

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Unmasking job satisfaction among special education teachers from a social perspective

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ABSTRACT

Job satisfaction of special education teachers is an important issue influencing teacher retention, teaching quality and student achievement, especially considering the special needs of these special teachers. This study explores the main determinants of job satisfaction in the special education teachers in Pakistan concerning intrinsic motivation, institutional support, workload management, leadership, collaboration, and demographic variables. Based on the survey conducted on 300 teachers, the research concluded that job satisfaction attached to intrinsic motivation, professional pride, and teamwork was recorded on a high scale on average. Nonetheless, the level of satisfaction was lower with regard to administration support and access to resources. Through statistical analysis it was found that there were significant differences of job satisfaction in terms of the age, teaching experience, designation, educational level, grade level teaching and income but not on gender, institution type and school location. The most important factors to improve the level of job satisfaction and retention are positive leadership, realistic workloads, sufficient resources, and collegial support. The research suggests the idea of nurturing institutional support systems and collective working culture to enhance the motivation and welfare of teachers and, in turn, benefit students with special needs in Pakistan.

Keywords: job satisfaction; special education teachers; working conditions; professional development

1. Introduction

The job satisfaction among special education teachers is a topical issue in educational systems, having an impact on teacher retention, quality of instruction, and student performance. Special education teachers usually deal with increased demands, challenging student needs and unique job demands, which may affect teachers' levels of satisfaction. It is crucial to comprehend what impacts their job satisfaction to deliver high-quality educational policies and enhance the welfare of these teachers^[2,19,33,34].

Historically, teacher job satisfaction studies have emphasized workload, administrative support, and compensation as being at the heart of teacher professional satisfaction. By the beginning of the 2020s, the research diverged in the distinction of general education and special education teachers, which then stressed how teachers working in special education commonly endure high levels of work-related stress and low

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environmental satisfaction due to ineffective resources, assistance, and training possibilities^[5,24,26]. Gradually, the scope of research was extended to account not only for individual and organizational variables that could influence satisfaction but also policy-related variables.

Across the world, job satisfaction among special education teachers has been a topic of great concern to scholars. Based on global research done in countries like Saudi Arabia and Turkey in the year 2024 among special education teachers, the results indicate moderate levels of job satisfaction among them, mostly lower than those of their general education colleagues, which can be attributed to the complexities of the work and stigma in society^[27,33,34]. School head support, working conditions and institutional climate are issues that are important to teacher retention and well-being^[16,20]. The international dimensions not only emphasize the universality of these concerns, but they also illustrate the differences in culture and system in terms of the provision of support systems to teachers.

In Pakistan, it has been found that the special education teachers are faced with inadequate opportunities for professional development, inadequate resources and even a lack of administrative support. Current research in Punjab and other provinces in 2024 records a variability in special educator levels of satisfaction and identifies seniority and institution as influential variables^[2,11,13]. The quest to deal with these nagging problems by policymakers and school administrators continues to be an uphill task, as it not only affects job satisfaction but also the delivery of quality education to students with special needs.

Although the importance of special education has long been acknowledged, dissatisfying working conditions among a significant number of teachers persist due to large workload, low level of autonomy, poor pay, and insufficient professional development^[2,3]. The issue of constant and high levels of job dissatisfaction among special education teachers poses a threat to creating greater teacher shortages and higher turnover rates, and thus making special education programs less effective^[19,20].

Even though the literature is confronted with factors that affect job satisfaction among special education teachers in different regions across the world, no current study supporting and focusing on the findings in Pakistan has been previously conducted, particularly using the data from 2024 and 2025. The majority of studies did not look at the changes in education after the pandemic, advances in policy systems, and regional professional issues^[3,29]. This gap requires updated empirical data to create policy decisions that can be implemented and acted upon based on local Pakistani circumstances^[2,3,19].

Job satisfaction among special education teachers is a complex issue affecting retention and instruction quality. To provide a rigorous analysis, this study employs Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Motivation-Hygiene Theory)^[18]. This framework is crucial for distinguishing between intrinsic factors (Motivators), such as recognition and achievement, and extrinsic factors (Hygiene Factors), like salary and working conditions. Applying this theory addresses the theoretical gap by guiding the classification of variables and enabling a grounded interpretation of their distinct impact on special educators' job satisfaction.

1.1. Objectives of the study

This study intends to:

- 1.To determine the present situation regarding job satisfaction among special education teachers in Pakistan.
- 2.To establish what causes job satisfaction and dissatisfaction among these teachers.
- 3.To contrast results with global trends to put the local issues into perspective.
- 4.To propose evidence-based strategies to increase job satisfaction and retain special education teachers.

1.2. Research questions

Following research questions address the research objectives:

1. What is the job satisfaction rate of special education teachers in Pakistan currently?
2. What are the key variables that affect job satisfaction amongst the special education teachers in Pakistan?
3. What role does school administrator support have in job satisfaction and retention intent of special education teachers?
4. How can job satisfaction and retention of special education teachers be strengthened in Pakistan?

2. Literature review

The special education teacher and job satisfaction have been identified as one of the key aspects that determine teacher retention, instructional quality, and student achievement globally. In Pakistan, although special education has been on the rise in terms of focus, there is limited and isolated research on the topic of job satisfaction among teachers in special education. The current empirical evidence supports the multifactor concept of job satisfaction, which comprises individual, institutional, socio-cultural, and policy and governmental aspects.

A prominent study in Punjab revealed that although most special education teachers were fairly satisfied with their job, they all had to show high levels of disparity in accordance with the teaching experience and/or income. The overall satisfaction level among senior teachers rose relatively significantly higher than that of junior teachers, although the satisfaction level did not differ significantly based on gender. The working atmosphere, promotion of professional growth, accessibility to facilities and resources, policies clarification and application, earnings, and the ratio between students and teachers were deemed to be the key determiners of job satisfaction. The research emphasized that such areas of policy interventions have the capacity to increase job satisfaction and the process of education among special needs students^[2,11,13].

