Determinants of Job Satisfaction among Teacher Educators in Ethiopia

Almaz Asharge[1], Alemayehu Bishaw[2], and Berhanu Mekonnen[3],*

[1]Institute of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Dilla University
[2]Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies Department, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Bahir Dar University
[3]Department of Curriculum and Instructional Supervision, College Institute of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Dilla University

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Abstract

This study investigated the factors influencing job satisfaction among teacher educators. A quantitative correlational research design was employed to identify key determinants, examine demographic characteristics, and propose strategies for enhancement. Seventy-four teacher educators participated, providing data through questionnaires. Findings revealed that salary, incentives, work-life balance, and interpersonal relations were significant determinants of job satisfaction. Academic qualifications and work experience exhibited negative correlations with organizational policies, autonomy, and promotion-related factors. The study underscores the need for tailored interventions to address the unique concerns of mid-career educators, particularly regarding compensation, career advancement, and work-life balance. It suggests the development of personalized professional development programs and human resource policies that consider educators' career stages and specific needs. Further research in this area is recommended.

1 Introduction

In the realm of education, the role of teacher educators is pivotal, as they mold the future of teaching by preparing prospective educators. Literature underscores the significance of job satisfaction among teacher educators, highlighting its profound influence on motivation, commitment, overall well-being, and direct implications for the quality of teacher education and subsequent student outcomes (Johnson & Birkeland, 2023). Notably, factors contributing to job satisfaction include autonomy, collegiality, recognition, and opportunities for professional growth (Atmaca *et al*., 2020). Additionally, the alignment between expectations and experiences, perceived job benefits, self-efficacy, and supportive working conditions are key determinants (Abdullah *et al*., 2022).

Research indicates a direct correlation between teacher educators' job satisfaction and their commitment to teaching, with heightened job satisfaction fostering increased dedication and enthusiasm in instructional practices (Adebomi *et al*., 2012). The interplay of gender and qualifications is also an influential factor in shaping job satisfaction among teacher educators (Srivastava & Chabra, 2012). Furthermore, Pérez Fuentes *et al*. (2023) found empirical evidence supporting a positive correlation between job satisfaction and teacher education, emphasizing the need for further exploration of this relationship.

Research reviews underscore the nature of job satisfaction determinants among teacher educators, encompassing individual characteristics such as gender and experience, organizational factors like teacher-student relations and school climate, and broader considerations like economic income and life satisfaction (Raiany *et al*., 2022). The organizational culture and perceived teacher competency are identified as indirect influencers on job satisfaction through their impact on self-efficacy (Tria, 2023).

* Corresponding author; Email: berhanu.my@gmail.com

Educational leaders are urged to consider these multifaceted factors to create and sustain conducive working conditions for teacher job satisfaction. This, in turn, contributes to teacher retention and holds promise for improving the quality of teacher education and student outcomes (João & Célia, 2020). However, recent studies challenge conventional views regarding high job satisfaction among educators, pointing to decreased psychological well-being, heightened burnout, and reduced job satisfaction among higher education institution teaching staff (Hansen *et al.*, 2015).

Furthermore, studies suggest that teachers' perceptions of their college environment, teaching efficacy, and teacher stress play pivotal roles in shaping job satisfaction, with observed gender differences (Tran, 2015). Retirement benefits, although not explicitly explored in relation to job satisfaction, form part of teachers' overall compensation preferences, potentially impacting their satisfaction and overall well-being (O'Shea, 2021).

In Ethiopia, Abrahim (2018) found a medium level of job satisfaction among teacher educators in teacher education institutions. Among the variables, he identified promotion and supervision as the main driving forces in determining job satisfaction and suggested that further studies should be conducted on the determinants of different facets of job satisfaction.

Literature and prior studies on teacher educators' job satisfaction show the need for an in-depth study that considers individual, institutional, and contextual factors. Understanding and addressing these determinants are critical for fostering positive working environments, enhancing teacher retention, and ultimately elevating the quality of teacher education and student outcomes. Hence, the purpose of this study was to examine the determinants of teacher educators' job satisfaction.

