



Job Satisfaction of Secondary School Teachers in Kotli, AJ&K: Role of Work Environment, Rewards, and Administration

Shamsa Munir¹, Uzma Riaz², Asma Tariq³, Zarish Altaf⁴, Dr. Muhammad Naqeeb ul Khalil Shaheen⁵

¹M. Phil Scholar, Department of Education, University of Kotli AJ&K, Email: shamsashamsa495@gmail.com

²M. Phil Scholar, Department of Education, University of Kotli AJ&K, Email: uznaarslan69@gmail.com

³M. Phil Scholar, Department of Education, University of Kotli AJ&K, Email: asmatariq828@gmail.com

⁴M. Phil Scholar, Department of Education, University of Kotli AJ&K, Email: zarishaltaf9@gmail.com

⁵Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Kotli AJ&K, Email: naqeeb.shaheen@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received: January 20, 2026
Revised: February 17, 2026
Accepted: February 26, 2026
Available Online: March 06, 2026

Keywords:

Teacher job satisfaction, work environment, rewards, administration, workload, burnout, compensation

Corresponding Author:

Dr. Muhammad Naqeeb ul Khalil Shaheen

Email:

naqeeb.shaheen@gmail.com



ABSTRACT

Job satisfaction is an emotional reaction towards a job. It is the positive or negative feelings which come from job related frustrations. In this paper, the authors analyze which of work environment, rewards and administration have more influence on job satisfaction of secondary school teachers of Kotli, AJ&K. The paper addresses one's working environment's impact on teacher performance, motivation and job satisfaction; how teacher's motivation, commitment and work productivity can be influenced by the provision of compensation benefits, rewards and recognition; present the role of the administrators in motivating the teams, thereby improving organizational effectiveness, teacher support and working management. Structured questionnaires were distributed to 183 teachers, and their answers were summarized with descriptive statistics. The results show that teachers think positively of their work environment. They have personal relationships through which they help each other and, therefore, have a pleasant time at work. Besides, they experience only a few conflicts. On the other hand, since the teachers reported doing lots of work, excessive paperwork and burning out of students so soon in the year, there seems to be a very serious factor of stress and exhaustion. Nevertheless, teachers seem to enjoy their profession and are willing to give up their administrative tasks in favor of teaching. As far as rewards are concerned, teachers are moderately satisfied with salary and benefits, but the fact that there are limited promotion and reward opportunities has led to their feeling of being underappreciated. Administration staff have been scored highly on justice and understanding but have been rated very low in equal work distribution. Among the suggestions of this research are digitally handling of administrative work load, open promotion and reward system, monitoring workload and well-being programs for addressing early burnout, and upgrading salary schemes. Lead to teacher satisfaction, motivation, and retention getting better, which in turn, leads to educational effectiveness.

Introduction

Teaching has long been considered a noble profession, and the role of teachers in shaping and advancing society cannot be overstated. Besides passing on academic knowledge and information to their pupils, teachers also pay attention to other facets of development that lead to making a person honest, moral, ethical, and a good human being. In fact, teachers are the very heart and soul of the school education system. Students learn through various factors; one of the significant factors that influence students' academic performance is teachers (Aklilu & Gebretsadik, 2025).

Many things can affect the performance and job satisfaction of secondary school teachers. These factors can motivate teachers to work with commitment and zeal; on the other hand, they can also cause teachers to leave their jobs. Therefore, these factors can either have a positive or negative influence on teacher performance and job duties. The performance of a teacher is largely influenced by the attributes of the teacher themselves, such as their level of commitment, depth of knowledge, and academic skills (Pradhan et al., 2023).

Student performance depends on teachers' job satisfaction, which is a vital component of high-quality education. In every educational institution, teachers serve as guiding forces. If they are happy and persuasive in their work, their students will perform well and achieve the desired results. The majority of a satisfied teacher's time is spent with pupils and instruction. Secondary education is crucial to any educational system, as it marks the end of school life for most students and serves as a bridge between elementary and higher education (Wartenberg, Aldrup, Grund, & Klusmann, 2023).

