

Research Article

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Examining the Relationship Between Burnout and Job Satisfaction Among Teachers: A Relational Study

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Abstract

Background/purpose. Teacher burnout and job satisfaction are critical factors affecting both individual well-being and educational effectiveness. This study aimed to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and burnout levels, and to examine whether these variables differ by personal and professional characteristics such as gender, marital status, seniority, education level, and school type.

Methods. This study used a quantitative approach with a relational research design. The sample consisted of 474 teachers working in Elazığ during the 2024–2025 academic year, selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using the Personal Information Form, the Maslach Burnout Inventory, and the Job Satisfaction Scale.

Results. The findings indicated that teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction were high, whereas perceptions of burnout were low. A moderate, negative, and statistically significant relationship was found between job satisfaction and burnout. Job satisfaction was identified as an important predictor of burnout. Married teachers reported significantly higher job satisfaction than single teachers.

Conclusions. The results suggest that higher job satisfaction is associated with lower burnout among teachers. Enhancing teachers' job satisfaction may therefore be an effective strategy to reduce burnout and improve educational outcomes.

1. Introduction

Since the inception of educational activities, teachers have been widely acknowledged as one of the most critical components of the education system. Educators exert a substantial influence on both their pupils' academic achievement and personal development. However, because of the challenges and negative experiences they face, teachers may experience declining job satisfaction and develop burnout. This predicament can negatively affect both the quality of education and teachers' overall quality of life. The combination of teachers' excessive workload, parent and student expectations and behaviors, and economic and social issues can lead to low job satisfaction and burnout, categorizing teachers as a high-risk occupational group (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Conversely, teachers with higher job satisfaction have also been shown to exhibit higher levels of motivation (Karataş & Güleş, 2010; Shah et al., 2012). This heightened motivation has been shown to foster greater dedication in teachers, thereby exerting a favorable influence on student achievement (Vrieling et al., 2012). However, high levels of burnout can also negatively affect teacher health and student achievement (Capel, 1987; Durak & Seferoğlu, 2017). Indeed, Guglielmi and Tatrow (1998) observed that occupational stress and burnout are associated with a range of physical and psychological health problems among teachers. It has been observed that these problems experienced by teachers can result in communication difficulties between teachers and students, teaching activities falling short of the desired level, and the suppression of students' ideas (Beer & Beer, 1992; Durak & Seferoğlu, 2017). Consequently, examining the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and burnout, and developing recommendations to address it, is imperative to resolve potential issues that may arise in achieving schools' objectives.

Job satisfaction is defined as a state of contentment resulting from an employee's adaptation to the workplace (see İşcan & Timuroğlu, 2007; Şimşir & Seyran, 2020). According to Schultz and Schultz (1998), it can be defined as a fulfilling work life. Job satisfaction is defined as the positive emotional responses employees develop towards their work (Erdoğan, 1996; Locke, 1976). A wide range of factors, including management style, compensation policies, promotion opportunities, the nature of the work itself, working conditions, employee attitudes towards work, the organization's value structure, and the nature of communication among employees, have been identified as influential in these reactions towards work (Erdoğan, 1996; İşcan & Timuroğlu, 2007; Locke, 1976; Kartal et al., 2017; Mullins, 1996). As in all organizations, the fundamental factor in achieving goals in educational organizations is undoubtedly employee happiness and the resulting job satisfaction (Yavuz & Karadeniz, 2009). Teachers with high job satisfaction have been shown to exhibit higher levels of organizational commitment (Karataş & Güleş, 2010), which in turn has been shown to reduce turnover rates (Ingersoll, 2001). This decline in turnover has been shown to positively affect teachers' contributions to their students (Ingersoll, 2001). As posited by Gülnar (2007), educational institutions characterized by elevated levels of job satisfaction have been shown to exhibit superior communication and collaborative capabilities. Consequently, it can be posited that this contributes to the establishment of a conducive educational environment, as students will experience an increased sense of safety in schools.

Another concept to be examined within the scope of this research is that of burnout. Freudenberger (1974) defines burnout as physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion resulting from excessive workload, stress, and emotional suppression. In their study on the measurement of burnout syndrome, Maslach and Jackson (1981) describe the condition as comprising three primary dimensions:

- *Emotional exhaustion*: A state in which an employee's emotional resources are depleted or completely absent, resulting in an inability to commit to their work.