In line with that, a 2024 study covered the pivotal importance of school administration in creating the experience of novice teachers. It was revealed that a strong correlation exists between the strong support of school heads and job satisfaction, intent to stay and decreased stress levels of junior special educators. It was highlighted that supportive leadership and individual induction programs were critical not only to increase teacher welfare and motivation but also during the initial years of their careers^[10,17].

An exploratory study aimed at exploring the feelings of the senior special educators in the Punjab state identified that class environment, professional development, administrative support, recognition, emotional support, and collaboration are some crucial areas that determine the quality of teachers' work life. Among policy remedies that the study advocated were the revision of teacher preparation programs, provision of incentives, and promotion of inclusive school culture to raise the level of job satisfaction and retention^[3,29].

In addition, studies have been conducted on the interconnection of motivation, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction. An example of contemporary research that utilizes correlation is a study published in 2023 concerning intrinsic motivation among special educators, where the researchers found that continued motivation is strongly associated with favourable policies, career development opportunities, and favourable working environments. Absence of these aspects results in reduced levels of motivation and fulfilment and makes it more probable that they will come into attrition^[7,30].

In the international literature, reports of similar situations confirm Pakistani ones: in most cases, the satisfaction of special education teachers does not reach the highest values, and dissatisfaction is caused by the feeling of overload, the absence of freedom of choice, low pay rates, and a weak and ineffective professional development. Interestingly, there was a reverse correlation between job satisfaction and stress, depression, and anxiety, which portrays the emotional burden that this teaching group was being subjected to. Such factors are congruent with the Pakistani experience and the necessity of systemic interventions that support a system of material and psychosocial-level needs^[9,28].

The pattern in another sub-central comparative study done in recent years on the differences between the special education teachers in the public and private sectors brought out different patterns. Teachers employed in the public sector were more satisfied with their payments and the feasibility of work, yet teaching resources and facilities were identified as the reasons for dissatisfaction. Conversely, the teachers in the private sector were unhappy with a poor salary package and long working hours, though they were positively inclined towards their professional role. The study highlighted how government strategies should be put towards ending of poor teacher salaries in the private education institutions as well as adequate allocation of resources without discrimination between the two sectors^[22,39].

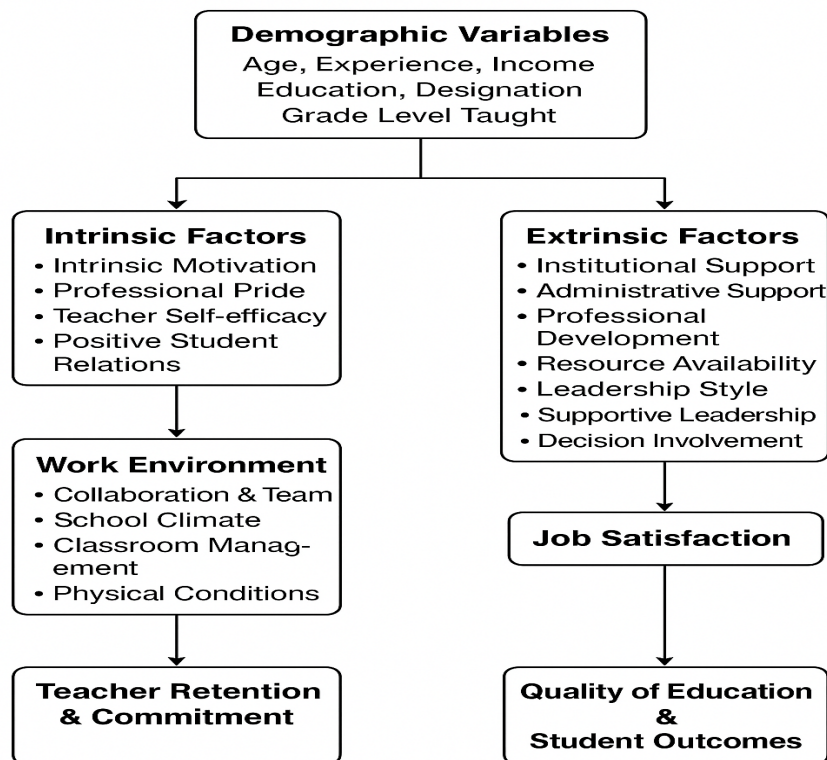
There has also been an analysis of the importance of emotional factors, where results indicate that positive emotions like happiness will increase job satisfaction, whereas negative ones like anger and sadness will be associated with decreasing levels of job satisfaction. Moreover, it was stated that the educational background and the pay scale of a teacher were observed as the two variables strongly correlated with a level of job satisfaction, whereas such demographic aspects as age and gender of a teacher were subject to less influence^[2,11].

Organization issues also dominate new literature. Research shows that perceived quality of the working environment such as relationship with colleagues, professional support, freedom in the classrooms, moral treatment are powerful positive contributors of job satisfaction by the special education teachers. However, other factors contributing to dissatisfaction are low base pay, lack of an adequate means of professional growth, and administrative or non-teaching work overload^[25].

Generally, the modern studies always advise a multi-dimensional approach to enhancing the employer satisfaction of special education teachers in Pakistan by providing competitive salaries, investing in their professional growth, providing resources and amenities, and also create a positive culture in the work environment. These factors should be taken into account not just to make teachers stay but also to increase the learning and performance outcomes of students with disabilities^[2,25,39].

