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## Trust and Job Satisfaction among Private School English Teachers

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### ABSTRACT

Research on organizational trust and job satisfaction is an over-researched domain within organizational settings. However, whether such a connection extends to educational or language school contexts, has been scarcely investigated in education research. In this study, we report the connection between trust and job satisfaction among English teachers across private language schools and the extent to which age, gender, and experience moderate this relationship. The participants of the present study were selected from among the English teachers of several English schools in Urmia, Iran. We adopted two main questionnaires, namely, job satisfaction and interpersonal trust scales, to collect data. In this study, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was utilized to detect multi-group relationships among the variables. The findings yielded a positive association between English teachers' interpersonal trust and their job satisfaction and illustrated that age and experience moderated the relationship between the two variables. We found that teachers with a higher degree of interpersonal trust were more satisfied with their jobs. The findings warrant taking heed of language teachers' job satisfaction at language schools and creating an educational workplace with cooperation and trust among supervisors and teachers.

**Keywords:** English teachers; job satisfaction; private school; relationship; SEM; trust

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## Introduction

In educational settings, dissatisfaction or disillusion with teaching conditions may induce teachers to depart from their jobs. Consequently, schools can no longer offer high-quality education to learners, turning teacher retention into an important issue in educational research (Guarino et al., 2006; Müller et al., 2009). A pivotal factor contributing to teachers' retention is job satisfaction, which is associated with attraction, creativity, and challenges in teaching (Hancock & Scherff, 2010; Rinke, 2008; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2012).

Job satisfaction, in lay terms, is an individual teacher's subjective and fulfilled feeling in terms of the expectations set beforehand. Earlier studies have shown relationships between job satisfaction and teachers' burnout, efficacy, stress, and job commitment (Collie et al., 2015; Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Madigan & Kim, 2021; Mansfield et al., 2016). Research has reported trust as a determining factor leading to job satisfaction (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Yin et al., 2019). The construct of trust is defined as general feelings that establish and maintain mutual relationships among employees (Pesamaa et al., 2013). In addition, trust can reflect the connection among individuals which is founded upon previous experiences (Gulati, 1995). In a study across 85 secondary schools in Belgium, for example, Van Maele and Van Houtte (2012) reported a positive association between teacher trust and job satisfaction. An important source of trust is the employee's immediate social environment, which largely comprises co-workers (Tan & Lim, 2009). In this vein, Jabeen et al. (2021) argue that people's ability to comprehend their surroundings and act rationally is a direct result of the social context in which they find themselves.

Two types of interpersonal trust, namely trust in coworkers and supervisors, have been widely studied among employees in organizational settings (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Kim et al., 2023; Matzler & Renzl, 2006; Ratna et al., 2022; Sendlali & Elyarah, 2022). In addition, the importance of teachers' trust in students has been substantiated by some researchers (Van Houtte, 2006). However, the research on the association between teachers' trust and other school members and their job satisfaction is still scant. In addition, the research line on trust issues across organizations has overlooked the language teaching setting. Importantly, in private language schools, as the main centers for English education worldwide, such trust relationships among teachers could yield productive teaching and learning. However, the body of research on trust and job satisfaction has not extended to such teaching-related contexts.

Teaching English is more prevalent than any other subject across the world, and English teachers far outnumber all other subject teachers, especially in non-English speaking countries where English is taught at private language schools besides public schools. In addition to organizational trust, interpersonal trust, which includes trust in coworkers and supervisors, can be studied within language schools and among language teachers. English teachers, having an underpaid career in Iran, suffer from heavy teacher loss or burnout. These teachers, especially those teaching at private language schools, are not adequately paid in return for the job they do. On that account, they are generally dissatisfied with their jobs and suffer burnout at early stages of their careers. Given that trust leads to job satisfaction (e.g., Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Yin et al., 2019), we intend to investigate the job satisfaction of private school English teachers and its association with trust among teachers.