- *Depersonalization*: The behavior of detaching oneself from others by exhibiting negative and emotionless attitudes toward clients or co-workers.
- *Reduced personal accomplishment*: A decrease in personal accomplishment resulting from the inability to perform one's job as desired due to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.

Maslach and Jackson (1981) posited that burnout occurs more frequently among individuals in occupations that involve regular face-to-face interaction with others. Undoubtedly, teaching is one of the professions that involves the most interaction with people. Consequently, it can be deduced that teachers are more susceptible to burnout. A study by Durak and Seferoğlu (2017) concluded that student misbehavior and classroom management difficulties contribute to teacher burnout. Research has also shown that class size, administrative behaviors, promotion and reward systems, and professional satisfaction influence teacher burnout (Cemaloğlu & Şahin, 2007). Research has indicated that teachers experiencing burnout do not perceive themselves as professionally competent (Çelikkaleli, 2011), do not feel mentally well (Aslan et al., 2021), and have low levels of job satisfaction (Filiz, 2014).

Research findings suggest that the relationship between job satisfaction and burnout among teachers is significant. Many studies have shown a negative correlation between job satisfaction and burnout. Kumaru and Toran's (2024) study posits that low job satisfaction is associated with high burnout. This finding aligns with Zang and Chen (2022), who argued that job satisfaction is a pivotal factor in the development of burnout among teachers. Their argument is that teachers who experience high levels of job satisfaction are less likely to develop burnout. A similar conclusion was reached in a study by Acar and Karaaslan (2022) on special education teachers. Furthermore, the dimensions of burnout, such as emotional exhaustion and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment, have been linked to job dissatisfaction (Stasio et al., 2017). As Stasio et al. (2017) have observed, low job satisfaction among teachers is directly related to these dimensions of burnout, highlighting the psychological toll that dissatisfaction can take on educators. Consequently, identifying strategies to enhance job satisfaction may be a pivotal approach to mitigating burnout among teaching professionals. Activities aimed at improving job satisfaction – such as enhancing workplace conditions, providing professional development, and fostering supportive relationships – can serve as effective strategies for reducing burnout and improving overall teacher well-being.

This study aims to determine the correlation between job satisfaction and burnout among teachers, with a view to formulating recommendations that promote teachers' well-being. Pursuant to the primary objective of the study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What is the level of teachers' perceived job satisfaction?
2. What is the level of teachers' perceived burnout?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in job satisfaction and perceived burnout across demographic variables and school types?
4. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' levels of job satisfaction and their levels of burnout?
5. Do teachers' levels of job satisfaction have a predictive effect on their levels of burnout?

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

The present study adopts a quantitative approach and employs a correlational research design. A correlational research design is a research approach used to determine whether a causal or

predictive relationship exists between two or more variables and, if so, its direction and strength (Bekman, 2022; Gliner et al., 2015; Karasar, 2005).

2.2. Population and Sample

The study population consists of teachers working in schools in Elazığ Province during the 2024–2025 academic year. The sample consists of 474 teachers selected from this population using simple random sampling. The simple random sampling method was selected because it enhances sample representativeness relative to the population (Büyüköztürk et al., 2016). The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	258	54.4
	Female	216	45.6
Marital Status	Single	104	21.9
	Married	370	78.1
Professional Seniority (Years)	0–5	48	10.1
	6–10	103	21.7
	11–15	81	17.1
	16–20	86	18.1
	21 and above	156	32.9
Education Level	Graduate degree	156	32.9
	Bachelor's degree	318	67.1
School Type	Preschool	22	4.6
	Primary school	103	21.7
	Middle school	145	30.6
	High school	204	43.0
Total		474	100.0

Note. N = 474. Percentages may not total 100 exactly due to rounding.

