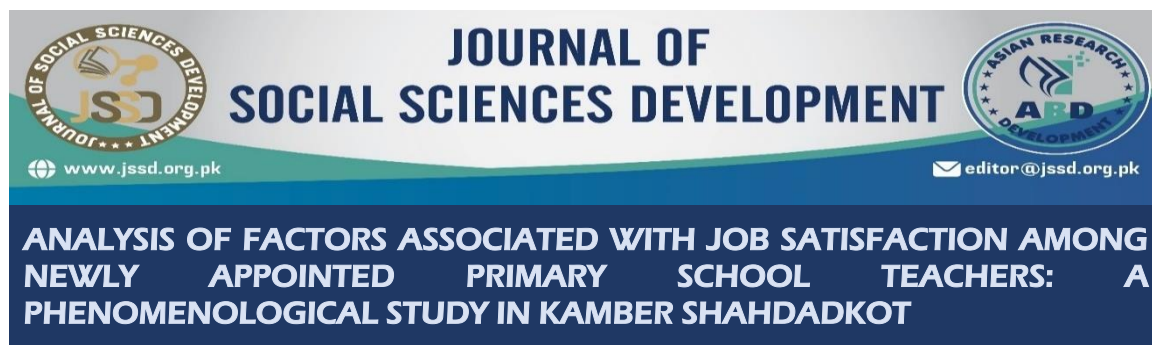




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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Job Satisfaction, Teaching Profession, Primary School Teachers, Newly Appointed Teachers, Education, Quality Education.	Job satisfaction is a combination of physiological, psychological and environmental conditions that lead an individual to honestly report that they are satisfied with their job. Although job satisfaction is under the influence of different external factors, it still is an internal thing of how an employee feels. This qualitative study explores the factors that affect job satisfaction of newly appointed primary school teachers in Taluka Nasirabad, District Kamber Shahdadkot, Sindh, Pakistan. The study's paradigm is rooted in the interpretivist philosophy, using an interpretive approach to capture the lived experiences of teachers in their first years of teaching. Ten newly appointed primary school teachers (5 male, 5 female) were interviewed in a semi-structured format, and thematic analysis was used to identify patterns of meaning from their stories. The analysis revealed six core themes: workplace conditions and physical resources, administrative and collegial support, financial rewards and recognition, professional development chances, intrinsic motivation and professional commitment, and participants' recommendations for improving job satisfaction. The findings reveal a complex and often contradictory picture of early-career satisfaction: participants described being personally engaged with their vocation and having a strong sense of community and relationships with their students, but also noted frustration with being overloaded, lack of administrative support, and poorly developed induction programs. These systemic issues significantly affect teachers' confidence and professional well-being in the early, critical stages of their careers. The study recommends urgent structural changes at the district level, involving a formal mentoring system, timely financial compensation, and enhanced school infrastructure, to foster an environment supporting good and motivated teaching.
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Introduction

Teachers' job satisfaction has been well recognized as one of the factors of quality education and learning performance. Teachers play a vital role in determining the extent of achievement of

learners, and a teacher's fulfillment toward the profession enhances the commitment, passion and recital that are positive factors in student achievement; if a teacher is happy, he or she will spend considerable time and energy on teaching and working with students, and educational achievements will be higher (Zaman, Khurram, Alwi, and Shaig, 2019). The institutes are now providing to the preferences of the society and the learning of the students and are expected to develop more multipurpose institutes for both academic and skill based training (Imran, sultana, and Ahmed, 2023). The issue of job satisfaction among teachers is now known as drop in drop-out phenomenon and it has been blamed for the high rate of teacher dropouts in Pakistan as well as its neighboring countries. However, this is perceived as a heartfelt and committed profession, but there are teachers who join the profession only because there is no other occupation for them and it may affect their job satisfaction (Imran and Akhtar, 2023).