### *Trust & job satisfaction*

Trust in organizational research is defined as a "psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviors of another" (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395) and is measured as a multi-dimensional trait comprising of the

trustee's ability, benevolence, and integrity. Therefore, teacher trust is defined as "a teacher's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999, p. 189). Four referents of teacher trust in school settings are identified as the school principal, parents, students, and co-teachers with each referent identifying one particular dimension of teacher trust (Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2009). Teacher trust in the principal exemplifies a person's trust in another person, while trust in students, parents, and colleagues manifests a person's trust in a collective entity (McEvily et al., 2002).

There are two types of trust. The first type is interpersonal trust, which involves a) trust in coworkers and b) trust in supervisors. Interpersonal trust is a fundamental social prerequisite that impacts one's professional and organizational success (Lascaux, 2020; Paluri & Mishal, 2020). The second one is organizational or institutional trust. The former is personal, face-to-face, and among members. The latter, however, is shaped between individuals and the organization as an impersonal faceless entity. The fact that different types of trust are conceptually different is not far from expectation. In other words, it is possible that individuals have confidence in their coworkers but not in supervisors or trust both coworkers and supervisors but have their reservations about the organization.

The other important variable in this study involves individuals' satisfaction with their careers, commonly known as job satisfaction. Schleicher et al. (2010) believe that job satisfaction is the extent to which teachers feel content with their teaching careers. The extent to which teachers are satisfied with their jobs has a relationship with the probability of their staying with or quitting their jobs (Crossman & Harris, 2006). A myriad of factors influences job dis/satisfaction among teachers, including intrinsic or extrinsic reasons. Regarding intrinsic reasons, Shen (1997) reports that many teachers enter the profession because of intrinsic reasons, such as the pleasure of working with children. In the same vein, Dinham and Scott (1998b) report that few teachers choose a teaching career for external rewards such as payment. The situation in Iran, however, seems to be different. Most teachers choose their careers due to extrinsic reasons, such as the paucity of job opportunities.

## Empirical grounding

A plethora of studies, though less relevant to our scope, has investigated trust and job satisfaction in organizational settings considering several factors (Aruoren & Tarurhor, 2023; Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; McEvily et al., 2006; Matzler & Renzl, 2006). Recently, for example, Aruoren and Tarurhor (2023) explored the effect of authentic leadership, defined as leaders' real-life stories to help them manage followers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) on organizational trust. This research examined the function that organizational commitment played as a mediator between organizational trust and authentic leadership. The research suggests that organizational leadership cultivates a high degree of trust and commitment among members of the organization.

Trust is claimed to be context-specific (Rousseau et al., 1998), and different researchers have investigated this construct within and across different school settings in different countries (Forsberg & Wermke, 2012, in Sweden & Germany; Forsyth et al., 2011; Louis, 2007, in the U.S.; Moolenaar et al., 2010, in the Netherlands; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2009, in Belgium). These researchers have examined the issue of trust from the vantage point of both interpersonal trust, also called teacher trust (e.g., McEvily et al., 2006), and organizational trust, known as faculty trust (e.g., Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Teacher trust takes place at the individual level and is the extent to which an individual teacher trusts his/her coworkers at school. Organizational trust occurs at a group level and is the level of trust a teacher can invest in the school as an organization. Both

types of trust have been reported to contribute to the successful performance of school teachers, and a teacher who trusts her/his students can foster student success and achievement (Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2012). Teachers who have better relationships with other coworkers experience higher levels of job satisfaction (see Dinham & Scott, 1998). It has been shown that low levels of trust are correlated with self-estrangement, powerlessness, and conflict on the part of teachers (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Along the same lines, Yin et al. (2019) conducted a research study on Hong Kong kindergarten teachers and reached the conclusion that trust in colleagues indicated a positive effect on teachers' professional development.