Research Questions

1. What are the key factors influencing job satisfaction among teacher educators?

2. How do demographic characteristics such as gender, experience, and academic qualifications correlate with the job satisfaction of

teacher educators?

3. What strategies can be implemented within the CTE to enhance job satisfaction among teacher educators?

2 Review of Related Literature

Job satisfaction is a crucial aspect of employee well-being and organizational success. Several factors play a role in influencing job satisfaction levels among employees. Compensation and motivation are two key factors that significantly impact job satisfaction (Ananda, 2023). Fair compensation, including salaries, benefits, and incentives, contributes positively to employees' satisfaction with their work. When employees perceive that their rewards align with their contributions, they are more likely to be content in their roles. Additionally, high motivation levels enhance job satisfaction by creating a positive work environment where employees feel engaged and valued.

Moreover, research indicates that approximately 18.4% of the variation in employee job satisfaction is influenced by other unexplored factors (Ananda, 2023). This highlights the complexity of job satisfaction and suggests that organizations need to consider various aspects beyond compensation and motivation to fully understand and address employee satisfaction levels. Therefore, while compensation plays a significant role in driving job satisfaction, it is essential for organizations to adopt holistic approaches that consider multiple factors impacting employee well-being.

Job satisfaction plays a crucial role in determining employee performance and organizational success. When employees are content with their work, they tend to be more engaged, motivated, and committed to their tasks, ultimately leading to higher job performance and overall success for the organization (Alzen & Ismi, 2023). High levels of job satisfaction are often associated with factors such as fair compensation, recognition, opportunities for growth, and a positive work environment. These elements significantly contribute to how satisfied employees feel with their roles (Ananda, 2023).

While compensation is a key factor influencing job satisfaction by aligning rewards with contri-

butions made by employees (Ananda, 2023), it is important to recognize that other unexplored factors contribute to around 18.4% of the variation in employee job satisfaction. This indicates the complexity of job satisfaction and underscores the need for organizations to adopt holistic approaches that consider multiple factors impacting employee well-being (Ananda, 2023).

In summary, organizations should focus not only on providing competitive compensation but also on creating a work environment that fosters motivation and addresses various aspects beyond monetary rewards. By prioritizing strategies that promote job satisfaction among employees comprehensively, organizations can enhance individual performance and achieve their objectives more effectively.

Role of Teacher Educators

Teacher educators play a crucial role in shaping the next generation of educators by preparing pre-service teachers for the complexities of the classroom. Their responsibilities encompass several key areas:

1. **Modeling Effective Teaching Practices:** Teacher educators demonstrate strategies such as student-centered learning, differentiated instruction, and reflective practice. By showcasing these methods, they inspire pre-service teachers to adopt similar approaches, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice (Sotardi & Brogt, 2023).

2. **Mentorship and Counseling:** Acting as mentors and counselors, teacher educators guide their students through the emotional and psychological aspects of teaching. They provide support and encouragement, helping pre-service teachers develop the resilience and self-awareness needed for successful teaching careers (West *et al.*, 2023).

3. **Fostering Understanding of Educational Theory:** Teacher educators equip pre-service teachers with a deep understanding of educational theory and research. By exposing them to developments in learning science, curriculum design, and educational policy, they enable future educators to make informed

decisions and adapt to changing educational landscapes (Sa'ban, 2020).

Ultimately, teacher educators aim to cultivate reflective, adaptable, and committed teachers who are dedicated to improving the education system. Through modeling excellence, providing mentorship, and promoting intellectual growth, they play a vital role in shaping the future of the teaching profession.

Factors Influencing Teacher Educators' Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction among teacher educators is essential for their performance and, subsequently, the academic achievements of their students. Several key factors influence job satisfaction:

1. **Compensation and Promotion:** Research indicates that salary, opportunities for promotion, and recognition significantly affect job satisfaction (Yousaf *et al.*, 2024; Quarstein *et al.*, 1992). Adequate compensation ensures that educators feel valued, while opportunities for career advancement provide a sense of progression.

