

Level of job satisfaction among junior high school teachers in Cotabato City: A basis for policy implementation

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Abstract

This mini-project aimed to assess the level of job satisfaction among junior high school teachers in Cotabato City, Philippines with a specific focus on the relationship between their sociodemographic profile and job satisfaction. It also explored the key job issues that influence the overall satisfaction of teachers. A total of 100 junior high school teachers from public schools in Cotabato City participated in the study. Using a descriptive research design, data were gathered through a structured questionnaire, which was divided into sections addressing sociodemographic characteristics, job satisfaction levels, and job-related issues. The results of the study revealed that the level of job satisfaction among junior high school teachers was generally moderate. Younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience tended to report lower satisfaction levels compared to their older counterparts. Furthermore, the study identified several job-related factors that significantly influenced teachers' satisfaction, including workload, compensation, administrative support, and opportunities for professional development. Job issues such as student behavior, inadequate teaching resources, and insufficient salary emerged as critical challenges that negatively impacted teachers' job satisfaction. The study recommends action plan interventions to address the identified job issues and improve the overall working conditions for teachers. Efforts should focus on enhancing administrative support, increasing teacher compensation, and providing adequate resources for teaching. Additionally, professional development programs tailored to the needs of teachers, particularly those with fewer years of experience, could help boost their satisfaction and retention in the profession.

Keywords: Action plan; Job issues; Job satisfaction; Junior high school teacher

1. Introduction

Job satisfaction is a crucial factor that influences both the performance and retention of teachers, particularly in junior high schools, where educators face distinct challenges. Various aspects, including workload, salary, professional development opportunities, and school leadership, significantly affect teacher satisfaction. By understanding the level of job satisfaction among teachers, we can gain valuable insights into their overall well-being and the effectiveness of educational institutions.

In Cotabato City, an area marked by socio-economic and cultural diversity, assessing the job satisfaction of junior high school teachers is essential for improving educational outcomes and informing effective policy-making. As a dynamic urban center in the Philippines with a growing population and numerous schools serving diverse student backgrounds, ensuring teacher satisfaction is vital for creating a positive learning environment and fostering student success.

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Research indicates that job satisfaction plays a significant role in shaping teachers' motivation, commitment, and overall effectiveness in the classroom. Teachers who report higher levels of job satisfaction are more likely to remain in their positions, thereby reducing turnover rates that can disrupt student learning and overall school stability. In contrast, job dissatisfaction can lead to burnout, absenteeism, and high attrition rates, especially in regions like Cotabato City, where educational resources may be limited [1].

Several factors contribute to job satisfaction among teachers, including working conditions, administrative support, opportunities for professional development, and collegial relationships [2]. In Cotabato City, socio-political conditions and community support also play significant roles. A study by Naim et al. [3] found that teachers in conflict-affected areas often experience increased stress and lower job satisfaction due to external pressures.

Understanding the specific levels of job satisfaction among junior high school teachers in Cotabato City can provide valuable insights for policymakers. This information can help identify areas needing improvement, such as enhancing professional development initiatives, fostering supportive work environments, and ensuring access to adequate resources. Research indicates that when teachers feel appreciated and supported, they are more likely to perform effectively and positively impact their students' educational experiences [4].

Additionally, addressing the factors influencing job satisfaction can lead to improved teacher retention, which is essential for maintaining continuity in education and promoting a constructive learning environment [5]. This study aimed to fill the gap in research by examining job satisfaction levels among junior high school teachers in Cotabato City. By investigating the factors contributing to teacher satisfaction in this specific context, the research will provide valuable insights for educational policymakers, school administrators, and teachers. Ultimately, understanding job satisfaction can help identify areas for improvement and inform strategies to enhance teacher well-being and the overall quality of education in the region.

While existing research on teacher satisfaction in the Philippines has highlighted factors like workload and professional development there remains a lack of focused studies on junior high school teachers in Cotabato City. By addressing this gap, the current study aims to inform effective policy implementations that enhance teacher well-being and contribute to improved student success.

2. Methods

2.1. Research Design

The study used descriptive, cross – sectional survey with the objective to assess the level of job satisfaction among junior high school teachers in Cotabato City and to identify factors influencing their satisfaction.

2.1.1. Location and Duration of the Study

The study was conducted at Cotabato City specifically from two national high schools. The primary data were collected during the months of November and December 2024.