Several common aspects of teacher job satisfaction that are studied include the work environment, rewards and compensation, intrinsic motivation, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, and administrative support. The main factor that leads to teacher turnover, according to international studies, is a poor work environment. The teaching profession is also becoming less popular, and salary could be one of the reasons in some cases (Hardi, Wiresentana, & Khusniyah, 2025).

Job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is generated by employees' ideas of how well their job meets those things that they consider as important and necessary to work well and to enjoy. Job satisfaction is explained as the level of contentment of an individual with his or her job, whereas the emphasis is on the person's feelings toward the job (Hasan & Sadat, 2023). Job satisfaction could be the extent to which a person is happy with the rewards he/she derives from his/her job, mostly in terms of intrinsic motivation. Job satisfaction is all about the feelings and attitudes of the individuals toward their work. Those who have a positive and a favorable attitude toward their job exhibit job satisfaction. While, those who have a negative and a harsh attitude toward their job manifest job dissatisfaction (Boh, 2022).

Researchers focusing on secondary school teachers' job satisfaction have discovered different reasons for teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Besides other factors, job satisfaction is correlated with teacher quality, teachers' organizational commitment, and their performance in terms of student attainment, student attitudes, teacher turnover, and leadership effectiveness. Job satisfaction is presumed to be playing a dual role, on one hand, as one of the factors giving rise to commitment and, on the other hand, mediating variable between demographic/organizational variables and commitment (Mo & Morris, 2024).

Internationally, a large body of research on teachers' professional development has been carried out. However, authentic and good studies on teacher motivation are very rare. Besides, none of the

top four journals in international comparative education has published a single article on teacher motivation in any developing country of Africa or Asia for the last decade (Hashmani, Sehar, Rafiq, & Fareed, 2024).

Located in the educationally renowned area of Kotli where secondary education holds an important position in the city, this research is based. The objective of this main research is to analyze the contribution of a working environment, rewards, and administration in influencing secondary school teachers' job satisfaction in Kotli, AJ&K.

Problem Statement

Job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Kotli, AJ&K, is influenced by various organizational, economic, and personal factors, particularly work environment, rewards, and administrative practices. Not having a clear grasp of these aspects can significantly affect teacher effectiveness and educational standards. This study delves into the understanding of work environment, incentives, and management as factors affecting the job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Kotli, AJ&K, and will offer suggestions for enhancing teacher satisfaction and educational quality.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the role of working environment in teacher performance, motivation, and job satisfaction.
2. To analyze how compensation, benefits, rewards, and recognition influence teacher motivation, commitment, and productivity.
3. To investigate the role of administrators in improving organizational effectiveness, teacher support, and working management.

Research Questions

1. What is the role of working environment in teacher performance, motivation, and job satisfaction?
2. How do compensation, benefits, rewards, and recognition influence teacher motivation, commitment, and productivity?
3. What is the role of administrators in improving organizational effectiveness, teacher support, and working management?

Literature Review

Job satisfaction, in effect, is a kind of emotional reaction tied to one's work. When this reaction is weighed against one's assessment of the job, it is basically a joyful reaction on the one hand or an unhappy reaction on the other due to the worker's experiencing of various frustrations in the work area. In fact, the literature really only deals with the cognitive (appraisal) and emotional layers of job satisfaction. It is said by some that job satisfaction is among the work attitudes and along with the emotional and cognitive elements it also differentiates the third attitudinal component, the behavioral one, i.e., the willingness to work or not to work (Adamopoulos & Syrou, 2022).

This article explores the reasons that motivate teachers' happiness at work and their dissatisfaction, and it assesses how teachers in public secondary schools feel about their profession. Besides that,

the study sets a goal to look at and report on the correlation between various indicators related to work satisfaction and the overall job satisfaction of teachers. Differences in teacher job satisfaction based on factors such as age, gender, experience, and education are also considered. Many definitions of job satisfaction and the causes determining job satisfaction have been elaborated extensively, and the research works made on this issue domestically and globally have also been presented (Ahmad, Ali, & Noorani, 2024).