2. **Working Conditions:** The work environment plays a critical role in job satisfaction. Positive conditions, such as additional vacation time and a supportive atmosphere, enhance satisfaction levels. Conversely, negative factors like faulty equipment and lack of support can lead to dissatisfaction and hinder educators' effectiveness (Cerci & Dumludag, 2019; Karmakar, Saha, & Adhikari, 2023).

3. **Emotional and Psychological Factors:** The responsibility of preparing future teachers contributes to job satisfaction. When teacher educators feel content in their roles, they are more effective in imparting knowledge and skills, leading to greater productivity and commitment to their work (Yousaf *et al.*, 2024).

Challenges Faced by Teacher Educators

Despite their critical role, teacher educators face unique challenges that impact their job satisfaction:

- **Salary and Job Security:** Inadequate compensation and job security concerns can lead to dissatisfaction and exhaustion (Jabbar & Naveed, 2024).

- **Work Pressure:** High work demands without adequate support can hinder performance and well-being, affecting their ability to prepare future educators effectively (Karmakar *et al.*, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

To understand the factors influencing job satisfaction among teacher educators, various theoretical frameworks have been employed:

1. **Job Characteristics Model (JCM):** Developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976), the JCM examines how job design impacts psychological states and job satisfaction. It highlights five key job characteristics—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—that can enhance job satisfaction when effectively integrated into educators' roles (Omar *et al.*, 2022).

2. **Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R):** This model suggests that balancing job demands with available resources can improve job satisfaction and performance (Barba-Sánchez *et al.*, 2022).

3. **Phenomenological Approach:** This research approach focuses on understanding educators' lived experiences and perceptions of job satisfaction, revealing deeper insights into their motivations and challenges (Yüksel & Yıldırım, 2015).

4. **Organizational Climate and Culture:** Studies indicate that organizational factors such as leadership, communication, and opportunities for professional growth significantly influence job satisfaction (Ghosh & Joshi, 2016).

5. **Self-Efficacy:** Higher self-efficacy correlates with greater job satisfaction, as educators who feel competent in their roles are more likely to report positive job attitudes (Tria, 2023).

Conclusion

Understanding the determinants of job satisfaction among teacher educators is critical for fostering positive working environments, enhancing teacher retention, and ultimately improving the quality of teacher education and student outcomes. By addressing the various individual, institutional, and contextual factors influencing job satisfaction, educational institutions can support teacher educators more effectively and contribute to the development of a robust education system.

3 Research Method

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a **correlational research design**, focusing on the analysis of quantitative data collected through structured questionnaires administered to teacher educators. This design incorporated both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** This component provided a detailed summary of key variables, offering insights into the factors influencing job satisfaction among teacher educators.

- **Inferential Statistics:** Specifically, Pearson correlation was utilized to examine the relationships among variables. This analysis aligned with the research questions and objectives, aiming to quantify primary factors influencing job satisfaction, explore demographic correlates, and propose strategies for enhancing job satisfaction.

This research design enabled a comprehensive examination of numerical data, yielding nuanced insights into the complexities of teacher educators' job satisfaction in the context of Continuing Teacher Education (CTE).

3.2 Sampling Techniques

The participants in the study consisted of seventy-four teacher educators, categorized into three ranks: lecturer, assistant lecturer, and graduate assistant. To ensure representation across these ranks, stratified sampling was employed.

The sample included:

- Fifty-one lecturers
- Seven assistant lecturers
- Sixteen graduate assistants

3.3　Data Analysis

Data analysis involved both descriptive and inferential statistical methods:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Measures such as mean, standard deviations, and percentages were calculated to summarize the data.

- **Inferential Statistics:** Pearson r correlation was used to analyze the data, specifically assessing the correlation between teacher educators' job satisfaction and demographic characteristics, including academic qualifications and work experience.

4　Results

This section presents the major findings of the study, which include:

1. **Demographic Characteristics:** A summary of the participants' demographic information.

2. **Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction:** An overview of the identified factors affecting job satisfaction among teacher educators.

3. **Distribution of Factors:** Insights into how these factors are distributed among the participants.