Demographic analysis indicates that 54.4% of the teaching sample is male ($n = 258$), while 45.6% is female ($n = 216$). In terms of marital status, 21.9% are single ($n = 104$), and 78.1% are married ($n = 370$). Regarding professional seniority, 10.1% reported 0–5 years, 21.7% reported 6–10 years, 17.1% reported 11–15 years, 18.1% reported 16–20 years, and 32.9% reported 21 years or more. Educational background showed that 67.1% possess a bachelor's degree, while 32.9% possess a graduate-level degree. Finally, distribution by school type indicates 4.6% in kindergartens, 21.7% in elementary schools, 30.6% in middle schools, and 43.0% in high schools.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

Data were collected using the Personal Information Form, the Maslach Burnout Inventory, and the Job Satisfaction Scale.

- *Personal Information Form*: Designed to gather demographic information regarding gender, marital status, years of service, educational level, and school type.

- *Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)*: Developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) and adapted into Turkish by Ergin (1992). The inventory was adapted into a 5-point Likert format (0 = Never to 4 = Always) to ensure cultural appropriateness (Ergin, 1992). It consists of three subscales: Emotional Exhaustion (9 items), Reduced Personal Accomplishment (8 items), and Depersonalization (5 items). Items in the Reduced Personal Accomplishment subscale were reverse-coded prior to analysis.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients reported by Ergin (1992) were .83 for Emotional Exhaustion, .72 for Reduced Personal Accomplishment, and .65 for Depersonalization.

- *Job Satisfaction Scale*: Originally developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) as an 18-item instrument, reduced to 5 items by Judge et al. (1998), and adapted into Turkish culture by Başol and Çömlekçi (2020). The 5-point Likert-type scale ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with a reported Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .89 (Başol & Çömlekçi, 2020).

2.4. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS software. Univariate normality tests showed skewness and kurtosis values falling within the ± 2 range, confirming a normal distribution (George & Mallery, 2010). Consequently, we conducted parametric statistical tests, including independent-samples t-tests, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), Pearson correlations, and simple linear regression. Effect sizes were evaluated using Cohen's d for t-tests and Eta-Squared (η^2) for ANOVA, interpreted according to standard guidelines (Cohen, 1988; as cited in Pallant, 2020). The results of the normality tests for the study variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Normality Test Results of the Variables

Variables	n	$\bar{X}$	sd	Skewness	Kurtosis
Job Satisfaction	474	4.02	.89	-1.13	1.20
Emotional Exhaustion	474	2.44	.85	.51	-.14
Personal Accomplishment	474	2.15	.61	.48	.71
Depersonalization	474	2.05	.80	.74	.00

3. Results

Independent samples t-tests revealed no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction or burnout subdimensions according to gender (job satisfaction: $p > .05$; emotional exhaustion: $p = .27$; reduced personal accomplishment: $p = .15$; depersonalization: $p = .96$). Thus, teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and burnout did not vary by gender. The results of the independent samples t-tests examining differences in job satisfaction and burnout subdimensions by gender are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Burnout Subdimensions by Gender Using Independent Samples t-Test

Variable	Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	sd	t	df	p
Job Satisfaction	Male	258	4.02	.89	.000	472	1.00
	Female	216	4.02	.89			
Emotional Exhaustion	Male	258	2.40	.83	-1.08	472	.27
	Female	216	2.49	.87			
Reduced Personal Accomplishment	Male	258	2.11	.65	-.042	472	.15
	Female	216	2.19	.55			
Depersonalization	Male	258	2.05	.79	-.042	472	.96
	Female	216	2.05	.81			

Regarding marital status, married teachers reported significantly higher job satisfaction than single teachers ($p = .04 < .05$, $d = -0.22$). Conversely, single teachers reported significantly higher levels of reduced personal accomplishment ($p = .00 < .05$, $d = 0.31$) and depersonalization ($p = .04 < .05$, $d = 0.22$). No significant difference was found for emotional exhaustion ($p = .15 > .05$). The results

of the independent samples t-tests examining differences in teachers' job satisfaction and burnout subdimensions by marital status are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Comparison of Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Burnout Subdimensions by Marital Status Using Independent Samples t-Test