Many factors have been identified as contributing to teachers' job satisfaction, including physical facilities, location of schools, gender expectations, workload, and management support, as well as previous teaching experience. Inadequate working conditions have consistently emerged as a key factor leading to teacher turnover, and declining skills combined with low salaries have lowered demand for the teaching profession in specific environments (Toropova, Myrberg, and Johansson, 2021). Job satisfaction is widely known to affect employee commitment, productivity and organizational security, particularly in teaching careers, where teacher experience directly impacts the learning environment (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2017); Satisfied teachers are more likely to remain in the teaching profession, whereas lower job satisfaction is associated with greater intentions to leave and reduced professional engagement (Toropova et al., 2021).

Job satisfaction of teachers has become an increasing area of concern in Pakistan due to organizational issues that are always present in teaching institutions, largely in rural districts such as Kamber Shahdadkot. Supportive school climates, effective leadership, professional autonomy, and participation in decision-making are positively associated with teachers' job satisfaction and well-being (OECD, 2025). In rural districts such as Kamber Shahdadkot, job satisfaction of teachers has become an increasing area of concern due to organizational issues. Research in Sindh has identified working conditions, salary, promotional opportunities, and administrative support as important factors shaping primary school teachers' job satisfaction (Soomro et al., 2023). However, limited qualitative research has examined the lived experiences of newly appointed primary school teachers in rural and less-developed contexts. In particular, the experiences of newly appointed teachers in District Kamber Shahdadkot remain insufficiently explored.

Problem Statement

Teacher job satisfaction is widely recognized as an important factor influencing instructional effectiveness, professional commitment, teacher retention, and the quality of education. Recent international evidence from the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2024 indicates that job satisfaction is associated with teachers' well-being, self-efficacy, working environment, and professional experiences. In developing countries such as Pakistan, where improving the quality of primary education remains a major educational priority, enhancing

teachers' job satisfaction is therefore an important element of educational reform. Pakistan's education reforms, including the National Education Policy (2017–2025) and initiatives of the School Education and Literacy Department (SELD), Government of Sindh, emphasize teacher quality, professionalism, accountability, and improved educational outcomes. However, while considerable attention has been given to teacher recruitment, monitoring, performance standards, and accountability, comparatively less attention has been given to understanding how newly appointed teachers experience and interpret their professional lives during the early years of service. Existing research in Pakistan has predominantly used quantitative approaches, providing limited insight into teachers' lived experiences, personal meanings, contextual interpretations, and day-to-day experiences. District Kamber Shahdadkot provides a distinctive socio-cultural, geographical, and administrative context. The early years of teaching are particularly significant because the experiences of novice teachers can influence their professional identity, motivation, well-being, commitment, and intention to remain in the profession. The absence of context-sensitive qualitative evidence creates an important research gap. Therefore, there is a need for an in-depth phenomenological investigation of the lived experiences of newly appointed primary school teachers in District Kamber Shahdadkot.

Research Objectives

1. To explore the lived experiences of newly appointed primary school teachers regarding their job satisfaction in Kamber Shahdadkot.
2. To identify the major factors that influence job satisfaction among newly appointed primary school teachers.
3. To understand how workplace conditions and professional support affect teachers' motivation and commitment.

Research Questions

1. How do newly appointed primary school teachers in Kamber Shahdadkot describe their experiences of job satisfaction?
2. What factors contribute to job satisfaction among these primary school teachers?
3. In what ways do school environment and administrative support affect their motivation and teaching performance?

Literature Review

Job satisfaction is derived from the Latin words *satis*, meaning "enough," and *facere*, meaning "to do," indicating a sense of fulfillment or adequacy (De Luca et al., 2021). It refers to a positive emotional state resulting from an individual's evaluation of their job and job-related experiences (Inayat & Khan, 2021), consistent with Locke's (1976) view of job satisfaction as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from appraisal of one's job. In the educational context, teachers' job satisfaction reflects perceptions and emotional responses toward the teaching role and is influenced by sense of belonging, relationships with colleagues, leadership practices, and organizational culture (Lindner et al., 2021; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021).