In a nutshell, there is a consistent pattern in modern literature that suggestion of targeted reform specifically entails competitive compensation, ongoing career advancement, facilitative leadership, and the enhancement of resources and clinic facilities. By ensuring that these complex drivers are considered, educational stakeholders can bolster the level of job satisfaction in special education instructors, and this will eventually lead to higher retention rates in all aspects of education and enhanced educational outcomes among learners with special needs^[3,9,10,17,30].

2.1. Conceptual framework



There is a conceptual framework, according to which Demographic characteristics with intrinsic and extrinsic factors are displayed and their impact on teacher retention, commitment and standard of education. The aspects upon which it is based include demographic factors such as age, experience, income, education, designations and grade level of teaching which determines the intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Examples of intrinsic factors are the inner motivation, pride in work, self-efficacy of teachers and positive relationships with students that lead to a favourable job environment reflected in the collaboration and positive climate at school, effective management in the classroom and favourable physical conditions. Healthy work environment contributes to maintaining good teacher retention as well as long term devotion to teaching. Extrinsic factors, on the other hand, include external support as that found in institutional and administrative support systems, professional development and professional support services, and availability of resources and supportive leadership, and effective workload management. These variables directly promote job satisfaction that leads to positive effects on the quality of education and student results accordingly. The combination of the two important components that the framework puts into focus is that it is necessary to keep teachers satisfied, retained, and enhance the general effectiveness of education by combining the personal motivation and institutional support, mediated through the conditions of the workplace.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Research design

The research design used in this study was a descriptive and quantitative research design. Quantitative design was adopted in the study where numerical data collected by means of pre-structured questionnaire was analysed statistically in accessing the levels of job satisfaction of the special education teachers in Pakistan. The descriptive design was applied in providing a very elaborate explanation of the influences to job satisfaction to this particular group of teachers.

3.2. Research population

Special education teacher is the target population of this research and their scope of work is within different educational institutions in Pakistan. These educators are so chosen because of their immediate contact in teaching and providing services to students with special needs; hence the satisfaction they experience in their work is a central component determining the quality of education and the performance of students.

Sampling technique and research sample

There were 300 special education teachers who took part in the research. The survey used to retrieve the sample was carried out via Google Forms. To attain a varied sample of special education teachers, the non-probability convenience kind of sampling was made application of, so as to reach a wide assortment of the respondents across various areas, and institutional experiences.

3.3. Research tool

The data collecting tool was a questionnaire designed and constructed by herself owing to thorough literature search on the field of job satisfaction among special education teachers. The questionnaire had two major sections, the first section elicited the demographic data of the respondents, that is, age, gender, years of experience, qualification and the nature of institution. The second section consisted of statements which pertained to different aspects of job satisfaction i.e. working conditions, remuneration, professional development areas, administrative backup, emotional well-being, and work-life balance. The answers were noted on a 5 point Likert scale that used Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree as options.

3.4. Validity and reliability

Content validity of the questionnaire was established by means of professional validation, where the special education and educational psychology informants evaluated the instrument concerning its topicality, readability, and a completeness. To check the reliability of the questionnaire, a smaller number of special education teachers had a pilot study. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was utilized to evaluate internal consistency since it was found to be very reliable, implying that the tool will be suitable in the prime data collection.

Cronbach's Alpha	Frequency	No. of Items
0.918	300	47

3.5. Data collection

The data were only collected by way of online survey which was sent through Google Forms. The approach helped us to gather enough and easy data and the participants could fill the questionnaire at their convenience. The anonymity of the respondents and the confidentiality of their answers was highlighted to induce the truthful responses.

4. Data analysis and interpretation

Analysis of collected data was conducted with the help of SPSS software. To generalize demographic variables and the degree of job satisfaction the descriptive statistics in the presentations included means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. The inferential statistics such as t-tests and ANOVA were used to analyse variations between job satisfaction across different groups of demographics as well as professional groups. The objective of the analysis was to determine the main variables that determine the job

satisfaction and provide insights on the impact that they have on policy and practice of the special education in Pakistan.

Table 1. Frequency of the Demographic Information.

Category	Respondents	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age			
	20–29 years	194	64.7
	30–39 years	85	28.3
	40–49 years	19	6.3
	50 years or above	2	0.7
Gender			
	Male	89	29.7
	Female	211	70.3
Designation			
	Junior Special Education Teacher (JSET) in Public Sector Schools	112	37.3
	Senior Special Education Teacher (SSET) in Public Sector Schools	18	6.0
	Other (Special Education Teacher) in Private Sector Schools	170	56.7
Level of Education			
	Bachelor's degree	56	18.7
	Master's degree	144	48.0
	Educational Specialist/Advanced Graduate	72	24.0
	Doctoral	28	9.3
Years of Teaching Experience			
	Less than 1 year	119	39.7
	1–5 years	113	37.7
	6–10 years	39	13.0
	11–15 years	15	5.0
	16 years or more	14	4.7
Grade Levels Taught			
	Preschool	53	17.7
	Elementary	103	34.3
	High School	63	21.0
	Other	81	27.0
Institution Type			
	Government	158	52.7
	Private	142	47.3
Type of School			
	Rural	106	35.3
	Urban	194	64.7

Category	Respondents	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Monthly Income (PKR)	Below 30,000	84	28.0
	30,000–50,000	89	29.7
	50,001–70,000	30	10.0
	Above 70,000	97	32.3

Table 1. (Continued)

Table 1 indicates the demographic distribution; the sample is female dominant (70.3%) over the males (29.7%). Most of them (64.7%) belong to 20-29 years of age and 30-39 years of age (28.3%). More than half of them occupy the ranks of the category other (56.7%), whereas 37.3% are Junior Special Education Teachers and 6.0% are Senior Special Education Teachers. The higher levels of education attained by the majority of the respondents include Master (48 percent) and Bachelor (18.7 percent) and Doctorate (9.3 percent). Almost 40 percent has less than one year, and 37.7 percent 1-5 years of teaching experience. The greatest percentage teaches on elementary level (34.3 %), others are divided on preschool, high school and other grades. There is almost a balanced ratio between government and private institutions and the majority works in schools in cities (64.7%). There is diversified income distribution where the biggest number earns more than PKR 70, 000 (32.3%).