Literature is replete with studies investigating the factors that bring about the job (dis)satisfaction among teachers (Farber, 1991; Khan et al., 2018; Kyriacou, 1987; Madigan & Kim, 2021; Mansfield et al., 2016; Mykletun, 1984; Okeke et al., 2017; Yin et al., 2019). Collie et al. (2015) investigated 1267 teachers' profiles in a study, which came from two separate research projects in two provinces in Canada. They identified three social-emotional learning profiles of teachers. It was found that these different profiles had different associations with teacher stress and job satisfaction. Teachers with lower social-emotional learning profiles reported higher levels of job satisfaction. Papanastasiou and Zembylas (2005) found that teachers in Cypress who chose teaching careers for intrinsic reasons and held higher positions in their schools, enjoyed higher levels of job satisfaction. Dou et al. (2017) studied the association between principal leadership, teachers' job satisfaction, school autonomy gap, and organizational commitment. They showed the effect of instructional leadership on the teachers' job satisfaction and commitment. Organizational culture (Lee & Smith, 1996) and the socio-demographic composition of the school (Stearns et al., 2014) have also been reported to have associations with job satisfaction among teachers. Madigan and Kim (2021) showed in their study that teachers who were more satisfied with their profession tended to stay longer in their jobs, and less satisfied teachers had a propensity to quit their jobs.

Work conditions have also been shown to have a positive relationship with the job (dis)satisfaction among both public and private teachers (Perie et al., 1997). Teacher empowerment, such as involvement in decision-making over different school matters, has also been reported to constitute a measure of job satisfaction (Sweetland & Hoy, 2000). In a study in charter schools in the US, Bulkley and Fisler (2002) reported that teachers in charter schools felt more empowered and enjoyed higher levels of job satisfaction than their counterparts at public schools. On the contrary, several factors may contribute to teachers' dissatisfaction with their jobs. For example, according to Papanastasiou and Zembylas (2005, p. 150), job dissatisfaction among teachers is brought about by "work overload, poor pay, and perceptions of how teachers are viewed by society." Other variables, such as supervisors' support and time restrictions, in a school context, can affect job satisfaction. In spite of the conflicting findings regarding the relationship between years of experience and job satisfaction, experience has been shown, in some studies, to be negatively correlated with job satisfaction, with more experienced teachers experiencing lower levels of job satisfaction than newcomers (MacMillan & Ma, 1999; Van Houtte, 2006). In the context of language schools, and in the Middle-East, Tanriogen and Iscan (2016) studied the effect of distributive leadership behavior of language schools' principals, including respect and trust, on the instructors' job satisfaction in Turkey. They reported that the distributive leadership behaviors of principals influenced the job satisfaction among instructors significantly.

In the Iranian context and in language schools, Razavipour and Yousefi (2017) examined the association between organizational climate, i.e. the surrounding atmosphere and members' relationships, and English teachers' job satisfaction. They found teachers both at private and public schools to be dissatisfied with their jobs as English teachers and reported a positive relationship between the climate of language school and job satisfaction of the teachers. In a similar vein, Rezaee et al. (2020), in their study on the role of the Iranian school organizational

climate on English teachers' job satisfaction, found a significant positive association between the school organizational climate and the teachers' job satisfaction. In another study in the Iranian context, Khany and Tazik (2015) reported similar findings. They investigated the relationship between psychological empowerment, trust and job satisfaction among 217 English teachers. They reported that psychological empowerment was directly associated with job satisfaction; however, trust was indirectly correlated with job satisfaction through psychological empowerment.

Several studies have attempted to investigate the possible relationships between age, gender, and job satisfaction. Khan et al. (2018) found that age significantly affected teachers' job satisfaction. Moreover, another research study analyzed the effect of sex on the satisfaction of teachers. According to the results of the study, the effect of gender on satisfaction was significant in males (Aydin et al., 2012). Furthermore, as regards the teaching experience as being one of the demographic characteristics, Mansfield et al. (2016) stated that novice teachers with less experience were more unsatisfied with their jobs, which led to a lower likelihood of staying in their jobs. Topchyan and Woehler (2020) also suggested in their study on the effects of teacher gender and experience on their job satisfaction that female teachers were more involved in their jobs than men were, although no significant effect was found for the teaching experience.