2.1.2. Respondents of the Study and Data Collection Procedure

The respondents of the study were junior high school teachers from two national high schools of Cotabato City. The 100 respondents were chosen using random sampling technique with a goal of achieving a representative sample depending on the size and diversity of the estimated target population.

Researchers sought the permission through letter to conduct the study from the Division Superintendent of Cotabato City. The researchers submitted letter of approval to every principal or head of the school. The researchers also prepared a letter to each respondents informing them about the survey's purpose and intentions. The administration of the questionnaire was done onsite and face-to-face.

2.1.3. Instrument for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire with Likert – scale sections to assess was used as a tool of research. The questionnaire consists of the following main parts:

- Respondents' Sociodemographic Profile
- Level of Job Satisfaction

- Issues Affecting Job Satisfaction

2.1.4. Validity and Reliability Testing

Researchers conducted a pilot study on a small subset of 30 teachers outside Cotabato City to test the questionnaire's clarity and validity. The study used Cronbach's Alpha to test the reliability and to assess internal consistency of the questionnaire. The Cronbach's Alpha result was 0.93 which means reliable.

2.1.5. Data Analysis

The study used mean and standard deviation to interpret the results on level of satisfaction on descriptive analysis. The mean is one of the most fundamental measures of central tendency. In introductory statistics texts, the mean is presented as a key tool in summarizing data, representing the "average" or central point in a distribution. It is simple to compute and widely applicable, from economics to social sciences. This explains the significance of standard deviation in understanding the spread of data. It is especially useful in detecting outliers and understanding the consistency of measurements in engineering applications. The authors emphasize its role in interpreting the degree of variation in datasets, offering insights into reliability and precision.

3. Results and discussion

This chapter presents and organizes the results and discussions necessary for the study on the level of job satisfaction among junior high school teachers in Cotabato City, and provides tabular data presentation, analysis and interpretation. It is aligned on the statement of the problems of the study. The findings are discussed in relation to the key research objectives, which include examining teachers' satisfaction in various aspects of their working environment, social relationships, compensation, leadership, and issues that impact their job satisfaction. Literature is incorporated to support the findings, and implications for improving job satisfaction among teachers in Cotabato City are discussed.

3.1. Teacher's Sociodemographic Profile

The key areas of the profile include gender, civil status, age, length of service, educational qualifications, and job position. Each of these factors is explored in relation to the teachers' job satisfaction levels.

Table 1a Sociodemographic Profile of Respondents in terms of Gender (n=100)

A. Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	31	31%
Female	69	69%
Total	100	100%

Table shows that the distribution of respondents by gender shows that there is a higher percentage of female teachers (69%) compared to male teachers (31%). This suggests that the teaching profession in Cotabato City is predominantly female. This gender difference may reflect the national trend in education, where women often outnumber men in the teaching workforce. Understanding the gender composition is important as job satisfaction may vary between male and female teachers due to different social expectations, work-life balance challenges, and personal interests in the teaching profession.

Studies often explore whether gender influences job satisfaction differently. For example, Haar and Spell [6] examined how work-life balance and work environment factors differ between male and female employees, including teachers. They found that women generally report lower levels of job satisfaction due to the higher demands of balancing work and home responsibilities, even when they are in comparable positions to their male counterparts. Female teachers often experience job dissatisfaction due to workload, role conflict, and lower career advancement opportunities. Research by Buchanan [1] indicated that gendered expectations of teachers play a critical role in job satisfaction. Female teachers are often expected to take on emotional labor, such as caring for students' emotional well-being, which can lead to burnout and decreased job satisfaction. In contrast, male teachers are less likely to be burdened with these expectations, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction in some cases. Ingersoll [8] found that gender is an important factor in teacher retention. Female teachers report more dissatisfaction related to work-life balance, leading to higher turnover rates compared to male teachers. Skaalvik and Skaalvik [2] found that female teachers experienced higher

levels of emotional exhaustion, leading to lower levels of job satisfaction, despite similar working conditions. However, male teachers were more likely to report higher levels of autonomy and satisfaction with salary and benefits.

In terms of gender distribution, there is a higher representation of female teachers in the junior high school sector compared to male teachers. This might suggest various factors such as societal trends, teaching preferences, or recruitment policies that influence the gender composition in the teaching profession. The higher percentage of female teachers could potentially provide insights into gender-specific experiences or satisfaction levels, though this specific data does not directly correlate satisfaction with gender. Further analysis would be required to explore satisfaction trends in greater detail based on gender differences.