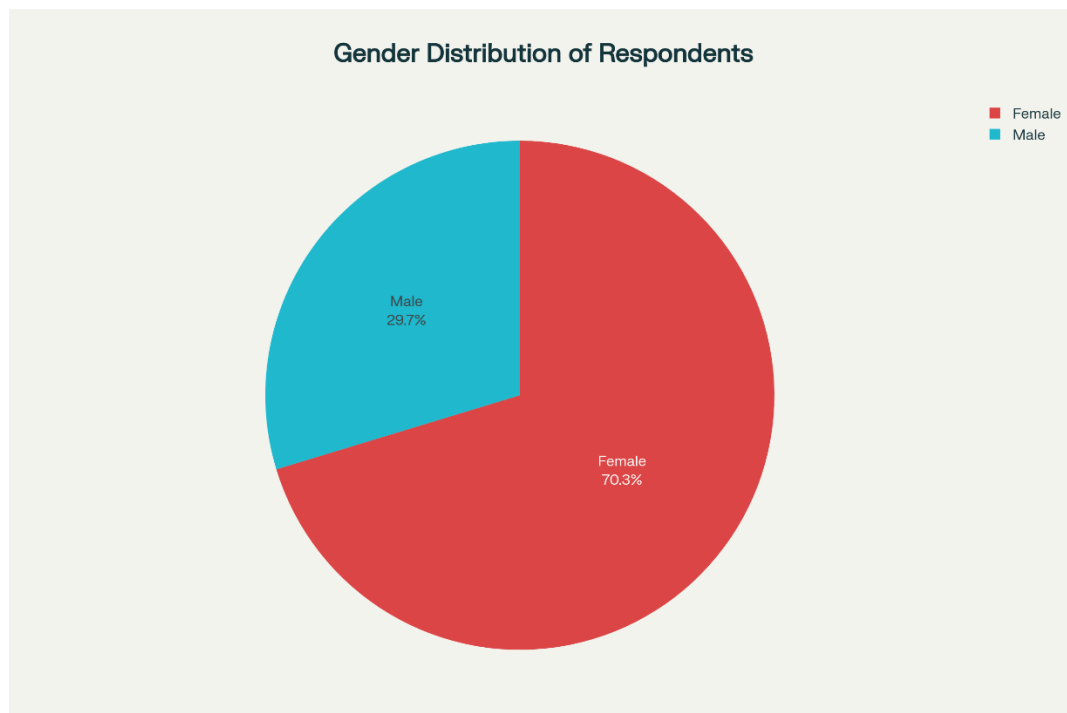


Figure 1. Gender Distribution of Surveys.

Figure 1 shows a pie chart that illustrates the male to female ratio in your study and reveals that female special education teachers form the majority of the study sample (70.3 percent) with the males making up 29.7 percent.

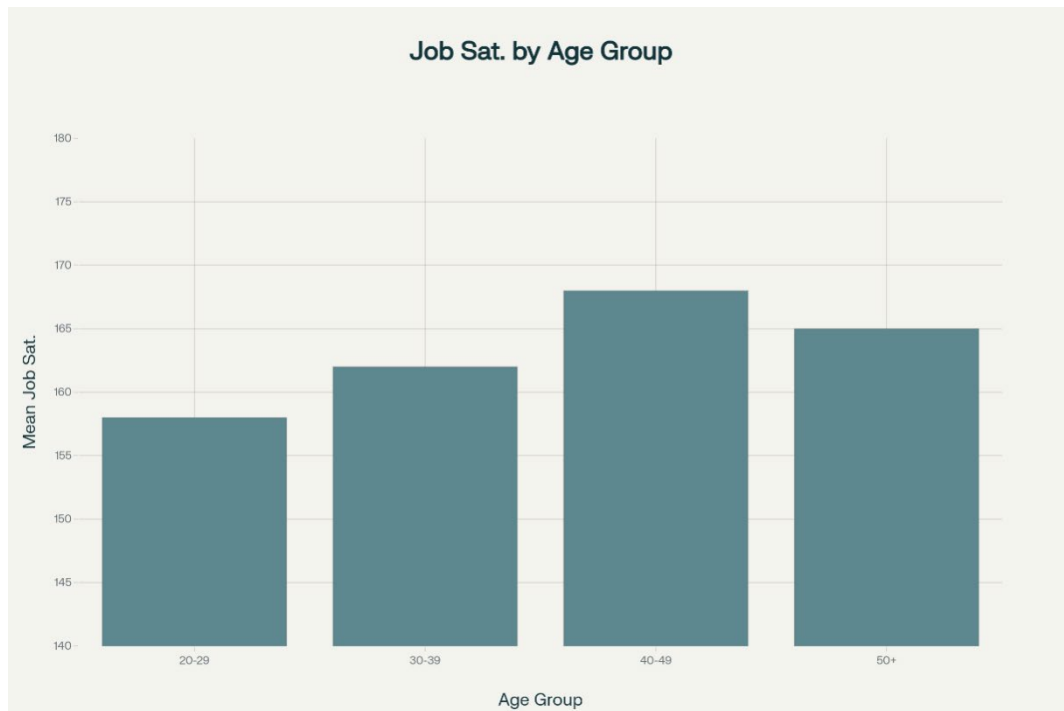


Figure 2. Job Satisfaction according to Age Group and Teaching Experience.

