Turkey seemed to be below the OECD average when all ranks of state-run jobs were considered. Furthermore, as the teachers gained experience, their salaries fell further below the OECD average (Demirel Yazıcı and Cemaloğlu, 2022). Similarly, according to the OECD data, 70.1% of teachers stated that their salaries should be increased (TEDMEM, 2020). In parallel with the results of the study, teachers' low salaries directly affected their performance in the profession, such as participating in social activities (Selçuk and Akdağ, 2020), lack of motivation for professional self-development (Akın, 2022), and negatively influencing their professional seniority (Öztürk, 2021).

As far as the results obtained from the study are concerned, it is believed that designing and organizing the physical conditions in schools according to the needs of the curriculum, improving teachers' salaries within the scope of the fair wage policy, strengthening the communication between the school administration, teachers and parents,

and teachers' active participation in the school administration will positively contribute to the job satisfaction of teachers.

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