Variable	Marital Status	n	$\bar{X}$	sd	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Job Satisfaction	Single	104	3.87	.86	-1.99	472	.04	-0.22
	Married	370	4.07	.89				
Emotional Exhaustion	Single	104	2.55	.86	1.42	472	.15	.15
	Married	370	2.41	.85				
Reduced Personal Accomplishment	Single	104	2.30	.56	2.83	472	.00	0.31
	Married	370	2.11	.62				
Depersonalization	Single	104	2.19	.82	1.99	472	.04	0.22
	Married	370	2.01	.79				

ANOVA results across professional seniority groups showed no significant differences for job satisfaction ($p = .294$), emotional exhaustion ($p = .114$), or reduced personal accomplishment ($p = .094$). However, a statistically significant difference emerged in depersonalization ($F = 2.824$, $p = .025 < .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$). Post-hoc Tukey comparisons revealed that this difference was specifically between teachers with 11–15 years and 16–20 years of seniority ($p = .03 < .05$), in favor of the 11–15 years group. The results of the one-way ANOVA examining differences in teachers' job satisfaction and burnout subdimensions across professional seniority groups are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results for Job Satisfaction and Burnout Subdimensions by Professional Seniority

Variable	Seniority (Years)	n	$\bar{X}$	sd	F	p	η^2
Job Satisfaction	0–5	48	4.13	.69	1.239	.294	
	6–10	103	3.93	.87			
	11–15	81	4.04	.95			
	16–20	86	3.90	1.00			
	21 and above	156	4.11	.86			
Emotional Exhaustion	0–5	48	2.38	.75	1.872	.114	
	6–10	103	2.50	.86			
	11–15	81	2.30	.87			
	16–20	86	2.63	.94			
	21 and above	156	2.40	.80			
Reduced Personal Accomplishment	0–5	48	2.24	.52	1.997	.094	
	6–10	103	2.27	.55			
	11–15	81	2.09	.61			
	16–20	86	2.14	.66			
	21 and above	156	2.08	.64			
Depersonalization	0–5	48	2.02	.83	2.824	.025	0.02
	6–10	103	2.12	.80			
	11–15	81	1.90	.83			
	16–20	86	2.26	.82			
	21 and above	156	1.97	.75			

The results of the post-hoc Tukey test identifying the specific group differences in the depersonalization subdimension are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Post-Hoc Tukey Test Results Following One-Way ANOVA for the Depersonalization Subdimension of Burnout by Professional Seniority

(I) Seniority (Years)	(J) Seniority (Years)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	p
0–5	6–10	.101	.139	.95
	11–15	.116	.145	.93
	16–20	-.244	.144	.43
	21 and above	.048	.131	.99
6–10	0–5	.101	.139	.95
	11–15	.217	.118	.35
	16–20	-.143	.107	.73
	21 and above	.149	.101	.58
11–15	0–5	-.116	.145	.93
	6–10	-.217	.118	.35
	16–20	-.361	.123	.03
	21 and above	-.068	.109	.97
16–20	0–5	.244	.144	.43
	6–10	.143	.116	.73
	11–15	.361	.123	.03
	21 and above	.292	.107	.51
21 and above	0–5	-.048	.131	.99
	6–10	-.149	.101	.58
	11–15	.068	.109	.97
	16–20	-.292	.107	.51

In terms of educational level and school type, no statistically significant differences were observed across any subdimensions (educational level: all $p > .05$; school type: all $p > .05$). The results of the independent-samples t-test examining differences in teachers' job satisfaction and burnout subdimensions by educational level are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Comparison of Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Burnout Subdimensions by Educational Level Using Independent Samples t-Test

Variable	Educational Level	n	$\bar{X}$	sd	t	df	p
Job Satisfaction	Graduate Degree	156	4.01	.95	.249	472	.804
	Bachelor's Degree	318	4.03	.86			
Emotional Exhaustion	Graduate Degree	156	2.52	.88	-1.399	472	.162
	Bachelor's Degree	318	2.41	.83			
Reduced Personal Accomplishment	Graduate Degree	156	2.15	.59	.096	472	.924
	Bachelor's Degree	318	2.15	.62			

Depersonalization	Graduate Degree	156	2.10	.80	-1.00	472	.314
	Bachelor's Degree	318	2.02	.80			