Teachers' job satisfaction is defined by the sentimental relationship between a teacher and his or her teaching role (Sadeghi et al., 2021), and is linked to teacher retention and instructional development. Because it fulfills both psychological and physical needs, job satisfaction is considered a complex, multidimensional process (Ortan et al., 2021), and when teachers lack gratification in their occupation, they are more likely to quit (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Job satisfaction of primary school teachers is one of the most critical factors affecting the quality of education: satisfied teachers are more motivated to plan lessons and use student-centered approaches, whereas teachers unhappy about salary, workload, or recognition experience strain and demotivation, with a resulting drop in teaching competence (Soomro et al., 2023).

Several factors are consistently associated with teacher job satisfaction. Working conditions and the school environment are important factors, with workload, teacher cooperation, and student discipline showing strong associations with job satisfaction (Toropova et al., 2021). When the school environment is good, teachers are better positioned to remain in the profession (Nguyen, 2021; Toropova et al., 2021). A positive school climate and supportive interpersonal relationships with colleagues, students, and parents are important for teachers' job satisfaction and professional well-being (Zahid et al., 2024). Administrative support is one of the most important determinants of job satisfaction; school heads play crucial roles in formulating fair policies and sharing workloads justly, and teachers who feel valued and included in decision-making are likely to develop a positive attitude toward their work (Hamid et al., 2024). Transformational leadership styles positively affect teacher motivation and commitment (Kılınc et al., 2024). Parent feedback and community interaction also shape teacher morale: appreciation from parents strengthens dedication and internal drive, while poor-quality parent-teacher relationships correlate with increased stress and emotional fatigue (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2017; Khan et al., 2023).

Related National and International Studies

National studies highlight various factors shaping teacher satisfaction across Pakistan. Soomro et al. (2023) identified that a high proportion of primary teachers in Dadu, Sindh were dissatisfied with salary and non-promotion prospects. Abdullah et al. (2023) examined intrinsic and extrinsic determinants in Multan, finding that public sector teachers reported higher satisfaction with job security than private sector peers, though intrinsic factors like respect drove motivation in both. Shabbir et al. (2022) found positive ratings for supervision and responsibility in Azad Jammu & Kashmir, despite medium satisfaction with remuneration.

Cheema et al. (2024) noted that peer cooperation significantly enhanced satisfaction in Chakdara, KPK, whereas high workload negatively impacted it. Additionally, Sardar et al. (2022) emphasized the critical role of safe and supportive school environments for female primary teachers in Nushki, Balochistan.

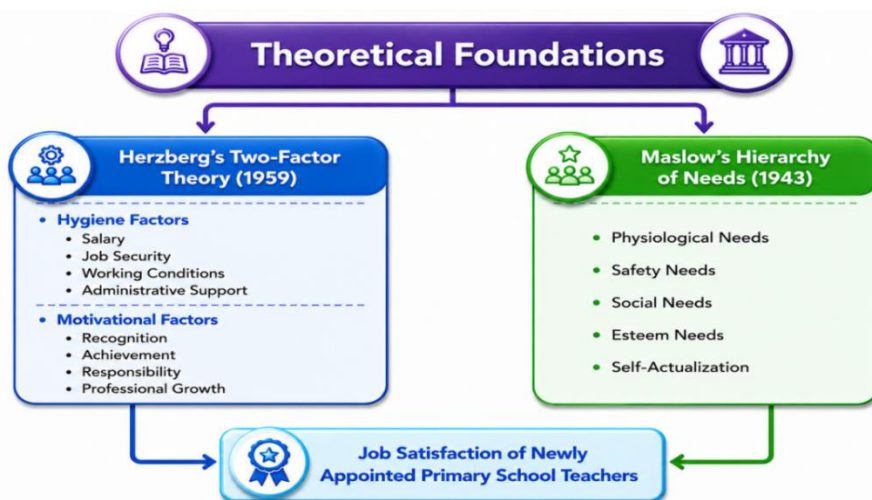
Internationally, Zhang and Varela (2024) demonstrated in China that teacher self-efficacy and classroom management skills directly predict job satisfaction. TIMSS international evidence from 46 countries analyzed by Eryilmaz et al. (2023) confirmed global links between positive working

conditions, supportive leadership, continuous professional development, and teacher job satisfaction. Similarly, Evans et al. (2020) and Hardianto (2022) verified that transformational leadership and fair reward systems significantly enhance teacher commitment and reduce burnout across diverse global contexts.