Job happiness refers to the state when an employee enjoys his or her job and the duties that come with it. To put it simply, job satisfaction means the extent to which a person enjoys their job. Besides a person's individual personality and a number of human needs that are met indirectly through work, job satisfaction is also shaped by factors such as how an organization functions, the style of management, interpersonal relations, and the culture of the organization (Charles-Leija, Castro, Toledo, & Ballesteros-Valdés, 2023).

To have no complaints and being content with what they get from their work is generally the state of an employee who can be said to be satisfied with the job. Job satisfaction is a person's feelings about their job, reflected in the way they talk about it (Mugira, 2022).

How satisfied someone is with their job depends largely on how they do their work as well as the things that they like and dislike about the job. The biggest factor is how well a person reaches their objectives. Since what a person puts into the job and the job itself are the things that lead to achieving the person's goals, it is quite possible for an employee who is satisfied with the job in some ways to be dissatisfied in other ways. Job satisfaction is defined as working experiencing a range of positive and negative emotions at work (Judge, Zhang, & Glerum, 2020).

Reward, recognition, and workplace environment have been found to be the strongest factors influencing job satisfaction. On the other hand, participation in the decision-making process was found to have an insignificant relationship to job satisfaction (Thabit et al., 2022). Besides rewards and recognition, which are the most important factors influencing employee job satisfaction, Muthuswamy and Almoosa also regard these two as their top influencers (2023). Opportunity, good leadership, increase in relative strength, work standards, fair reward, and adequate authority are the six main factors promoting and increasing employee job satisfaction. In addition, in the case of satisfaction of teachers, job satisfaction along with student performance is also an important factor and has a significant relationship with each other. Teacher job satisfaction, among other things, is also dependent upon the areas of the organizational climate such as performance standards, responsibility, unity, reward, success, and leadership. A teacher seeing a way forward (promotion) serves as a morale booster and a motivation to work more effectively, which results in higher productivity and efficiency and, of course, job satisfaction.

According to past research, teacher satisfaction plays an important role in effective education. Along the same lines, Igielski (2023) discussed factors that influence satisfaction including salary, terms of employment, relationships with key stakeholders, and participation in management. They... (1) identified that a great balance of students with active community engagement is reflective of high job satisfaction levels of a teacher irrespective of the gender. Loads, compensation, work environment, human relations are among the teacher's satisfaction determinants. Several researches reveal that factors like distribution of workloads, administrative support, salary, job security, and professional development opportunities are main determinants that explain the level of a teacher's job satisfaction. Besides that, in the classroom, when a teacher is found to be more satisfied, it is usually the case that supportive leadership, collegial relationships, and a positive environment have been a feature of such a teacher (Abid, Siming,

Chao, Amin & Sarwer, 2025). A substantial correlation that exists between teacher satisfaction, educational quality, and student achievement is what the empirical data has revealed. A review of the various meanings of the term job satisfaction and the different factors that influence it have been presented as well as a discussion of various studies conducted in the field both at home and abroad (Ertürk, 2022).

Teacher job satisfaction refers to a teacher's emotional attachment to their teaching role and it also depends on how much a teacher believes teaching fulfils their expectations (Peterson & Clark, 1992). Job satisfaction is generally divided in two broad categories: extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic aspects of job satisfaction include, among other tangibles, salary, colleagues, retirement, and health insurance benefits. Intrinsic job satisfaction, on the other hand, is mainly about internal factors, such as the work being challenging, having a high level of responsibility, using one's skills, being able to help others, and enjoying work tasks and challenges. Moreover, job satisfaction is associated with motivation since only well-motivated employees can be efficient and productive (Viningienė & Ramanauskas, 2012). For instance, in their article, Sahito and Vaisanen (2017) treat job satisfaction and motivation as the two main elements for success of any organization. First, they use motivation to show the rewards that are received for satisfying human needs. Then, they use job satisfaction to depict a state of positive emotions of a person towards his/her job (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2017).