### ***Public and private schools in Iran***

The ministry of education in Iran formulates and prescribes school curricula and syllabi at public schools, and English is no exception in this regard. The syllabi and the textbooks are designed and mandated by the government, and no school can introduce its own syllabus or textbook. However, private schools act rather autonomously in their choice of syllabus and methodology. They introduce their own textbooks, which are commercially produced and internationally used textbooks, such as *Touchstone*, *American English File*, *Headway*, etc. English courses in public schools are deemed ineffective by learners since the focus of school English courses is only on developing vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing ability based on a grammar-translation framework. The courses are considered futile by students due to inadequate focus on conversational fluency. There is no emphasis on developing speaking skills at public schools in Iran, and this has rendered school English courses unfavorable and less than useful to many Iranians. Therefore, private language schools, which are autonomous and work for profit, are popular, especially because they pay a great deal of attention to developing the learners' communicative capacities. Therefore, there are two different settings for learning English: a) public schools and b) private language schools. What makes these two settings different are the teachers who work in these two settings. School teachers are relatively older and are paid higher by the government. The private school teachers are typically younger since they are mostly university students or have recently graduated and receive inadequate pay in the private sector. These issues have led to more qualified EFL teaching in private language, where teachers are more energetic and hold master's or doctoral degrees. Although research in the U.S. (see Alt & Peter, 2002; Perie, Baker, & Whitener, 1997) has shown that private school teachers are more satisfied with their jobs than public school teachers, the situation is reversed in Iran. The pay is inadequate (about one dollar per class), such that some teachers complain of being manipulated.

Literature has extensively compared public and private language schools on different measures, such as effectiveness, accountability, student achievement, and job satisfaction (Coleman et al., 1982; Mokhtar et al., 2023). The focus of such comparisons, especially in developing countries, has often been on the issues of the relative effectiveness of private schools or on the payment and funding. However, a few studies have examined job satisfaction among teachers in this context. Some studies (Afshar & Doosti, 2016; Sayadi, 2016; Tsang, 1995) have found private schools to be more effective than public schools regarding both cost and quality. The situation in Iran is no exception in this regard. Private language schools are deemed by Iranians more effective than

public schools, and a considerable number of school students prefer to attend private language schools to learn English.

As noted, in the Iranian context, state school EFL teachers tend to be more satisfied with their jobs due to the support they receive from state organizations. This triggers a trusted relationship among these teachers and organizations. However, we cannot put forward the same idea in the case of EFL teachers working in private language schools in Iran. In other parts of the world, private teachers expressed their satisfaction with teaching and trust on the organization (Alt & Peter, 2002). The same research trend has rarely been pursued in Iranian private language schools. It is quite uncertain whether Iranian private teachers hold the same satisfaction with their jobs and trust their colleagues and organizations. As far as we know based on experiential and contextual evidence, private language teachers seem not be happy with their jobs in Iran due to several possible factors, such as inadequate payment. Given these potential issues in Iranian private language schools, it becomes vital to examine these teachers' satisfaction and trust issues based on empirical evidence to obtain more conclusive results.

### *The present study's conceptual framework*

The present study examined the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational trust and whether demographic characteristics, such as teachers' age, experience, and gender, can moderate this relationship. A moderation analysis confirmed the interactional effect of age, gender, and experience on the relationship between the variables. Furthermore, evidence reveals the role gender, age, and teaching experience played in the relationship between job satisfaction and interpersonal trust and their interaction with those variables (see Literature above). In this study, the direct relationship between job satisfaction and interpersonal trust is assessed, and the indirect effects of gender, age, and teaching experience on that relationship are evaluated. The conceptual framework of the present study drawn from the pertinent literature, which is warranted for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) (Kline, 2016), is sketched in Figure 1.