Figure 2 shows the trend in two side-by-side vertical bar plots indicating that the scores of the job satisfaction went up as people got older and experienced teaching longer. This is an indication of the strong positive relationship between such demographic variables and teacher satisfaction levels.

Table 2. Job Satisfaction.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	S.D.
I am also satisfied with my career, being a teacher.	81	138	54	19	8	3.88	.966
I am happy with my job as a teacher in this school.	59	143	70	17	11	3.74	.960
I take great interest in my work.	144	136	11	5	4	4.37	.754
I am motivated by what I do.	112	151	19	6	12	4.15	.926
I am proud in my job.	122	127	30	11	10	4.13	.969
I am going to teach as long as possible.	106	121	42	18	13	3.96	1.061

Table 2 illustrate the overall job satisfaction was found to be relatively high and its level slightly higher on the scale of interest in work ($M = 4.37$), motivated ($M = 4.15$) and proud of their job ($M = 4.13$). The commitment to teach as long as possible received a moderate score ($M = 3.96$), and the overall satisfaction with one of the career was also positive ($M = 3.88$). Although the items referring to the positive attitude toward school of the moment were lower ($M = 3.74$), the results show overall positive relations toward the profession of the teacher.

Graphical Representation

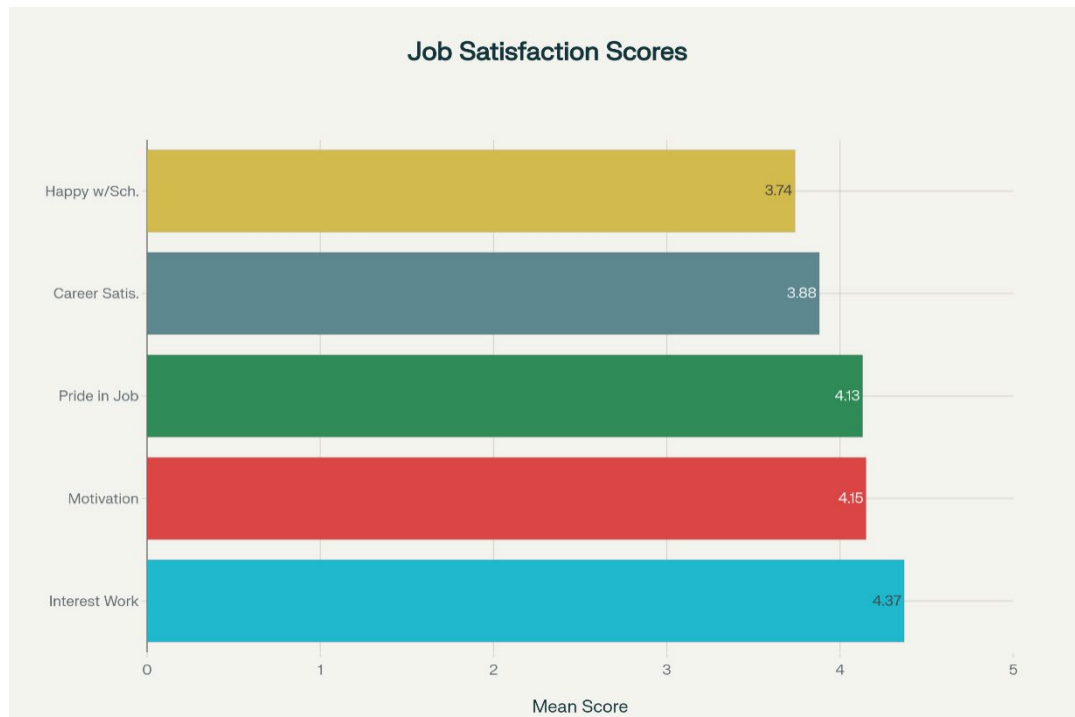


Figure 3. Mean Scores of Job Satisfaction.

Figure 3 indicate the horizontal bar graph which indicates the average satisfaction rates of special education teachers regarding major indicators of job satisfaction such as interest in work, motivation, pride, and career satisfaction. It also emphasizes excellent intrinsic motivation and professional pride of teachers.

Table 3. Student Discipline and School Climate.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	S.D.
Students act orderly.	12	142	100	44	2	3.39	.809
The students respect the teachers.	36	191	51	19	3	3.79	.770
Students value school property.	22	140	89	47	2	3.44	.866
Rules regarding student conduct are very clear in this school.	35	170	64	22	9	3.67	.886
In this school, rules are applied fairly and consistently.	7	28	68	28	7	3.66	.914

Table 3 indicate the teachers expressed the opinion that students are respectful to them ($M = 3.79$) and school rules are easily understood ($M = 3.67$). Students were however viewed negatively in how they behaved ($M = 3.39$) and appreciating school property ($M = 3.44$). A minimum in the scores means there is a possibility to improve in the way of productive conduct among students.

Table 4. Leadership Support.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	S.D.
My leadership in school engages me in major instructional decisions and planning.	44	186	45	21	4	3.82	.816
To make my teaching better, I am receiving constant assistance and advice by school leadership.	50	174	47	26	3	3.81	.851

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	S.D.
My professional growth is sponsored and encouraged by the school leadership.	36	159	59	36	10	3.58	.962
My work and contribution is appreciated by administrative leaders.	50	157	56	33	4	3.72	.915
School leaders are available to me whenever I want instructional or professional guidance.	33	170	67	21	9	3.66	.876
The teaching environment is one that encourages one another and leadership in this school promotes this environment.	54	156	64	24	2	3.79	.855

Table 4. (Continued)

Table 4 describe the positive responses were towards leadership involvement in decisions about instructions ($M = 3.82$) as well as offering support to persons to enhance instruction ($M = 3.81$). Administration leader's appreciation received a moderate mean of ($M = 3.72$). Among the lowest factors were professional growth support ($M = 3.58$), which had to be addressed with improvement.

