



EXPLORING TEACHING SATISFACTION OF PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM TURKEY

Hilal Büyükgöze¹, Feyza Gün

Abstract: The current paper primarily investigates teaching satisfaction of teachers working in public high schools of Ankara. The latter aim of this study is to determine whether teachers' satisfaction levels vary in relation to some demographic variables such as gender, education, type of high school, tenure, marital status, and membership to an educational union. The study group consists of 337 (182 female and 155 male) high school teachers from eight public high schools located in Ankara. The data collection tool was 'Teaching Satisfaction Scale-TSS' developed by Ho and Au (2006). The data was analyzed by utilizing *t* test, ANOVA, and LSD test of post hoc tests. The construct validity of the scale was tested by confirmatory factor analysis on AMOS 23.0 program. For the reliability of the scale, Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated, and the result verified that the TSS is a reliable assessment tool for evaluating teaching satisfaction. Further, the implications of teaching satisfaction in educational organizations is discussed based on the findings of the study.

Key words: teaching satisfaction; public sector; high school; Turkey

1. Theoretical Background

Locke (1976) defines job satisfaction as 'a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (p. 1304)' in his *Range of Affect Theory*. Whereas Vroom (1982) focused on employees' job roles, and defined job satisfaction as 'employees' affective orientation toward their present job roles (cited in Worrell, 2004, p. 11)'. Employee satisfaction has been intended to be investigated through various theories and models such as Herzberg's (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory, Adams's (1965) Equity Theory, Locke's (1976) Affect Theory, Hackman and Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristics Model, Staw, Bell and Clausen's (1986) Dispositional Approach, and Higgins's (1999) Discrepancy Theory.

A great body of studies have conducted over 50 years, and the factors influencing employees' satisfaction have captured researchers' attention. Job satisfaction have been reported to be positively correlated with good citizenship behaviours (Bateman & Organ, 1983), organizational commitment (Philips, 1994), pay satisfaction (Bolarin, 1993), task clarity and career commitment (Adeyemo & Aremu, 1999), personal self-efficacy beliefs (Buluç, & Demir, 2015), job performance (Büyükgöze, & Özdemir, 2017; Chamundeswari, 2013; Usop, Askandar, Langguyan-Kadtong, & Usop, 2013), positive psychological capital (Büyükgöze, & Büyükgöze-Kavas, 2016), facilitating work conditions (Schneider, 2003), positive affectivity (Agho, Price, & Mueller, 1992), leader-member exchange (Özdemir, & Büyükgöze, 2015), and work motivation (Tella, Ayeni, & Popoola, 2007). However, lower levels of employee satisfaction have been found to correlate with intention to leave (Coomber, & Barriball, 2007), job stress (Bemana, Moradi, Ghasemi, Taghavi, & Ghayoor, 2013), anxiety (Ferguson, Frost, & Hall, 2012), retention (Myers-Giacometti, 2005), and burnout syndrome (Ogresta, Rusac, & Zorec, 2008).

¹ Corresponding author

It is clear that employee satisfaction has both individual and organizational reflections. Accordingly, in the current study, it was primarily aimed to investigate the overall teaching satisfaction level of the high school teachers, and secondly to figure out whether participants' satisfaction level differ in relation to their gender, educational background, type of high school, tenure, marital status, and membership to an educational union.

2. Method

In the current study, the quantitative research approach was adopted, and quantitative research methods was utilized throughout the study.

Participants

The study was conducted in eight public high schools. The study group consists of 337 high school teachers (182 female and 155 male). Concerning the marital status, it was investigated that 263 (78 %) of the participants are married, and the rest 74 (22 %) are single. A majority of the participants (44,8 %) have 21 and more years of experience, 129 (38,3 %) of them have 11 to 20 years of experience, and the rest 57 (16,9 %) have 1 to 10 years of professional experience in educational settings. Of the participants, 272 (80,7 %) have a bachelor's degree, and 65 (19,3 %) of them have a graduate education degree. Regarding membership to an educational union, 183 (54,3 %) of them are members of educational unions, whereas 154 (45,7 %) of them are non-members. 248 (73,6) of them work in vocational and technical high schools, while 89 (26,4) of them work in Anatolian high schools.