Table 1b Sociodemographic Profile of Respondents according to Civil Status (n=100)

B. Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	39	39%
Married	55	55%
Windowed	6	6%
Legally Separated	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Table shows that regarding civil status, the majority of teachers are married (55%), followed by single teachers (39%). A smaller proportion of teachers are widowed (6%), and no teachers reported being legally separated. The fact that most respondents are married might imply that their family responsibilities influence their job satisfaction, as married teachers may have to balance professional duties with family obligations. The level of job satisfaction could be influenced by the support they receive at home and the impact of their work-life balance on their personal life [9].

Gonzalez & Ramos [10] conducted a study on job satisfaction among Filipino teachers, finding that married teachers reported higher job satisfaction than their single and widowed peers. The authors suggested that emotional stability and financial security in marriage contribute significantly to a teacher's overall job satisfaction.

Davidson [11], in a study on the work-life balance of teachers in the United States, concluded that married teachers reported a more favorable work-life balance, which positively impacted their job satisfaction. The study found that the support structure in a marriage allowed teachers to focus more on their professional responsibilities and report greater job satisfaction.

The data presented highlights the most common civil status categories among junior high school teachers, with the majority being married. This might suggest that marital status does have an impact on teacher demographics. While we cannot directly correlate civil status with job satisfaction due to the absence of specific satisfaction data, one could hypothesize that factors such as family support and work-life balance play a role in determining overall satisfaction levels among different civil status groups. Future studies with more detailed satisfaction data could help clarify the relationships between civil status and job satisfaction more thoroughly.

Table 1c Sociodemographic Profile of Respondents according to Age (n=100)

C. Age	Frequency	Percentage
20 to 29	23	23%
30 to 39	40	40%
40 to 49	24	24%
50 above	13	13%
Total	100	100%

Table shows that the age distribution of the respondents shows a diverse range of teachers. Most of the respondents (40%) are between the ages of 30 and 39, followed by teachers in the 20-29 age range (23%), 40-49 years (24%), and

50 years and above (13%). Younger teachers (20-29 years) may experience different job satisfaction levels compared to older teachers, as they might have different expectations, career aspirations, and levels of experience. In contrast, teachers in the older age categories (40 years and above) may value job security and stability more highly, potentially influencing their satisfaction with their roles. Teachers' age can also intersect with job satisfaction in terms of salary expectations. While younger teachers may be dissatisfied with lower salaries, older teachers may have more realistic salary expectations due to years of service. Furthermore, the impact of pay on job satisfaction may be less significant for older teachers, who often derive satisfaction from intrinsic rewards such as student outcomes and teaching autonomy [12].

Research indicates that teachers in mid-career stages (30-39 years) are often most satisfied when provided with professional development opportunities that allow them to enhance their teaching skills and leadership abilities. As teachers age, their expectations regarding professional development shift, with older teachers focusing more on leadership roles or mentoring younger teachers [13]. The distribution of teachers across different age groups provides a useful lens through which to analyze job satisfaction. It is likely that satisfaction levels vary significantly based on age due to factors such as career stage, experience, expectations, and personal circumstances. The largest group (30 to 39 years) might have the highest job satisfaction due to professional stability and experience, while younger teachers may still be navigating the complexities of the profession. Older teachers, on the other hand, may have varying levels of satisfaction depending on their specific career experiences. Ultimately, understanding the relationship between age and satisfaction can help in tailoring support programs for teachers, addressing specific needs based on career stage, and enhancing overall job satisfaction across the teaching profession.

Table 1d Distribution of Respondents According to the Sociodemographic Profile (n=100)

D. Length of Service	Frequency	Percentage
0 to 5 years	35	35%
6 to 10 years	27	27%
11 to 20 years	28	28%
21 years and above	13	13%
Total	100	100%

Table shows that the length of service distribution reveals that most teachers have served between 0 to 5 years (35%), followed by those with 6 to 10 years of service (27%), 11 to 20 years (28%), and 21 years and above (13%). This distribution indicates that a significant portion of teachers are relatively new to the profession, while others have extensive experience. The level of job satisfaction may vary based on years of service, as newer teachers might face challenges in adjusting to the demands of the profession, while more experienced teachers may have developed coping strategies and a deeper sense of commitment, potentially leading to higher job satisfaction.