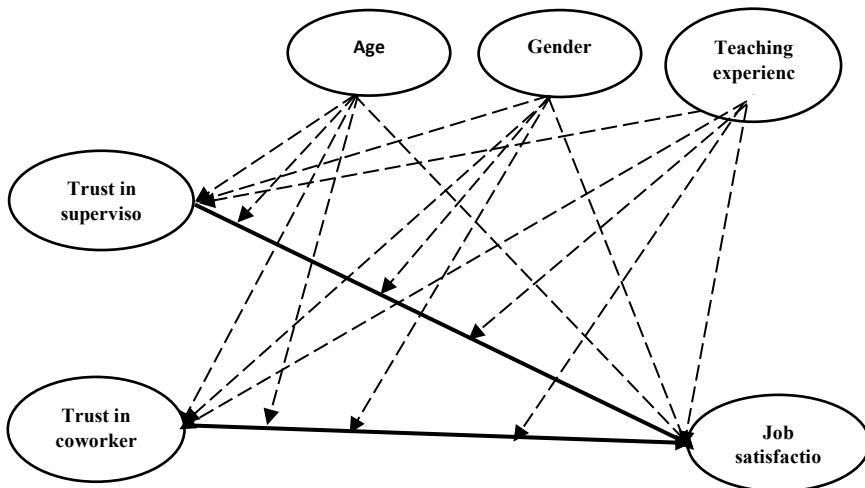


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

## Method

### *Design and participants*

This study adopted an ex-post-facto design. Quantitative data were collected to obtain an accurate image of the relationship between interpersonal trust and job satisfaction among English teachers. The variables were interpersonal trust and job satisfaction, and three moderators, including gender, age, and teaching experience, were considered in this study. We selected English teachers from several language schools in Urmia, Iran, as the target sample through convenience sampling, which comprised 42 male and 154 female teachers. The participating teachers' age ranged from 19 to 44 years. In order to observe research ethics, we first contacted the institutional managers to gain primary permission for our data collection and made sure whether they had any specific ethical procedures for research issues. Considering these points, we ensured that the teachers' participation was voluntary, and they were informed about all aspects of the trial orally. Moreover, we ensured our participants that their contribution would be kept confidential. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 206 English teachers who participated in the present study.

Table 1  
*Demographic profile of participants*

	Characteristics (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male (43)	21%
	Female (163)	79%
Age (Years)	19-31 (105)	61%
	32-42 (101)	34%
Teaching experience	High experience (60)	30%
	Low experience (146)	70%

### *Instruments*

#### *The job satisfaction scale*

Spector (1985) developed a job satisfaction scale in order to measure child welfare workers' feelings of contentment with their careers. The internal consistency reliability of this questionnaire was reported to be 0.87. This scale consists of 36 items, a nine-item scale with each facet, and each item has six choices ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The nine facets are as follows: Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, Contingent Rewards (performance-based rewards), Operating Procedures (required rules and procedures), Coworkers, Nature of Work, and Communication. Due to the limited scope of the present study, however, the focus was mainly on job satisfaction as a unitary whole, and the facets were not considered for analysis.

#### *Interpersonal trust scale*

Trust in supervisors was measured using four items borrowed from Podsakoff et al. (1990). Due to contextual differences, the word 'managers' in Podsakoff et al. (1990) items was replaced with 'supervisors.' The four items incorporated the following: (1) "I feel quite confident that my supervisor will always try to treat me fairly," (2) "My supervisor would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving workers," (3) "I have complete faith in the integrity of my supervisor," and (4) "I would support my supervisor in almost any emergency." The reliability index of trust in supervisors was considerably high (Cronbach's = .84). Trust in coworkers was measured using the four items borrowed from Cook and Wall (1980). The items are as follows: (1) "If I got into difficulties at work I know my workmates would try and help me out," (2) "Most of my workmates can be relied upon to do as they say they will do," (3) "I have full confidence in the

skills of my workmates," and (4) "Most of my fellow workers would get on with their work even if supervisors were not around." The reliability index of the four items was highly satisfactory (Cronbach's = .87).