Data Collection Tool

To measure the overall teaching satisfaction of the participants, "Teaching Satisfaction Scale-TSS", developed by Ho and Au (2006) was used. The scale consists of five items. The options of the items range from "(1) totally disagree" and to "(7) totally agree". Participants get minimum 5 points and maximum 35 points as a total score. Low scores point to lower levels of teaching satisfaction, and high scores indicate higher levels of satisfaction of the participants. The sample items are "In most ways, being a teacher is close to my ideal", and "So far I have gotten the important things I want to be a teacher".

The original Cronbach alpha value of the TSS was reported to be .79. Within the current study, the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be .86. Büyüköztürk (2011) states that Cronbach alpha values above .70 is enough to be considered reliable. The single dimensional construct of the scale was tested via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on AMOS (Arbuckle, 2006) in 23.0 version. The fit indices obtained from the CFA are presented below; [$\chi^2=30,65$; $df = 5$; $\chi^2/df = 6,13$; sRMR = .038; RMSEA = .124; AGFI = .89; GFI = .96; NFI = .97; CFI = .98; IFI = .98]. The fit indices were found to be lower than the acceptable values. The modification suggestions were taken into consideration, and a modification was made between item number 1 and item number 2. After that, a CFA was conducted again. The fit indices of the second CFA are as follows; [$\chi^2= 10,55$; $df = 4$; $\chi^2/df = 2,63$; RMSEA= .07; sRMR= .020; GFI=.99; NFI=.97; CFI=.99; IFI=.99; AGFI=.95]. The ratio of the chi-square to the degree of freedom is expected to be lower than 5.00 (Kline, 2005). In accordance with these references, it can be stated that the one dimensional construct of the TSS was tested, and verified by confirmatory factor analysis. Therefore, the TSS is adequately reliable and valid data collection tool for measuring teachers' teaching satisfaction.

Procedure

The forms were distributed and collected during the spring semester of 2015 academic year with the permission of the school principals. Participation was held voluntarily.

Data analysis

The data gathered within the research was initially examined in terms of distribution, homogeneity, missing data, and homoscedasticity. After that, for the demographic variables with two sub-categories, *t* test was conducted. The variables with three or more sub-categories, ANOVA and LSD tests were performed. All the calculations were made via IBM SPSS 18.0 version.

The construct validity of the scale used within the study was tested by confirmatory factor analysis conducted by IBM AMOS 23.0. For the reliability of the scale, Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated.

3. Results

Within the scope of the current study, the overall teaching satisfaction of the high school teachers was investigated. The mean and standard deviation scores of the participants in relation to their teaching satisfaction were presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation in relation to participants' teaching satisfaction

Variable	Mean	SD
Teaching satisfaction	4,913	1,279

As can be seen in Table 1, the mean score for overall teaching satisfaction of the participant high school teachers was found to be 4,913. It is obvious that the participants have a moderate level of satisfaction. The highest mean belongs to the first item of the scale which is 'In most ways, being a teacher is close to my ideal ($M = 5,51$)', while the lowest mean belongs to the last item of the scale which is 'If I could choose my career over, I would change almost nothing ($M = 4,22$)'.

A *t* test was conducted to explore whether gender of participants has any significant influence on their teaching satisfaction level. The *t* test results are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. *t*-test results in relation to participants' gender

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p*
Gender	Female	182	5,029	1,260	335	1,806	,072
	Male	155	4,778	1,291			

* $p > .05$

As seen in Table 2, participant teachers' teaching satisfaction level does not differ in relation to their gender ($t_{(335)} = 1,806$, $p > .05$). This finding indicates that both male and female teachers have similar levels of teaching satisfaction.