The results of the one-way ANOVA examining differences in teachers' job satisfaction and burnout subdimensions across school types are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results for Job Satisfaction and Burnout Subdimensions by School Type

Variables	School Type	n	$\bar{X}$	sd	F	p
Job Satisfaction	Primary School	125	4.16	.79	2.007	.135
	Middle School	145	4.00	.91		
	High School	204	3.96	.93		
Emotional Exhaustion	Primary School	125	2.38	.86	.569	.567
	Middle School	145	2.48	.90		
	High School	204	2.46	.81		
Reduced Personal Accomplishment	Primary School	125	2.15	.60	.840	.432
	Middle School	145	2.20	.65		
	High School	204	2.12	.59		
Depersonalization	Primary School	125	1.92	.84	2.529	.081
	Middle School	145	2.06	.75		
	High School	204	2.13	.80		

Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant negative relationships between job satisfaction and all burnout dimensions (Büyüköztürk et al., 2016): emotional exhaustion ($r = -.615$, $p < .001$), reduced personal accomplishment ($r = -.446$, $p < .001$), depersonalization ($r = -.342$, $p < .001$), and overall burnout ($r = -.592$, $p < .001$). Simple linear regression demonstrated that job satisfaction explained 35.1% of the variance in teacher burnout ($R = .592$, $R^2 = .351$, $\beta = -.592$, $p < .01$), establishing job satisfaction as a key negative predictor of burnout. The results of the Pearson correlation analysis examining the relationships between job satisfaction and burnout subdimensions are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Pearson Correlation Analysis Results for the Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Burnout Subdimensions

		Emotional Exhaustion	Reduced Personal Accomplishment	Depersonalization	Burnout
Job Satisfaction	Pearson r	-.615*	-.446*	-.342*	-.592*
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000
	n	474	474	474	474

* Correlation is significant at the .01 level.

The results of the simple linear regression analysis examining the predictive effect of job satisfaction on teachers’ burnout perceptions are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Simple Linear Regression Analysis Results Predicting Teachers’ Burnout Perceptions from Job Satisfaction Levels

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
1	Constant	3.836	.104		36.980	.000	.592	.351	.349
	Job	-.401	.025	-.592	-	.000			
	Satisfaction				15.960				

4. Discussion

This study aimed to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and burnout among teachers and differences across demographic variables. The primary finding—a moderate-to-strong negative relationship between job satisfaction and burnout—aligns closely with existing literature. Studies conducted with educators across various institutional settings have similarly reported that higher job satisfaction is associated with reduced burnout (Acar & Karaaslan, 2022; Kumaru & Toran, 2024; Özcan, 2023; Tunçbilek & Büber, 2023; Gürbüz, 2008).

The lack of significant differences across gender, school type, seniority, and education level reflects broader patterns in educational research (Babayiğit, 2024; Balci & Erkasap, 2024; Gülnar, 2007; Menon & Athanasoula-Reppa, 2011; Özcan, 2023; Özdemir & Ceylan, 2024; Yeşilköy Arslan et al., 2024). Furthermore, the finding that married teachers report higher job satisfaction and lower burnout in specific dimensions aligns with prior empirical evidence (Atasoy & İрге, 2019; Babayiğit, 2024), though some studies have noted non-significant variations (Gürbüz, 2008).

High job satisfaction plays a vital protective role in educational settings, reducing turnover intentions and absenteeism while enhancing organizational commitment and teacher effectiveness (Robbins, 2003). While several studies report consistently low burnout levels among teachers (Akyürek, 2020; Yeğın, 2014; Capel, 1992; Çapri & Güler, 2018), others observe moderate to high burnout (Cemaloğlu & Kayabaşı, 2007; Türkçapar et al., 2024; Bakan et al., 2015; Maraşlı, 2005). Such discrepancies highlight the impact of localized workplace conditions, administrative support, and regional socioeconomic factors.

5. Conclusions & Declarations

In conclusion, the findings demonstrate that high job satisfaction is associated with significantly lower burnout among educators. Because job satisfaction serves as a vital protective factor explaining 35% of the variance in burnout, educational policymakers and school administrators should prioritize interventions that cultivate positive work environments, support professional growth, and promote work-life balance for teachers.

DECLARATIONS

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