In a study by Tollefson [14] on the teaching profession in secondary schools, it was found that teachers with 6-10 years of service showed the highest levels of satisfaction, as they felt they had settled into the profession and achieved a sense of stability. Conversely, the teachers with more than 20 years in service experienced some dissatisfaction due to perceived lack of recognition or professional growth opportunities.

Bolin [15] examined how the work environment and external factors (such as school culture, leadership, and student behavior) impact job satisfaction differently at various career stages. He found that early-career teachers (0-5 years) report dissatisfaction when there is a lack of professional development, while mid-career (6-10 years) and long-tenure teachers (11+ years) tend to have a more balanced view, as they have learned to navigate the challenges of the job.

Research generally suggests that job satisfaction is not static and is affected by the length of service. Teachers in the early years of their career (0-5 years) may struggle with job satisfaction due to adjustment issues, workload, and lack of support, while those with 6-10 years of service often experience a boost in satisfaction. Teachers with over 10 years of experience may face challenges such as burnout or stagnation, but may also experience higher job satisfaction due to increased autonomy, mastery, and role clarity. Therefore, the level of job satisfaction among junior high school teachers varies across the years of service, with specific needs for each career stage to ensure retention and well-being.

Table 1e Distribution of Respondents According to the Sociodemographic Profile (n=100)

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor's Degree	42	42%
Master Degree	57	57%
Doctorate	1	1%
Total	100	100%

Table shows that the educational qualifications of the teachers show that most hold a Master's Degree (57%), followed by those with a Bachelor's Degree (42%) and one teacher with a Doctorate degree. Teachers with higher educational qualifications may experience higher job satisfaction due to a greater sense of accomplishment, professional development, and the opportunity for career advancement. It is possible that teachers with a Master's or Doctorate degree feel more confident in their roles and in their ability to make a difference in students' lives. Several studies have suggested that educational qualifications are positively associated with job satisfaction among teachers. Teachers with higher academic qualifications often report greater satisfaction in their professional lives. This is likely because these teachers feel more competent, have greater career advancement opportunities, and are more likely to be engaged in their work. Lindsey [16] found that teachers with higher educational qualifications, such as master's or doctoral degrees, tend to experience a higher sense of professional achievement, which contributes to greater overall job satisfaction. These teachers often have access to more professional development opportunities, which in turn enhances their satisfaction with their career.

Baloch et al. [17] conducted a study in Pakistan and concluded that teachers holding higher educational qualifications, particularly master's and doctoral degrees, experience higher job satisfaction due to better career prospects and personal development opportunities. They noted that the motivation stemming from advanced qualifications may lead to a greater sense of fulfillment in their roles. The level of job satisfaction among junior high school teachers is strongly influenced by their educational qualifications. Teachers with higher qualifications, such as a master's or doctoral degree, generally report higher job satisfaction due to increased career development opportunities, greater job role clarity, and enhanced professional status. However, it is essential to recognize that other factors, including school environment, leadership, and resources, also contribute significantly to teacher satisfaction.

Table 1f Distribution of Respondents According to the Sociodemographic Profile (n=100)

F. Position	Frequency	Percentage
T1	60	60%
T2	6	6%
T3	23	23%
MT1	10	10%
MT2	1	1%
Total	100	100%

Table shows that in terms of job position, the majority of respondents hold the position of Teacher 1 (T1) (60%), followed by Teacher 3 (T3) (23%), Teacher 2 (T2) (6%), Master Teacher 1 (MT1) (10%), and Master Teacher 2 (MT2) (1%). Teachers in higher positions such as Master Teachers might experience different levels of job satisfaction compared to those in lower positions, as they may have additional responsibilities, leadership roles, and opportunities for professional development. However, the workload and expectations associated with these higher positions may also contribute to job stress, potentially affecting their satisfaction. According to studies [18], teachers in entry-level positions (T1) often face challenges such as classroom management, workload, and adapting to the work environment, which can affect their job satisfaction. They tend to report higher dissatisfaction when there is insufficient administrative support or lack of career development opportunities.

Teachers with more experience, such as those in positions like T2 and T3, generally experience a higher level of job satisfaction. As noted by Kyriacou [19], they tend to be more confident in their teaching abilities, feel more competent

in managing their classrooms, and usually report better relationships with students and colleagues. However, their satisfaction may be affected by increased workload, lack of promotion opportunities, and institutional support.