Table 5. School Resources.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	S.D.
There is enough workspace among teachers.	30	139	74	51	6	3.45	.954
Instructional materials and supplies are sufficient among teachers.	29	139	62	62	8	3.40	1.005
Classrooms in schools are well maintained.	50	137	75	33	5	3.65	.941
There are good technology resources available to teachers.	33	90	80	87	10	3.16	1.068
There is sufficient support on the use of technology by teachers.	30	102	74	78	16	3.17	1.090

Table 5 describe the maintenance of the classroom was scored reasonably well ($M = 3.65$), the least strong result was the technology resources ($M = 3.16$) and assistance with it ($M = 3.17$). The provision regarding competence of instructions materials ($M=3.40$) and workspace ($M=3.45$) was also satisfying at moderate level indicating shortage of resources.

Table 6. Teacher Cooperation.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	S.D.
With colleagues, I talk about the process of teaching a specific subject.	41	189	53	12	5	3.83	.772
My working habits include collaboration with other teachers in terms of planning and preparation of instructional materials.	60	183	42	14	1	3.96	.746
I contribute to my teaching experiences to the co-workers.	68	183	39	9	1	4.03	.712
I collaborate with other fellows to experiment on new concepts.	66	183	37	11	3	3.99	.763
I get involved in small group activities to carry out the curriculum.	57	202	30	6	5	4.00	.722
I collaborate with other grade teachers to maintain coherence in learning.	63	187	38	8	4	3.99	.752

Table 6 illustrates the rating of collaboration among teachers was high with a score of all the items exceeding $M = 4.00$. Such aspects as sharing teaching experiences ($M = 4.03$), involvement in curriculum activities ($M = 4.00$) were particularly good and the culture of work was supportive and cooperative.

Table 7. Teacher Workload.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	S.D.
The volume of the material I have to teach in the classroom is not too big.	23	135	77	54	11	3.35	.982
I have sufficient time to plan my classes.	28	138	72	55	7	3.42	.969
I have enough time to support individual students.	36	113	63	78	10	3.29	1.082
My teaching is not interrupted by administrative work.	40	112	72	48	28	3.29	1.166

Table 7 shows, there was less satisfaction among teachers especially on time to assist individual students ($M = 3.29$) and administrative interruptions ($M = 3.29$). The fact that planning time ($M = 3.42$) and the volume of content that is manageable ($M = 3.35$) was moderate as well points to workload problems.

Table 8. Professional Self-Efficacy.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	S.D.
I can motivate learners to learn.	89	172	29	4	6	4.11	.785
I will be able to adjust the instructional techniques to address the students with various needs.	64	197	26	9	4	4.03	.736
I encourage students to recognize the importance of learning.	95	160	38	6	1	4.14	.732
I encourage the idea of struggling students.	94	167	32	7	0	4.16	.700
I ensure the learning has relevance in the life of students.	84	180	28	8	0	4.13	.681
I help students to become critical thinkers.	80	179	33	4	4	4.09	.737

Table 8 describe the scores were high with the maximum for prompting struggling students ($M = 4.16$) and relevance of learning to the student lives ($M = 4.13$). High levels of confidence in professional abilities are also demonstrated by the high levels of motivation skills ($M = 4.11$) and adaptability to student needs ($M = 4.03$).

Inferential Statistics

Table 9. Job Satisfaction According to Genders.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
Male	89	159.7978	16.28313	298	-.658	.082
Female	211	161.3744	19.95536			

Table 9 indicate the findings based on the independent sample t-test indicate that the difference in scores of job satisfaction between male teachers ($M = 159.80$, $SD = 16.28$) and female teachers ($M = 161.37$, $SD = 19.96$) is not a statistically significant one, $t(298) = -0.658$, $p = 0.082$. Because the p-value value is larger than the desired level of significance, which is 0.05, it can be stated that gender is not a significant factor in the job satisfaction of the teachers. It is also not widely differentiated as far as mean scores are concerned which implies that both female and male respondents hold relatively similar opinions regarding their workplace, motivation, and the level of satisfaction.

Table 10. Job Satisfaction in Relation to the Type of Institution (Independent Sample t-test).

Institution Type	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
Private	158	161.2152	20.14702	298	.297	.191
Government	142	160.5634	17.53516			

Table 10 shows the two groups compared being compared in the independent sample t-test are the sample of private school teachers ($M = 161.22$, $SD = 20.15$) and government school teachers ($M = 160.56$, $SD = 17.54$). The independent sample t-test could not reveal any significant difference by the job satisfaction values, $t(298) = 0.297$, $p = 0.191$. The p-value is greater than the 0.05 level, and this reveals that the type of institute in which teachers teach does not have a significant influence on determining the levels of job satisfaction. Although there are slight differences in the average scores of the results, it can be said that the teachers in government schools and the ones in the private schools feel equally satisfied.

Table 11. Comparison of job satisfaction between Type of school (Independent Sample t-test).

Type of School	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
Private	106	153.9434	18.50294	298	-4.887	.777
Government	194	164.7113	18.09844			

Table 11 indicates the independent sample t-test was used to analyse differences between the rural school teachers ($M = 153.94$, $SD = 18.50$) as against the urban school teachers ($M = 164.71$, $SD = 18.10$). As analysed, there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups, $t(298) = -4.887$, $p = 0.777$. Even though the difference in means scores is quite significant, the fact that p-value remains high means that in this study location (rural or urban) is not a decisive factor affecting job satisfaction of teachers.