Theoretical Framework

This study is theoretically grounded in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Herzberg's

Two-Factor Theory. Maslow's model posits that lower-level physiological and safety needs (salary, job security) must be met before higher-level needs (esteem, self-actualization) can motivate an individual. Complementing this, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between *hygiene factors* (working conditions, pay, administrative policy, supervision), which prevent dissatisfaction, and *motivators* (achievement, recognition, professional growth, responsibility), which actively drive internal job satisfaction. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework to analyze the lived realities of newly appointed primary teachers.



Research Gap

Although teacher job satisfaction has been widely studied, most research uses quantitative approaches, offering limited insight into teachers' lived experiences, particularly those of newly appointed teachers. In Pakistan, limited research has focused on less-developed and rural contexts such as District Kamber Shahdadkot, leaving the working conditions, administrative challenges, and resource constraints of newly appointed primary school teachers insufficiently explored. Moreover, phenomenological research on their job satisfaction remains limited. This study addresses this gap by exploring their lived experiences and the factors shaping job satisfaction in District Kamber Shahdadkot.

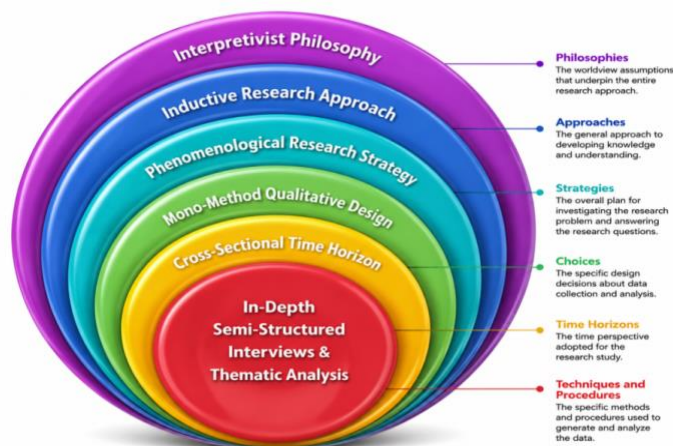
Methodology

Introduction

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological design to explore the lived experiences and factors influencing job satisfaction among newly appointed primary school teachers in Taluka Nasirabad, District Kamber Shahdadkot. The approach was appropriate for understanding job satisfaction as a subjective and multidimensional phenomenon. Methodological rigor and ethical standards were maintained throughout the study.

Research Onion Model

The study adopted Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill's (2007) Research Onion Model to ensure structural coherence across research philosophy, approach, strategy, choice, time horizon, and techniques.



Research Philosophy

An interpretivist research philosophy was selected because reality is viewed as socially constructed through subjective human experiences and interpretations within their natural settings (Creswell, 2014).

Research Approach

An inductive research approach was employed, allowing themes, patterns, and categories to emerge naturally from the participants' narrative data rather than testing pre-formulated hypotheses (Bryman, 2016).

Research Strategy

A phenomenological research strategy was used to capture and describe the essence of the participants' lived professional experiences (Prosek & Gibson, 2021).

Methodological Choice

A qualitative methodological design was chosen to obtain rich, descriptive, and contextually grounded data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Time Horizon

A cross-sectional time horizon was applied, gathering data from participants at a single point in time during early career service.

Data Collection Method

Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews using a flexible, open-ended interview guide focusing on working conditions, leadership, compensation, resources, and intrinsic motivation.

Data Collection Procedure

Formal permission was granted by relevant administrative authorities. Written informed consent was secured from all participants prior to conducting audio-recorded interviews in quiet, comfortable settings.

Pilot Testing of the Interview

A pilot test was carried out with two non-sample teachers to refine question clarity, timing, and structural flow of the interview instrument.