### *Data analysis*

The data were analyzed using a common method bias (Harman one-factor (HO-F)) analysis and variance inflation factor (VIF). All analyses were carried out in SPSS 24.0 for descriptive analysis, and HO-F and SmartPLS3.2.7 were employed to run Partial Least Squares, Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), and VIF for small sample size and non-normal data. The PLS-SEM required a suitable sample size that is ten times more than the highest number of model construct items (Peng & Lai, 2012). This study incorporated five latent variables. Thus, to reach a power of 0.90, a minimum sample size of 94 was required, with a medium effect size of  $f^2$  (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). The data were gleaned from 206 participants that could create a power of 0.95, and the number of the sample was higher than the minimum size. The multigroup analysis was utilized by Henseler's Multi Group Analysis (MGA) due to the non-parametric SEM (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). In this study, MGA was employed to specify the effect of age, gender, and teaching experience as moderators on job satisfaction. In accordance with the guidelines provided by Hair et al. (2017), measurement invariance was assessed besides convergent and discriminant validity.

## **Results**

### *Model Assessment*

In this study, we proposed a model consisting of interpersonal trust and job satisfaction as the main variables to detect possible associations. The former involved trust in supervisors and coworkers. Our moderators were age, gender, and teaching experience. Table 2 sketches the results of the proposed model assessment.

Table 2  
*Measurement model assessment results*

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Loading</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>
INTT (TIS)	TIS1	0.811	0.826	0.551
	TIS2	0.853		
	TIS3	0.914		
	TIS4	0.890		
INTT (TICW)	TICW1	0.796	0.817	0.539
	TICW2	0.814		
	TICW3	0.908		
	TICW4	0.823		
SJ	SJ1	0.703	0.712	0.503
	SJ2	0.718		
	SJ3	0.806		
	SJ4	0.721		
	SJ5	0.824		
	SJ6	0.808		
	SJ7	0.784		
	SJ8	0.810		
	SJ9	0.722		
	SJ10	0.781		
	SJ11	0.757		
	SJ12	0.835		
	SJ13	0.767		



SJ14	0.701
SJ15	0.694
SJ16	0.740
SJ17	0.813
SJ18	0.719
SJ19	0.703
SJ20	0.707
SJ21	0.694
SJ22	0.731
SJ23	0.710
SJ24	0.692
SJ25	0.719
SJ26	0.758
SJ27	0.580
SJ28	0.736
SJ29	0.710
SJ30	0.702
SJ31	0.687
SJ32	0.715
SJ33	0.721
SJ34	0.734
SJ35	0.727
SJ36	0.751

Note: INT(TIS): Interpersonal trust (trust in supervisors); INTTIC-W: Interpersonal trust (trust in co-workers); JS: job satisfaction

Table 2 shows that the indicator loadings on their constructs are between 0.6 and 0.7. Table 2 presented the AVE of the constructs to be lower than 0.5. For discriminant validity (DV), the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) was measured as a superior criterion than the former Fornell-Larcker and cross-loading criteria, which work better with large sample sizes and high heterogeneous loading patterns. Table 3 shows discriminant validity analysis for the model proposed in this study.

Table 3  
*Discriminant validity results*

	TIS	TI-CW	JS
TIS			
TIC-W	0.721		
JS	0.638	0.561	

Table 3 shows that the variables are lower, with a value of 0.721. These results disclose that there are no discriminant validity issues in this model. As recommended by Hair et al. (2018), the structural analysis warrants examining the presence of multicollinearity through the VIF and hypothesis contrast of the structural model by resampling 5,000 sub-samples. In order to assess multicollinearity for job satisfaction items,  $VIF > 3.3$  and even  $>2.5$  prove acceptable. The VIF value was 2.82, and there were no multicollinearity issues in this model.