Table 12. Job Satisfaction Comparison by the Age Group (One-Way ANOVA).

Age	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5264.326	3	1754.775	5.100	.002
Within Groups	101849.060	296	344.085		
Total	107113.387	299			

Table 12 describe the comparison of the job satisfaction between the four age groups was made by the use of one-way ANOVA. The outputs portray that there is a statistically significant difference between the groups $F(3, 296) = 5.100$, $p = 0.002$. The p value is lower than 0.05, which implies that age is a significant predictor of job satisfaction. The between groups sum of squares (5264.326) mean square (1754.775) indicates variances within groups associated with age differences whereas, within groups sum of squares (101849.060) indicates the variances within each group. A post-hoc analysis would be needed in order to understand which age groups significantly differ on the job satisfaction scores.

Table 13. Job Satisfaction comparison with designation (One-Way ANOVA).

Designation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3200.688	2	1600.344	4.574	.011
Within Groups	103912.699	297	349.874		
Total	107113.387	299			

Table 13 reveal the Designation ANOVA results that there is a significant difference in job satisfaction between the scores of the Junior Special Education Teachers, Senior Special Education Teachers and other jobs where, $F(2, 297) = 4.574$ and $p = 0.011$. The sum of squares between groups (3200.688) and mean

square (1600.344) depict that the job role is a factor that brings variance in the satisfaction levels. This suggests that the teaching job can affect the perception of teachers in regard to their professional satisfaction, job environment and general satisfaction.

Table 14. Comparison Jobs Satisfaction according to level of Education (One-Way ANOVA).

Level of Education	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6409.811	3	2136.604	6.280	.000
Within Groups	100703.575	296	340.215		
Total	107113.387	299			

Table 14 describe the analysis of variance indicates that there is a significant difference in job satisfaction as it varies across the four levels of education namely: Bachelor, Master, Educational Specialist/Advance Graduate and Doctorate Degrees, $F(3, 296) = 6.280$, $p < 0.001$. Between-groups variation ($SS = 6409.811$, hence $MS = 2136.604$) implies that there exists a correlation between the educational qualification of teachers and disparities in the job satisfaction. This can be an indication of differences in expectation, opportunities of career advancement or perceived professional recognition between teachers of other qualification status.

Table 15. Job Satisfaction Comparison According to Teaching Years of Experience (One-Way ANOVA).

Years of Teaching Experience	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13532.205	4	3383.051	10.665	.000
Within Groups	93581.182	295	317.224		
Total	107113.387	299			

Table 15 describe statistical outcomes that job satisfaction is found largely significant at the $p < 0.001$, $F(4, 295) = 10.665$, based on teaching experience. The between-groups sum of squares (13532.205) and the mean square (3383.051) indicate that level of experience assumes a significant role as far as teacher's satisfaction is concerned. There is a possibility that more experienced teachers build adaptability, sense of professional security, or good working environment, which leads to increased satisfaction levels over less experienced colleagues.

Table 16. Comparison of the job Satisfaction of Teachers based on Grade taught (One-Way ANOVA).

Grade Level Taught	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7707.277	3	2569.092	7.650	.000
Within Groups	99406.110	296	335.831		
Total	107113.387	299			

Table 16 describe a large difference was observed between job satisfaction among various levels of teachers (preschool, elementary, high school teachers and others), $F(3, 296) = 7.650$, $p < 0.001$. The between-groups variation ($SS = 7707.277$, $MS = 2569.092$) implies that the level of grade teaching influences satisfaction, and it might be caused by variation in workload, different needs of the students including curriculum difficulty, and teaching environs.

Table 17. The Comparison of Job Satisfaction on the basis of Monthly Income (One-Way ANOVA).

Monthly Income (PKR)	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4362.292	3	1454.097	4.189	.006
Within Groups	102751.095	296	347.132		
Total	107113.387	299			

Table 17 show the results of ANOVA indicate that there is a significant variation in job satisfaction within the group of income, $F(3, 296) = 4.189$, $p = 0.006$. The between-groups variation ($SS = 4362.292$, $MS = 1454.097$) indicates that level of income affects the perception of teachers of their work. The increased salary can also bring satisfaction with regard to financial security, appreciation and availability of amenities.

5. Findings

Based on the findings of the research, it is possible to say that special education teachers in Pakistan are overall moderately and highly satisfied with their jobs regarding various factors in their professional life. The rate of high perceptions regarding intrinsic motivation as well as a feeling of pride in the teacher on their work and enjoying their teaching profession was rated high with the highest rating raised by teachers being taking interest in work ($M = 4.37$), motivation ($M = 4.15$), and pride in their profession ($M = 4.13$). Nonetheless, the general satisfaction with their current school and future career commitment as teachers was a bit less, referring to the need to improve on institutional support and working conditions.

Regarding the school climate, the participants also defined that students typically respected the teacher ($M = 3.79$) and know school rules ($M = 3.67$), but had a smaller rating regarding the orderly conduct of students ($M = 3.39$) and their valuation of scholar property ($M = 3.44$). The leadership support received high scores on instructor decision-making ($M = 3.82$) and suggestions on teaching improvements ($M = 3.81$), whereas only above average evaluation was displayed regarding professional issue ($M = 3.58$).

There was variation in the availability of school resources; however, scores were satisfying concerning classroom maintenance ($M = 3.65$), but poor concerning access to technology ($M = 3.16$), and technical support ($M = 3.17$). The score of teacher on peer collaboration was high and all the items referring to cooperation had scores that were close or exceeding $M = 4.00$, which proves the high level of cooperation culture. On the other hand, issues of workload were recorded, with dissatisfaction of having a sufficient amount of time available to work individually with students ($M = 3.29$), and the degree to which there was administration interference ($M = 3.29$).