Teachers' job satisfaction has a significant effect on their level of efficiency and productivity. A satisfied teacher is more likely to stimulate and inspire students, and this is one of the factors through which student performance is enhanced. Conversely, teachers who are dissatisfied can adversely affect students' learning and the overall performance of schools (Baluyos, Rivera, & Baluyos, 2019). Hence, it is a fact that job satisfaction of teachers greatly determines their performance and as a result shapes academic performance of students. Aligning of teachers' needs and objectives with school goals is necessary (Baluyos, Rivera, & Baluyos, 2019).

Experts concur that job satisfaction is one of the factors related to promotion and career opportunities (Guoba, Žygaitienė, & Kepalienė, 2022). Career advancement is traditionally understood as the successful progression of an employee in service, social or scientific activities. However, it should be highlighted that, if employees are restricted in their opportunities to seek a vertical career path due to the nature of the organization, then facilitating a horizontal career development would be equally important, and this applies most of all to teachers.

Research Methodology

The whole scheme of the study was developed and implemented through a quantitative research approach. The descriptive method guided the study. Data collection was done by a cross-sectional survey aimed at exploring the impact of work environment, reward systems, and administrative support on the job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in the Kotli district of AJ&K. The investigator referred to a standard questionnaire of former job satisfaction and human resource management studies. The tool was divided into three parts: Work Environment Factor; Compensation, Benefits, Rewards, and Recognition Factor; and Administration Factor. A few tweaks were made to fit the objectives and the context of this study. The tool comprised different sections including demographic data and statements scored on a Likert scale. Secondary school teachers were surveyed and data was later analyzed statistically. According to the study, the teacher population of secondary schools was 347 in number. A sample of 183 teachers was drawn for data collection. Data was collected via a six-point Likert scale-based standardized

questionnaire. The questionnaire was personally handed out to the participants in secondary schools and collected simultaneously. The results are interpreted as follows.

Data Analysis

This section deals with data analysis and interpretation. Various statistical measures, including mean and standard deviation, were employed to analyze the data.

Table 1: Work Environment Factor

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have too much to do at work.	183	3.50	2.360
Teachers are often burned out too early in the year.	183	3.37	2.129
I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	183	3.29	2.296
I have too much paperwork.	183	3.33	2.331
I enjoy my co-workers.	183	3.80	2.231
My current job is enjoyable.	183	2.69	1.165
The people in my workplace are easy to work with.	183	3.87	2.205
I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the school.	183	3.15	2.328
It's better to focus on teaching than marking paper assignments.	183	3.98	2.200
There is too much arguing and fighting at work.	183	2.63	1.081

The proposition "Focus on teaching rather than marking paper assignments" was the statement with the largest average score (M = 3.98), showing that teachers really prefer teaching to paperwork. "The people in my workplace are easy to work with" (M = 3.87) as well as "I like my co-workers" (M = 3.80) point to good relations among colleagues. There were hardly any conflicts (M = 2.63 for arguing and fighting). Yet, stress due to workload was unmistakable: "I am overloaded at work" (M = 3.50) and "I have too much paperwork" (M = 3.33). The concern for burnout is quite common (M = 3.37). Even with problems, teachers expressed a strong sense of professional pride (M = 3.29).

Table 2: Rewards and Recognition Factor

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	183	3.93	2.275
There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.	183	3.48	2.128
The benefits we receive support our daily needs.	183	3.81	2.219
There are few rewards for those who work there.	183	3.33	2.199
I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increase.	183	3.80	2.238
Our accomplishments in the workplace are always recognized/awarded.	183	3.69	2.365
There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	183	2.87	1.205
I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	183	3.15	2.328
I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	183	3.98	2.291
I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	183	2.63	1.081
I feel the need to increase/upgrade the salary scheme for teachers.	183	3.77	2.224

Respondents showed moderate satisfaction with pay ($M = 3.93$) and benefits ($M = 3.81$). Many felt satisfied with chances for salary increase ($M = 3.80$). However, the highest mean score (3.98) was for feeling unappreciated by the organization when thinking about pay. Limited promotion opportunities were evident (promotion chance satisfaction $M = 3.15$; too little chance for promotion $M = 3.48$). Respondents believed the salary scheme should be upgraded ($M = 3.77$).