4. **Pearson r Test of Correlation:** Results from the Pearson r test, which examined the degrees of correlation between teacher educators' job satisfaction and two key demographic characteristics: qualifications and work experience.

4.1　Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 presents data regarding teacher educators' work experience and academic rank. Notably, most respondents (62.2%) reported having 11 to 20 years of teaching experience, indicating a significant presence of educators in the mid-career level. In terms of academic rank, most respondents (68.9%) were lecturers.

Table 1: Work Experience and Academic Rank of Teacher Educators

Work Experience	Frequency	Percentage	Academic Rank	Frequency	Percentage
< 10 years	22	29.2	Graduate Assistants	16	21.6
11-20 years	46	62.2	Assistant Lecturers	7	9.5
>18 years	6	8.1	Lecturers	51	68.9
Total	**74**	**100**	**74**	**74**	**100**

4.2　Major Contributing Factors for Job Dissatisfaction

Table 2 provides a frequency distribution illustrating the factors influencing teacher educators' job satisfaction. This analysis aims to quantify the mean values derived from respondents' ratings, offering a comprehensive understanding of their collective agreement on various aspects contributing to job satisfaction.

Table 2: Mean Distribution of Factors

Determinant factors	Mean	Std. Deviation
Leadership, Supervision and Recognition	9.46	2.985
Salary, incentives, fringe benefit and work life balance	23.01	8.945
Promotion and Advancement Related	12.27	3.345
Organization Policies and Autonomy	8.89	3.342
Interpersonal/Social Relations	11.07	.984
Work Conditions	16.77	4.787

4.3 Analysis of Determinants of Teacher Educators' Satisfaction

The analysis of the determinants of teacher educators' satisfaction, as presented in Table 2, provides valuable insights into various factors influencing educators' contentment in their professional roles. The mean scores and standard deviations help in understanding the level of consensus and variability among teacher educators regarding different aspects of their work environment.

1. *Salary, Incentives, Fringe Benefits, and Work-Life Balance:* This factor recorded the highest mean score (M = 23.01, SD = 8.945), indicating its significant importance to educators. However, the relatively high standard deviation suggests a diverse range of perspectives within this category, emphasizing the need for tailored strategies to address individual preferences and concerns related to compensation and work-life balance.

2. *Leadership, Supervision, and Recognition:* This area exhibited a moderate level of satisfaction among teachers, with a mean score of 9.46 and a lower standard deviation of 2.985. This finding suggests a more uniform agreement among educators on the importance of effective leadership, supervision, and recognition within the educational setting.

3. *Interpersonal/Social Relations:* This factor received a high mean score of 11.07, underscoring the importance of positive social interactions among teachers. The remarkably low standard deviation of 0.984 indicates a high consensus on the significance of fostering a supportive social environment, highlighting a shared sentiment among teachers in this regard.

4. *Promotion, Organizational Policies, and Autonomy:* These factors demonstrated moderate levels of satisfaction, with mean scores of 12.27 and 8.89, respectively. However, the corresponding standard deviations of 3.345 and 3.342 suggest varying opinions among teacher educators regarding promotion opportunities, organizational policies, and autonomy. These findings emphasize the need for genuine approaches to address concerns related to career advancement and organizational policies to enhance overall satisfaction among teacher educators.

Table 3: Distribution of Determinants

Factors	Total Score Ranges in Percent		
	Low (%)	Moderate (%)	High (%)
Leadership, Supervision and Recognition[1]	87.8	8.1	4.1
Salary, incentives, fringe benefit and work life balance[2]	62.2	37.8	0
Promotion and Advancement Related[3]	10.8	24.3	64.9
Organization Policies and Autonomy[4]	75.7	21.6	2.7
Interpersonal/Social Relations[5]	0	97.3	2.7
Work Conditions[6]	86.5	13.5	0

[1]=Low (6-12), Moderate (13-17) and High (18-24); [2]=Low (12-24), Moderate (25-38) and High (39-48); [3]=Low (4-8), Moderate (9-12) and High (13-16); [4]=Low (5-10), Moderate (11-15) and High (16-20); [5]=Low (4-8), Moderate (9-12) and High (13-16); [6]=Low (10-20), Moderate (21-31) and High (32-40)

4.4 Distribution of Determinants of Teacher Educators' Satisfaction

The distribution of determinants in Table 3 offers a comprehensive overview of teacher educators' satisfaction based on total score ranges. Notably, most respondents indicated high levels of satisfaction with interpersonal/social relations, with 97.30% highlighting the significance of positive social interactions in contributing to overall job satisfaction.