Data Analysis Technique

Phenomenological thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework was utilized alongside researcher *bracketing* to eliminate personal preconceptions (Tufford et al., 2023).

Research Setting

The study was conducted within government primary schools across Taluka Nasirabad, District Kamber Shahdadkot, Sindh.

Population of the Study

The population comprised all newly appointed primary school teachers serving in government primary schools within the specified district.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used to select information-rich participants meeting explicit professional scriteria (Etikan et al., 2016).

Sample Size

The sample size consisted of 10 newly appointed primary school teachers (5 male, 5 female) with 1–5 years of service, at which point empirical data saturation was achieved (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance adhered strictly to the SZABIST Research Ethics Protocol. Anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and protection from harm were maintained throughout.

Discussion of Findings

Introduction to Findings/Themes

The thematic analysis of the interview data produced six major overarching themes detailing the lived experiences of newly appointed primary school teachers.

Theme	Key Sub-Themes
Workplace Conditions & Physical Resources	Infrastructure deficits, lack of tech/teaching aids, heavy administrative burden.
2. Administrative & Collegial Support	Headteacher leadership styles, informal peer mentorship, supervisory behavior.
3. Financial Rewards & Recognition	Salary inadequacy against inflation, delayed disbursements, desire for verbal/formal appreciation.
4. Professional Development Opportunities	Induction training limitations, need for continuous professional development (CPD).
5. Intrinsic Motivation & Professional Commitment	Passion for teaching, student success, vocational drive despite severe hardship.
6. Participant Recommendations	Mentorship setup, resource provision, timely pay, equitable workload.

Objective One: Lived Experiences of Newly Appointed Teachers

Most participants expressed satisfaction with basic school facilities:

I am happy with the facilities and learning environment at the school; the facilities are meeting the students and teacher's needs" (P1, Male).

At the same time, nearly all pointed to the absence of modern resources smart classrooms, libraries, laboratories as a persistent constraint:

"I believe a modern facility or resource is needed to teach... like smart room classes, provision of materials for different activities" (P6, Male).

Workload emerged as a double-edged experience: manageable teaching duties were motivating, but excessive documentation produced stress, as one teacher explained:

"overburden documentation and report has a negative impact on teachers' job satisfaction while workload when well-managed has a positive impact because it provides more time for teaching" (P9, Male).

Alongside these institutional realities, participants described strong intrinsic engagement with their vocation, with one affirming.

"I love teaching and my students are my motivation and desire to contribute to improving and educating society" (P1, Male).

Overall, the lived experience of newly appointed teachers in Kamber Shahdadkot is best characterized as an intertwining of professional pride, institutional constraint, and community belonging, in which resilience and intrinsic commitment offset but do not eliminate the pressures of resource scarcity and administrative burden.

Objective Two: Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction

Administrative and collegial support emerged as one of the most influential factors. Teachers who felt genuinely supported described considerable confidence:

"It's the trust of administration that gives me confidence and a sense of responsibility to be a good teacher in my classroom" (P9, Male),

While informal mentoring from senior colleagues also played a supportive role. A smaller number of participants offered a more qualified assessment, noting that support existed but could be strengthened further. Financial rewards presented a mixed picture: most reported that salary covered basic expenses while calling for periodic increases to match the rising cost of living:

"I am happy with the salary and money but let me tell you, it should be increased according to the situation because I, as a new teacher, am happy with it." (P1, Male)

Recognition through certificates and staff-meeting acknowledgment was valued where it occurred, and its absence was felt as a gap in teachers' sense of being valued. Professional development followed a similar pattern: all participants had received induction training and regarded ongoing training as directly linked to competence and satisfaction, one noting that:

"This applies to job satisfaction as well: If teachers don't know the right methodology, to become effective, they have not been properly trained." (P3, Female

Objective Three: Workplace Conditions, Motivation, and Commitment

Workplace conditions and professional support functioned as both facilitators and barriers to motivation and commitment. Supportive leadership, peer mentoring, and recognition reinforced participants' motivation and intention to remain in the profession, while the absence of formal mentoring structures, resource shortages, and administrative burden acted as inhibiting factors. Notably, all ten participants expressed a clear intention to continue teaching, several with ambitions toward leadership or mentoring roles:

"Yes, I want to be excited to move up in the education career to become a school leader, teaching and coaching future teachers" (P9, Male).