### ***Structural model assessment and the moderating effect***

The moderating effect was assessed using two non-parametric methods: Henseler-MGA and the permutation-based method (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017). The teaching experience and age had to be transformed into a categorical variable, while no further refinement was required for gender. This technique was used through the median split method in SPSS.

The results made manifest that there were significant differences between men (path coefficient = 0.214) and women (path coefficient = 0.580) in the association between trust in supervisors and job satisfaction (TIS→JS hypothesis; see Table 4).

Table 4  
Moderating effect of gender

Structural path	Path Coefficients Original (Male)	Path Coefficients Original (Female)	Path Coefficients Original Difference (Male-Female)	Path Coefficients Permutation Mean Difference (Male-Female)	2.5%	97.5%	Permutation p-Values	Acceptance
TIS→JS	0.214	0.580	0.566	0.065	0.551	0.527	0.041	Yes
TIC-W→JS	0.209	0.314	0.100	-0.002	-0.412	0.371	0.542	No

As Tables 5 and 6 show, there are significant differences between low and high age and low and high teaching experience in affecting the relationship between interpersonal trust (in TIS → J.S. and TIC-W→JS hypothesis) and job satisfaction in the permutation method ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results stipulated that the path strength of high age and teaching experience level were stronger than that of a low age and teaching experience.

Table 5  
Moderating effect of Age

Structural path	Path Coefficients Original (High Age)	Path Coefficients Original (Low Age)	Path Coefficients Original Difference (High-Low Age)	Path Coefficients Permutation Mean Difference (High-Low Age)	2.5%	97.5%	Permutation p-Values	Acceptance
TIS→JS	0.591	-0.319	1.106	0.130	-0.244	1.319	0.038	Yes
TIC-W→JS	0.484	0.293	0.862	0.136	0.237	0.368	0.033	Yes

Table 6  
Moderating effect of teaching Experience

Structural path	Path Coefficients Original (High Experience)	Path Coefficients Original (Low experience)	Path Coefficients Original Difference (High-Low Experience)	Path Coefficients Permutation Mean Difference (High-Low Experience)	2.5%	97.5%	Permutation p-Values	Acceptance
TIS→JS	0.675	0.617	1.201	0.132	-0.298	1.4812	0.025	Yes
TIC-W→JS	0.707	-0.272	1.113	0.204	-0.244	1.723	0.023	Yes

## Discussion

This study was a pioneering investigation that zeroed in on job satisfaction, interpersonal trust, gender, age, and experience among English teachers. We probed the roles of gender, age, and experience in mediating the association between trust and job satisfaction among English teachers in private language schools. The findings yielded a positive association between English teachers' interpersonal trust and their job satisfaction and illustrated that age and experience moderated the relationship between the two variables. We found that teachers with a higher degree of interpersonal trust were more satisfied with their jobs. The findings of this study made manifest that there were significant differences between male and female English teachers as regards the relationship between trust in supervisors and job satisfaction. The results were in line with the findings of the previous studies in the Iranian context, such as Khany and Tazik (2015) and

Rezaee et al. (2020). Our findings are similar to those of Topchyan and Woehler (2020), who worked on teacher work engagement based on gender orientations and reported that female teachers were more engaged in their jobs than males. Hence, the findings of this study and its similarities with some other studies encourage us to consider the gender factor to render a satisfactory workplace environment. More specifically, language schools need to realize that gender plays a significant role in successfully managing the school.