Conversely, factors related to promotion and advancement revealed a more diverse distribution, with 64.90% of respondents falling within the high satisfaction range. This indicates varying perspectives on career advancement, emphasizing the necessity for personalized approaches to address individual concerns related to promotion and career development within the teaching profession.

Additionally, the determinants of salary, incentives, fringe benefits, and work-life balance displayed a bimodal distribution. Specifically, 62.20% of re-

spondents reported low satisfaction, while 37.80% indicated moderate satisfaction. This divided sentiment underscores the need for targeted interventions to address the diverse perspectives on compensation and work-life balance.

Overall, this analysis provides valuable insights into the varying degrees of satisfaction across different determinant factors. It highlights areas where educators express higher consensus, such as interpersonal/social relations, and identifies those that require more authentic strategies to enhance overall satisfaction among teacher educators.

4.5 Determinant Factors, Academic Qualification, and Work Experience Relationship

To assess whether there is a significant relationship between teacher educators' demographic characteristics and the determinants of job dissatisfaction, a Pearson Correlation analysis was computed. Table 5 presents the correlation matrix, offering insights into the relationships between these demographic factors and job dissatisfaction determinants.

Table 4: Correlation Result

	1	2	3	4
Academic Qualification			-.495*	-.372*
			.000	.001
			.017	.021
Work Experience		-.237*	-.549*	
		.042	.000	

The correlation matrix in Table 5 depicts the relationships between academic qualifications, work experience, and various factors influencing teacher educators' job satisfaction. Remarkably, a significant negative correlation was observed between academic qualifications and organizational policies and autonomy (r = -0.372, p = 0.001) and between promotion and advancement (r = -0.495, p = 0.001). This suggests that as academic qualifications increase, there is a tendency for educators to report lower levels of satisfaction with organizational policies and autonomy, as well as issues related to promotion and advancement. These findings underscore the importance of recognizing the nuanced impact of academic qualifications on specific aspects of job satisfaction within educational institutions.

Furthermore, work experience exhibited a significant negative correlation with promotion and advancement issues (r = -0.237, p = 0.042) and with salary, incentives, fringe benefits, and work-life balance (r = -0.237, p < 0.042). The negative correlation with promotion and advancement implies that as work experience increases, educators may perceive a diminishing level of satisfaction in these areas. Similarly, the negative correlation with salary, incentives, fringe benefits, and work-life balance suggests that more experienced educators may have lower satisfaction levels regarding compensation and work-life balance. These findings underscore the complex interplay between work experience and specific facets of job satisfaction among teacher educators.

It is crucial to emphasize that all reported significance levels were below the threshold of 0.05, underscoring the statistical significance of these correlations. The correlation analysis elucidated the intricate dynamics between academic qualifications, work experience, and various factors contributing to teacher educators' job satisfaction, emphasizing the need for targeted strategies in human resource management and professional development initiatives.

5 Discussion

This study examined the determinants of job satisfaction among teacher educators, aiming to identify influential factors, examine correlations with demographic characteristics, and propose strategies for improvement. It was found that the majority of teacher educators were at the mid-career level and held the rank of lecturer. Recognizing this demographic composition is essential for tailoring interventions that address the unique needs of mid-career professionals in the teaching domain.

Regarding the factors affecting teacher educators' job satisfaction, salary, incentives, fringe benefits, and work-life balance emerged as the most significant factors. This aligns with the literature that highlights the pivotal role of compensation in educators' satisfaction (Huang *et al.*, 2019). Leadership, supervision, and recognition demonstrated a moderate satisfaction level, consistent with studies emphasizing the importance of supportive leadership in educational settings (Klassen *et al.*, 2018). The high mean score for interpersonal/social relations underlined the significance of positive social interactions in the workplace (Breaugh, 2020).