To summarize, the job satisfaction of junior high school teachers, especially when segmented by position, is influenced by various factors such as experience, workload, administrative support, and opportunities for professional growth. Teachers in entry-level positions (T1) may experience lower job satisfaction due to challenges in managing their classroom and balancing their responsibilities, while those in senior roles (MT1 and MT2) may experience satisfaction from recognition and responsibility but also face increased stress.

The data on sociodemographic factors suggest that various aspects of a teacher's profile can influence their level of job satisfaction. The gender, age, civil status, length of service, educational qualification, and position all contribute to the overall satisfaction of teachers. Teachers in higher positions and with greater years of experience may have higher job satisfaction due to their advanced skills, job security, and professional development opportunities.

In contrast, newer teachers or those with less experience might face challenges related to adjusting to the demands of the job, classroom management, and work-life balance, which could negatively impact their satisfaction. Furthermore, gender and civil status might also influence satisfaction due to societal expectations and personal responsibilities, with female teachers, in particular, possibly experiencing more pressure to balance family and work. Overall, understanding these sociodemographic factors is crucial for identifying areas where interventions could improve job satisfaction. Tailored professional development, work-life balance initiatives, and support for teachers in various life stages could help foster a more satisfying and fulfilling teaching environment.

3.2. Level of Job Satisfaction of Teachers

Table 2a Level of Job Satisfaction in terms of Working Environment

Working Environment	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I feel satisfied with my job as a junior high school teacher.	3.74	0.44	strongly agree
I have opportunities for career growth and professional development.	3.65	0.61	strongly agree
The school provides a safe and supportive working environment.	3.69	0.46	strongly agree
I am satisfied by the school conducive for the teaching and learning process.	3.61	0.6	strongly agree
I feel supported in managing student behaviour in my classroom.	3.64	0.52	strongly agree
The facilities and resources provided by the school meet my teaching needs.	3.49	0.59	agree
The class sizes I teach are manageable for effective instruction.	3.35	0.82	agree
I am satisfied with the cleanliness and maintenance of the school facilities.	3.35	0.73	agree
The school's policies regarding breaks, lunch, and prep time are fair and adequate.	3.61	0.55	strongly agree
I receive enough support to handle administrative and non-teaching tasks.	3.58	0.54	strongly agree
Total:	3.52	0.59	strongly agree

Table shows that the factor of social relationships scored a mean of 3.62, indicating that teachers are generally satisfied with their interpersonal relationships within the school. This score suggests that teachers experience positive interactions with their colleagues and feel supported in their social environment. The standard deviation of 0.55 reflects moderate consistency in teachers' perceptions, showing that while most teachers have favorable views of social interactions, some may have differing experiences.

Positive social relationships are a critical factor in job satisfaction, as they help create a supportive work environment. Research by Hargreaves [20] emphasizes the importance of collegiality and collaboration among teachers for professional well-being. Teachers who have strong social bonds with colleagues are more likely to feel a sense of belonging and community, which enhances job satisfaction. The findings indicate that fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment is essential for improving teachers' job satisfaction. Schools should encourage team-building activities, create opportunities for collaboration, and support the development of professional learning communities to enhance the social relationships among teachers.

Table 2b Level of Job Satisfaction in terms of Compensation, Benefits and Rewards Factor

Compensation, Benefits and Rewards Factor	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I am satisfied with my current salary as a junior high school teacher.	3.39	0.64	Agree
I receive adequate financial compensation for overtime or additional work.	2.89	0.95	Agree
My salary increases reflect my experience and performance.	3.07	0.83	Agree
The school offers a good retirement or pension plan.	2.93	0.91	Agree
I have access to sufficient health and wellness benefits through my job.	3.03	0.82	Agree
My accomplishment is often recognized, appreciated and awarded.	3.19	0.67	Agree
The school has a system for rewarding high-performing teachers.	3.06	0.80	Agree
The school provides adequate paid leave (e.g., vacation, sick leave).	3.03	0.83	Agree
My benefit package is competitive compared to other schools in the area.	3.18	0.75	Agree
I am satisfied with the overall compensation, benefits, and rewards system at this school.	3.16	0.74	Agree
Total	3.09	0.79	Agree

Table shows that the compensation, benefits, and rewards factor have a mean of 3.09, which suggests that teachers agree that they are somewhat satisfied with their pay, benefits, and rewards, but the satisfaction is not as high as for other factors. The standard deviation of 0.79 shows higher variability, indicating that some teachers may feel their compensation is inadequate, while others may feel it is sufficient. Compensation is one of the most significant factors influencing job satisfaction. In many studies, teachers consistently express dissatisfaction with their pay [8]. Although teachers in Cotabato City report moderate satisfaction with their compensation, the variability suggests that some may find their salaries insufficient given the demands of the profession. A more equitable distribution of resources and better reward systems could be beneficial.