This universal commitment, sustained despite acknowledged structural challenges, suggests that a strong intrinsic drive toward teaching combined with relational support can help early-career teachers in low-resource contexts maintain commitment even amid material hardship a finding with direct relevance for cost-effective, recognition-based approaches to teacher retention. Participants converged on similar recommendations for improving satisfaction, including formal orientation and mentoring, equitable workload distribution, timely compensation and career growth, and improved access to teaching resources and continuous training.

Conclusion

This study examined newly appointed primary school teachers' experiences of job satisfaction in government primary schools of Taluka Nasirabad, District Kamber Shahdadkot, using a phenomenological approach. Thematic analysis of ten interviews produced six themes spanning workplace conditions, administrative and collegial support, financial rewards, professional development, intrinsic motivation, and participants' own recommendations.

In relation to the first objective, the lived experience of newly appointed teachers is best described as an intertwining of professional pride, institutional constraint, and community belonging teachers entered the profession with strong motivation and purpose, and structural weaknesses limited resources, administrative burden, lack of formal support tempered but did not extinguish their enthusiasm.

In relation to the second objective, the determinants of job satisfaction operate at individual, institutional, and structural levels administrative support, collegial mentoring, and recognition were the most immediate institutional factors, resource shortages and the absence of formal mentoring were structural barriers, and passion for teaching and professional identity served as strong individual-level buffers against structural dissatisfaction.

In relation to the third objective, workplace conditions and professional support acted as both facilitators and barriers, but the universal commitment expressed by all ten participants indicates that strong intrinsic drive and relational support can sustain early-career teachers' commitment even in materially constrained contexts.

Overall, job satisfaction among newly appointed teachers in this resource-constrained context is a socially situated, multi-dimensional phenomenon that cannot be improved through salary interventions alone. A quality, motivated, and committed primary teaching workforce in Sindh requires simultaneous improvement of mentoring infrastructure, resource provision, and professional development and leadership practices.

Suggestions

Recommendations for School Administration and Head Teachers

Set up Formal Mentoring Systems: Establish structured peer-mentoring frameworks pairing novice teachers with experienced colleagues.

Implement Structured Orientation and Induction Programs: Conduct mandatory school-level induction covering administrative duties, school culture, and lesson planning.

Adopt Equitable Workload Distribution Practices: Ensure fair allocation of teaching hours and non-instructional responsibilities.

Institutionalize Recognition Practices: Introduce regular verbal and written commendations for dedicated teaching performance.

Recommendations for District and Provincial Educational Authorities

Address Resource Deficits: Priority funding must be allocated to provide basic infrastructure (drinking water, toilets, electricity, boundary walls) and modern instructional materials.

Expand CPD Opportunities: Design continuous, practical professional development programs focused on rural primary classroom management.

Establish Clear Career Progression Pathways: Implement transparent, merit-based promotion rules for primary school teachers.

Ensure Timely Salary Disbursement: Streamline administrative procedures to eliminate delays in initial pay and allowances.

Conduct Periodic Well-Being Surveys: Regularly assess teacher satisfaction across rural districts to inform evidence-based policy adjustments.

Recommendations for National Policy

Review Compensation Plans: Re-evaluate base salary scales for entry-level teachers to align with macroeconomic inflation and cost of living.

Enhance Leadership Preparation: Provide mandatory school management and leadership training for headteachers.

Recommendations for Future Research

Expand to Other Rural Contexts: Replicate the study across other underserved districts in Sindh and Pakistan.

Utilize Mixed-Methods & Longitudinal Designs: Combine qualitative depth with quantitative scale, tracking teachers over a multi-year period.

Explore Gender-Differential Experiences: Investigate how gender-specific social and institutional factors influence teacher satisfaction.

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