Furthermore, the study explored the distribution of determinants. It identified high satisfaction with interpersonal/social relations and diverse perspectives on promotion and advancement. The bimodal distribution in salary, incentives, fringe benefits, and work-life balance suggested a divided sentiment among respondents, emphasizing the need for nuanced interventions. These findings align with previous research indicating that satisfaction with promotion opportunities significantly impacts overall job satisfaction (Chiang & Birtch, 2019). The results have implications for crafting tailored strategies that address the unique concerns associated with promotion, compensation, and work-life balance.

Regarding the correlation analysis of the demographic characteristics of teacher educators and job satisfaction, the study found significant negative correlations between academic qualifications and organizational policies, autonomy, and promotion and advancement. These results highlighted the intricate relationship between academic qualifications and specific job satisfaction factors, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions. Work experience showed negative correlations with promotion and advancement and salary-related factors. These

findings align with the literature that shows the evolving nature of job satisfaction throughout an educator's career trajectory (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Understanding the nuanced relationship between demographic characteristics and job satisfaction is crucial for educational institutions. The findings emphasized the need for personalized strategies that consider educators' career stages and specific concerns related to compensation, promotion, and work-life balance (Brewster *et al.*, 2021). Institutions should leverage this information to tailor professional development programs and human resource policies that address the unique needs of mid-career educators, thereby enhancing overall job satisfaction.

In light of the findings, it is imperative to formulate targeted strategies for enhancing job satisfaction among teacher educators. Initiatives focusing on improving compensation structures, recognizing the importance of leadership and social interactions, and addressing concerns related to promotion and work-life balance can significantly contribute to educators' contentment and overall well-being (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this research unraveled the intricate dynamics that shape job satisfaction among teacher educators, offering nuanced insights into the factors influencing their professional contentment. Its emphasis on demographic characteristics shed light on the unique challenges faced by mid-career educators, with a majority falling within the 11-20 years of work experience category and lecturers constituting the predominant academic rank. This demographic composition underscores the need for tailored strategies that acknowledge and address the distinct needs and expectations of educators at this career stage. Understanding the demographic landscape provides a solid foundation for institutions to craft interventions that resonate with the diverse experiences of their teacher educators.

Moving beyond demographic profiles, the exploration of factors influencing job satisfaction highlighted the multifaceted nature of educators' con-

tentment. Salary, incentives, fringe benefits, and work-life balance emerged as paramount concerns, aligning with existing literature that emphasizes the central role of compensation in educators' overall satisfaction. The findings also shed light on the significance of leadership, supervision, and recognition in fostering a positive work environment. The high mean score for interpersonal relations further accentuates the importance of cultivating supportive social interactions among educators. These factors collectively point toward the need for a holistic approach in designing strategies that encompass the diverse aspects of educators' professional lives.

The distribution of determinants offered a detailed glimpse into teacher educators' satisfaction across various dimensions. The majority expressing high satisfaction with interpersonal relations underscores the pivotal role of positive social interactions in contributing to overall job satisfaction. Conversely, the distribution of promotion and advancement-related factors reveals diverse perspectives, emphasizing the need for personalized approaches that consider individual concerns and aspirations related to career progression. The bimodal distribution in salary, incentives, fringe benefits, and work-life balance signifies a divided sentiment among respondents, calling for targeted interventions to address the spectrum of viewpoints on compensation and work-life balance. These findings provide institutions with a roadmap to design interventions that resonate with the varying needs and preferences of their educator workforce, fostering an environment conducive to sustained professional fulfillment.

Limitations and Future Research

In the realm of future research, acknowledging the study's limitations is crucial, and exploring additional factors such as organizational culture and workload is warranted (Meyer & Morin, 2016). A longitudinal approach could provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamic nature of educators' satisfaction over time. Understanding the interplay of these factors could yield a more comprehensive picture of teacher educators' job satisfaction dynamics.

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