Table 2c Level of Job Satisfaction in terms of Leadership of Administrators

d. Leadership of Administrators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
My administrator makes me feel appreciated with my work.	3.42	0.62	Agree
School leadership encourages innovative teaching methods and supports their implementation.	3.42	0.6	Agree
School administrators are approachable and open to discussing teacher concerns.	3.44	0.64	Agree
My administrator supervises me in my teaching journey.	3.4	0.61	Agree
The school administration listens to and values teachers' feedback and suggestions.	3.4	0.65	Agree
I feel that the administration treats all teachers fairly and without bias.	3.33	0.66	Agree
I feel included in decision-making processes that affect my role as a teacher.	3.37	0.63	Agree
Leadership supports teachers in pursuing additional training and education.	3.39	0.6	Agree
The administrators create a positive work environment that enhances my job satisfaction.	3.41	0.6	Agree
I feel that the school's leadership has a positive impact on my job performance.	3.42	0.62	Agree
Total	3.44	0.62	Agree

Table shows that the leadership of administrator factor scored a mean of 3.44, indicating that teachers generally agree that the leadership provided by school administrators is satisfactory. The standard deviation of 0.62 indicates moderate

variability, suggesting that while many teachers are satisfied with their leaders, there are some differences in perception. Effective leadership is a crucial determinant of teacher satisfaction. Leithwood and Jantzi [21] assert that strong leadership positively affects teachers' work conditions, motivation, and overall job satisfaction. Teachers in Cotabato City generally seem to appreciate their administrators' leadership, but the variation in responses highlights the importance of consistency in leadership practices. Administrators who are perceived as supportive and visionary can help foster a positive school environment.

For sustained job satisfaction, school leaders should continue to engage in professional development and maintain open lines of communication with staff. Administrators should focus on providing clear expectations, offering regular feedback, and being responsive to teachers' concerns.

Table 3 Job issues that affect the satisfaction of junior high school teachers in Cotabato City

Issues Affecting Job Satisfaction	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Salary issue	3.06	0.74	Agree
Workload issue	3.04	0.76	Agree
Number of Students issue	3.04	0.73	Agree
School Facilities issue	3	0.72	Agree
School Environment issue	3	0.61	Agree
Distance of work from home to school issue	2.98	0.65	Agree
Peer issue	2.87	0.77	Agree
Administration issue	2.85	0.74	Agree
Health issue	2.76	0.78	Agree
Coordinatorship issue	2.78	0.73	Agree
Inadequate Compensation	2.83	0.66	Agree
Lack of Support	2.86	0.63	Agree
Discipline Challenges	2.94	0.58	Agree
Limited Resources	3.05	0.05	Agree
Professional Development Opportunities	2.97	0.54	Agree
Job Security	2.92	0.8	Agree
Poor Work-Life Balance	2.87	0.63	Agree
Lack of Autonomy	2.89	0.58	Agree
Insufficient Recognition	2.75	0.65	Agree
Being teacher is not the dream job.	2.44	0.95	Disagree
Overall	2.89	0.66	Agree

Table shows that the issues affecting job satisfaction factor scored the lowest mean of 2.83, which is still within the Agree range but indicates more room for improvement. This suggests that teachers have some concerns or unresolved issues affecting their satisfaction levels. The standard deviation of 0.6704 reveals moderate variability, indicating that while some teachers are content with how issues are addressed, others may feel that their concerns are not adequately managed. Job satisfaction is often influenced by the way schools address issues such as workload, class size, and administrative support. According to Valli and Buese [22], unresolved concerns and chronic dissatisfaction can lead to burnout and attrition among teachers. The relatively lower score in this area indicates that issues like workload and lack of support may be prominent challenges for some teachers in Cotabato City.

In conclusion, the results of this study indicate that junior high school teachers in Cotabato City experience moderate job satisfaction across several domains. Teachers are generally satisfied with their working environment, social

relationships, and leadership but express concerns about their compensation and unresolved issues that affect job satisfaction. The findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to improve teachers' compensation packages, address workplace issues, and maintain effective leadership practices. By focusing on these areas, Cotabato City can enhance teacher job satisfaction, which in turn could improve teaching quality and student outcomes leading to a more peaceful learning and teaching environment [23].