Table 3: Administration Factor

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Understands fully the difficulties of teachers and acts on them directly.	183	3.50	2.275
Shows little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	183	3.67	2.78
Assigns equal works/tasks.	183	2.72	2.377
Avoids giving teachers cramming tasks/works.	183	3.60	2.299
Treats all of us fairly.	183	3.73	2.377
Does not make me feel stressed working with him/her.	183	3.72	2.377
Gives us fair loads of subjects.	183	2.67	1.205
Is easy to work with.	183	3.48	2.328
Always understands the feelings of his/her subordinates.	183	3.72	2.209
Guides us effectively in our teaching and learning experiences.	183	3.63	2.133

Respondents held a moderately positive perception of their administrator. Highest scores were for "Treats all of us fairly" ($M = 3.73$), "Does not make me feel stressed working with him/her" ($M = 3.72$), and "Always understands the feelings of his/her subordinates" ($M = 3.72$). However, lowest scores were for "Gives us fair loads of subjects" ($M = 2.67$) and "Assigns equal works/tasks" ($M = 2.72$), indicating dissatisfaction with workload distribution.

Summary of the Results

Teachers choose teaching as their profession over paperwork; they like their colleagues and they also experience a low level of conflict. But on the other hand, teachers consider high workload, excessive paperwork, and early burnout as serious issues to them. However, their professional pride remains quite strong. Teachers show a moderate level of satisfaction with their pay and benefits but they feel that they are not appreciated enough as compared to their efforts. There is a strong need for salary increases among teachers as there are very few promotion and reward opportunities. While on the one hand, administrators are praised for fairness, empathy, and reducing stress, on the other hand, they are criticized for the inequitable distribution of workload and subject assignments which points to inconsistency in administrative practices.

Conclusions

1. This paper analyzed the impact of work environment, rewards, and administration on teacher job satisfaction in Kotli, AJ&K. Satisfaction levels differ significantly across the three aspects examined in this research.
2. In relation to work environment, results indicate that role-overload and burnout due to excessive workload, bulky paperwork, and lack of communication are major issues. On the other hand, positive collegial interaction and a high level of job pride are the main factors that help teachers in keeping their motivation up.

3. When it comes to rewards, dissatisfaction with pay structure, promotion opportunities, and acknowledgement of efforts is widespread. Most of the individuals believe that the substantive match of their work with rewards and benefits is very poor which signifies the need for policy revision.
4. Addressing issues concerning administration: Teachers agreed with skills of fairness, empathy, and stress reduction. However, they expressed that inconsistent decision-making and unequal distribution of workload and subjects were some of the concerns. Despite existing support at the interpersonal level, the administrative practises need to be more consistent and transparent.

The paper ends with a point that the improvement of the workload management system, provision of a fair compensation and recognition system, and enhancing consistency in administrative decisions will be key to establishing a more favorable teaching environment. Finding solutions to the highlighted areas will have a major impact on teacher satisfaction, reduction of their burnout, and finally, very high quality of education can be achieved.

Recommendations

1. To begin with, schools could tackle reducing teacher workload by eliminating unnecessary tasks and paperwork, as well as ensuring proper and effective communication between teachers and administration. Creating a friendly and well-structured environment is one of the reasons why teachers can be less stressed and less exhausted from their job.
2. A good way to attract, retain, and motivate teachers is by offering them proper pay together with a solid system of reward and recognition for outstanding work. Morale and commitment can be the highest when salary packages are remodelled to take into consideration both the workload and the market situation of teachers.
3. School leaders may refrain from adopting behaviors and habits that show leadership in a negative light. For example, they should always treat teachers in a respectful manner, be willing to hear out their problems, and even support them emotionally through positive feedback. Performance appraisal can be made clear and systematic by straightforward promotion criteria.
4. Teachers need different skills to face classroom changes. Therefore, it is extremely important for them to be able to attend workshops and experience in-service training so that they will always be up-to-date, either by learning to communicate better, for instance, or simply by teaching more effectively.
5. One of the ways to prevent burnout is to keep track of the teacher's working hours. With the implementation of a forum dedicated to well-being, teachers can also be encouraged to discuss their feelings and stress.

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