In addition, the study investigated the role of age in relation to interpersonal trust and job satisfaction. The results of the study made it evident that the path strength of high age was stronger compared to the one in low ages. Likewise, the findings on the role of age were akin to other studies, such as the study by Piosik et al. (2019), which reached the conclusion that age affected job satisfaction. Hence, based on our findings, it is implied that considering teachers' age an effective factor in job satisfaction and interpersonal trust could benefit language schools and help reshape the policy of employment, and eventually, more committed teachers might remain in the educational system. Moreover, our findings were similar to the study by Khan et al. (2018), who documented that age significantly moderated the association between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. As in the current study, the relationship between interpersonal trust and job satisfaction was demonstrated, and the results highlighted the role of trust among the staff in a language school, which leads to job satisfaction among teachers. Thus, in due course, a safe environment could be provided in the workplace. We further found that older teachers were more satisfied with their jobs and their workplace, probably due to their difficulty in searching and finding other alternatives. On top of that, older teachers have reached a more stable life and rarely take the risk of quitting their jobs and looking for another. Hence, it seems that school managers might choose to rely on older teachers more than younger instructors. However, these findings do not mean that age is not necessarily the determining factor in job satisfaction or organizational trust. Instead, we think that young instructors may require more or different challenges and responsibilities, which prepare them for future endeavours. We believe that younger teachers should be exposed to various challenges and practices to increase their employment opportunities, leading to job satisfaction and organizational trust.

However, the result of our study regarding the role of teaching experience in job satisfaction and interpersonal trust contradicted the previous literature, including the studies by Van Houtte (2006) and MacMillan & Ma (1999). In a series of comprehensive surveys, these researchers intended to find out possible roles of experience in teachers' job satisfaction and demonstrated that the two constructs were negatively correlated, such that teachers with more teaching experience were not adequately satisfied with their jobs. In contrast, Topchyan and Woehler (2020) used a job satisfaction scale and reported a negligible role for experience in encouraging job satisfaction. In this vein, Struyven and Vanthournout (2014) surveyed teachers' reasons for attrition. Their findings showed that teachers' experience strongly predicted motives of attrition. Hence, experienced teachers were more committed to their institutions. Likewise, in the current research, the results showed that teaching experience was correlated with job satisfaction and interpersonal trust. It seems that literature is teeming with conflicting findings vis-à-vis the role of experience in moderating job satisfaction among teachers, warranting further research in this arena.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of the present study yielded a positive relationship between interpersonal trust and job satisfaction. We illustrated that age and experience moderated the relationship between the two variables. It seems that teachers with a higher degree of interpersonal trust are more satisfied with their jobs. In addition, teachers' age and teaching experience should be recognized

simultaneously, and there needs to be a distinction between experienced and inexperienced teachers. Teachers' job satisfaction and interpersonal trust ought to be considered essential to achieving optimal language school outcomes. We think that school authorities should devote attention to teachers' job satisfaction and additionally provide an atmosphere where teachers cooperate, trust each other, and rely on their supervisors. In addition, in a workplace where teachers trust and help each other in many circumstances, organizations can reach their objectives and perform effectively. In this case, teachers are unanimous and are aware that there is neither competition nor disloyalty. Furthermore, managers can encourage teachers' participation and offer positive feedback and, consequently, improve organizational commitment and induce organizational productivity. Moreover, it is beneficial for the curriculum designers to utilize the findings of this study in order to design their syllabi accordingly and eventually enhance the effectiveness of language schools. Keeping these issues in mind and integrating them into the workplace might pave the way to achieving higher-order goals and outcomes across schools.

We have several limitations to note in this study. Although organizational commitment has three subscales, we did not measure them separately. Measuring the subscales of commitment warrants further research to gain deeper insight into the issue. Moreover, our study was purely quantitative, and we could not strengthen our finding through participants' elaborative responses. Future research studies are recommended to investigate other variables, such as teacher income or fringe benefits. Such aspects should be studied in association with job satisfaction and trust, and whether they impact teachers' job satisfaction could be an upcoming research line. Additionally, we recommend that future researchers add qualitative and narrative inquires to their studies and hold interview sessions with language teachers to gain detailed insights on satisfaction and trust. For example, juxtaposing job satisfaction with other factors, such as teacher autonomy and wellbeing, could provide fruitful results in educational research. Other demographic variables, including teachers' race, English proficiency, and experience abroad, might be of interest for future research in teacher job satisfaction and trust. These lines can be followed in Iran where concepts like trust and satisfaction do not seem to be fully understood in language teaching fields.

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