Table 4 Action Plan Proposal

Proposed Policy Recommendation	Objectives	Activities	Time	Person Involved	Expected Outcome
Professional Development	To offer continuous professional development opportunities and to help teachers stay updated with the latest teaching methods and technologies.	Regular professional development conference, workshops, training sessions and further education opportunities.	Monthly	Educational trainers, school administrators, teachers	Enhanced teaching skills, increased confidence, and job satisfaction.
Workload Management	To ensure teachers have manageable workloads.	Hiring additional support staff, reducing administrative tasks, and providing adequate planning time.	Throughout the school year	School administrators, support staff, teachers.	Reduced stress and burnout, increased focus on teaching quality.
Supportive Work Environment	To create a positive, collaborative and supportive work environment.	Team-building activities and collaborative projects, mentorship program, maintaining a clean and safe school environment, and fostering a culture of respect and collaboration.	Ongoing, with initial plan at the start of the school year	Senior teachers, junior teachers, school administrators.	Improved teacher support network, enhanced professional growth.
Competitive Compensation	To ensure teachers receive competitive salaries and benefits.	Includes health insurance, retirement plans, and performance-based incentives.	Monthly	School administrators, teachers	Increased enthusiasm and commitment to their teaching duties, leading to better mental health and well-being.
Teacher Autonomy	To allow teachers some degree of autonomy in their teaching methods and classroom management.	Providing teaching resources and materials, Allow teacher more autonomy in curriculum design and classroom management.	Throughout the school year	School administrators, teachers	Increased job satisfaction and creativity in teaching. This can help them feel more empowered and invested in their work.

Work-Life Balance	To promote work-life balance.	Flexible working hours, mental health support, and wellness programs.	Throughout the school year	School administrators, health professionals, teachers.	Improved work-life balance, reduced stress levels.
Recognition and Rewards	To acknowledge and reward teachers for their efforts, hard work and achievements.	Recognition programs, awards, public acknowledgment, and opportunities for career advancement.	Quarterly	School administrators, teachers.	Increased motivation and morale, fostering a sense of appreciation.
Feedback and Communication	To establish open lines of communication between teachers and administration.	Regular feedback sessions and discussions where teachers can voice their concerns and suggestions.	Quarterly	Teachers, school administrators.	Better communication, addressing issues promptly, increased satisfaction.
Student Support Services	To provide adequate support services for students and to help teachers focus on teaching rather than managing student issues alone.	Counseling and special education resources.	Quarterly	Teachers, students, school administrators.	This can create a supportive network for teachers

4. Conclusion

The teachers in Cotabato City reported a moderate level of job satisfaction overall. Specifically, teacher's express satisfaction with their working environment, social relationships, and leadership. However, concerns were noted regarding compensation and unresolved workplace issues, which negatively impact overall job satisfaction. The study's general objective of identifying factors influencing job satisfaction was achieved through an exploration of these domains. The study reveals that while the teachers are generally content with the interpersonal and leadership aspects of their work environment, improvements are needed in areas related to compensation and addressing workplace challenges. These findings suggest that fostering a more supportive and fairer environment could enhance job satisfaction, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students.

This study has contributed valuable insights into the factors affecting job satisfaction among junior high school teachers in Cotabato City. The findings highlight that a positive working environment, strong social relationships, and effective leadership contribute significantly to teachers' job satisfaction. On the other hand, compensation and unresolved issues present barriers to achieving high levels of satisfaction. By addressing these concerns, Cotabato City can improve the quality of education and teacher retention. This study provides a foundation for future research into teacher satisfaction, specifically focusing on compensation strategies and solutions for addressing workplace conflicts.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of ethical approval

Prior to starting this investigation, the researchers ensure the integrity of the research process. The researchers obtain approval from respective principal or school head of each secondary school chosen for this study. The researchers promised that every respondent would receive ethical treatment, including the provision of a consent form stating that

participation was voluntary and participants can withdraw at any time. The researchers assure participants of data confidentiality in relation to the Republic Act 10173, also referred to as the "Data Privacy Act of 2012," protects the fundamental human right to communication privacy while allowing the free flow of information to foster innovation and growth. As such, survey respondents were not asked for their names and were only identified by a unique number.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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