The measure of self-efficacy was sublime with respect to motivating the learners ($M = 4.11$), motivating struggling students ($M = 4.16$), and making learning relevant ($M = 4.13$). Nevertheless, it was understood that the capacity to adapt instructional techniques to the needs of the various students and incorporating assistive technologies had to be enhanced.

There were no significant differences in the level of job satisfaction across any gender and Institutions type as well as location of schools. Nonetheless, a statistically significant variation was identified on the basis of the ages ($p = 0.002$), designation ($p = 0.011$), level of education ($p < 0.001$), teaching experience ($p < 0.001$), grade level taught ($p < 0.001$), and monthly earnings ($p = 0.006$). These findings imply that job satisfaction is affected by the demographic and professional factors in terms of experiences, qualification, and grade level, but not by gender and institutional affiliation.

Generally, the results show that despite the presence of dedicated teachers and supportive professional relationships, there are still gaps in the delivery of instructional resources, opportunities to develop

professionally, manage workload, and to discipline students. These areas are the things that can be worked on to help improve job satisfaction and retention of special education teachers in Pakistan.

6. Discussions

The concept of job satisfaction among special education teachers is multidimensional and is the result of the intrinsic motivation, institutional support, management of the workload, leadership style, collaborator and professional self-efficacy. However, recent studies confirm that, although intrinsic conditions like motivation, sense of pride in teaching, and good relations with students can get teachers through the hardships of the occupation, the addition of extrinsic measures like the efforts of the administration to stay positive and offer the teachers resources is critical towards satisfaction and retention strategies.

The empirical evidence indicates that the graduates of special school would be likely to report moderate to high rates of job satisfaction in general, and intrinsic motivation is a key to professional fulfillment. As an example, the study conducted on special school teachers in Tamil Nadu revealed moderate job satisfaction levels of 61.8 percent and high satisfaction of 16.6 percent, indicating that positive workplace conditions and the availability of resources are crucial elements of motivation^[6,27,37]. Moreover, the years of experience directly correlates with intrinsic motivation when the older teachers are found to be more motivated and dedicated even under the pressure of workloads^[36,38].

School leadership is one of the major moderators of job satisfaction. The democratic and supportive style of leadership has a great contribution to both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction because it involves the teacher in the instructional choice and supports the positive, resourceful work environment. Conversely, the autocratic leadership styles were revealed to have a negative or insignificant influence on the job satisfaction^[1,31]. The leadership role further presupposes the moderate influence of the issue of workload stress: the research in the UAE region proves the crucial role of theoretically reasonable workloads in the enhancement of the levels of satisfaction, alongside the role of teacher self-efficacy^[15,21,23].

The issue of workload is a constant problem. One of the issues related to special education teachers is long administrative tasks that reduce instructional time and cause dissatisfaction. When workloads are well managed such as decreased administrative demands and balanced teaching loads, job satisfaction and reduced burnout are linked to each other^[4,12,32].

Collaboration among teachers and collegial support is also effective in increasing job satisfaction, since collaborative planning and shared instructions are key to building a supportive professional society as it is critical in special education views^[1,7,30,31]. The income necessary monetary stability will also remain one of the major harbingers of job satisfaction, where its direct factor relates to morale and retention^[2,11,13].

A key methodological consideration is the use of convenience sampling. While facilitating data collection, this approach limits the generalizability of our findings to the broader population of special education teachers. Since significant differences were observed in demographic variables (like income and experience) within the sample, the results may not accurately reflect the satisfaction levels across all special education settings. Future research should prioritize robust probability sampling to enhance the external validity of job satisfaction studies in this field.

The findings about low pay and resource deficits strongly support the role of Hygiene Factors. Their inadequacy is a primary source of dissatisfaction and contributes significantly to turnover. Conversely, the high value placed on recognition and professional growth indicates these function as true Motivators^[18]. In summary, job satisfaction with special education teachers can only be maintained through an intrinsic motivation facilitated by good school leadership, supportable workloads, cooperative cultures, and sufficient

resources. The educational policies that would target such improvement will foster teacher retention, quality of education delivery, and general happiness of educators who strive to address the needs of diverse learners.

7. Conclusion

As evidenced in the current research on job satisfaction of special education teachers in Pakistan, the concept presents a complex dynamic that is both internally and externally motivated. Teachers are highly intrinsically motivated, committed and proud of their profession, which is strong enough to keep them going despite the obstacles of poor administration support, scarcity of resources, and workload demands. These results emphasize that job satisfaction presents considerable differences depending on the demographic characteristics, including age, teaching experience, rank, level of education, and income, thus proving the multifaceted nature of the demographic factors that determine the satisfaction of the teacher. Moreover, teamwork culture and self-efficacy among teachers are identified as the crucial factors leading to a positive attitude towards jobs and their long-term motivation. In anticipation of an excellent and motivated special education work force, there must be an experience of institutional support, resource provision, leadership commitment, and workload regulation. A multi-faceted tackling of such areas will not only improve on professional satisfaction, retention of teachers and eventual high quality education given to students with special needs.

8. Recommendations

The following are two recommendations that came out of this study:

1. Increase administrative and institutional support systems through regular and continued professional development, ready access to instructional resources, and limiting non-teaching administrative work. It will assist in bettering the working conditions of teachers and job satisfaction, which ultimately leads to better results for students.
2. Facilitate and formalize collaborative works among special education instructors with the use of systematic teamwork, in addition to peer mentoring and combined instructional preparation. An improved culture of collegial support and a cooperative school climate to give a morale and a feeling of self-efficacy to the teachers, as well as increase teacher retention in this challenging discipline.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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