A *t*-test was performed to investigate whether marital status of participants has any significant influence on their teaching satisfaction level. The *t* test results are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. *t*-test results in relation to participants' marital status

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p*
Marital status	Married	263	4,885	1,283	335	-,778	,437
	Single	74	5,016	1,268			

* $p > .05$

As can be seen in Table 3, high school teachers' satisfaction does not vary significantly concerning their marital status ($t_{(335)} = ,778$, $p > .05$). It can be concluded that both single and married teachers have the similar levels of teaching satisfaction.

A *t* test was conducted to explore whether educational background of participants has any significant influence on their teaching satisfaction level. The *t* test results are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. *t* test results in relation to participants' educational background

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p*
Education	Bachelor's degree	272	4,964	1,244	335	1,471	,142
	Master's degree	65	4,704	1,407			

* $p > .05$

As can be followed in Table 4, participants' teaching satisfaction level does not differ statistically significantly in relation to their educational background ($t_{(335)} = 1,471$, $p > .05$). However, the arithmetic average of teaching satisfaction among bachelor's degree owner teachers is higher than those who have master's or doctoral degrees.

A *t* test was conducted to determine whether membership to an educational union has any significant influence on participant high school teachers' satisfaction level. The *t* test results are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5. *t* test results in relation to participants' membership to a union

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p*
Membership to a union	Member	183	4,854	1,281	335	-,928	,354
	Non-member	154	4,984	1,277			

**p* > .05

As presented in Table 5, high school teachers' satisfaction level does not differ statistically significantly in relation to being a member of an educational union ($t_{(335)} = -,928, p > .05$). Thus, non-member teachers were found to have higher mean concerning their teaching satisfaction than teachers who are members of educational unions.

A *t* test was conducted to determine whether the type of high school has any significant influence on participant high school teachers' satisfaction level. The *t* test results are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6. *t* test results in relation to participants' type of high school

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p*
Type of high school	Vocational HS	248	4,884	1,263	335	-,701	,484
	Anatolian HS	89	4,995	1,324			

**p* > .05

As shown in Table 6, teachers' satisfaction level does not differ statistically significantly in relation to the type of high school they work ($t_{(335)} = -,701, p > .05$). However, teachers work in Anatolian high schools have higher levels of teaching satisfaction than those work in vocational and technical high schools.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and LSD test of post hoc tests were conducted to investigate whether teachers' satisfaction level varies in relation their tenure. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 7 below.

Table 7. ANOVA results in relation to participants' tenure

Variable	Groups	Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F	p*	Difference
Tenure	0-10 years	W. groups	7,122	2	3,561	2,192	,113	-
	11-20 years	Btw. groups	542,663	334	1,625			
	21+ years	Total	549,784	336				

**p* > .05

As presented in Table 7, participant high school teachers' teaching satisfaction level does not differ statistically significantly in relation to their years of experience in the profession ($F_{(2-334)} = 2,192, p > .05$).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The overall teaching satisfaction level of the participants was found to be moderate ($M = 4,913$). A good deal of studies conducted among primary, secondary and high school teachers have stated parallel findings in line with the current finding (Ağırdaş, 2014; Akkurt, 2008; Aykaç, 2010; Büyükgöze, & Özdemir, 2017; Çevik, 2010; Dönmez, 2014; DüNDAR, 2011; Eker, 2006; Elbirlik Tülek, 2008; Ersözülü, 2008; Güllü, 2009; Kale, 2007; Tan, 2012; Tunacan, 2005; Tüzemen Gençer, 2004; Umay, 2015). However, some researches have reported lower levels of teaching satisfaction for teachers (Çankaya, 2010; Özcan Ceran 2010), whereas some have found higher levels of satisfaction (Çek, 2011; Doğan, 2009).

Participant high school teachers' teaching satisfaction was found not to differ in relation to their gender. Many studies in literature have reported no significant gender difference concerning teacher satisfaction (Arslan, 2006; Aydın, 2006; Boğa, 2010; Canbay, 2007; Dilsiz, 2006; Eranıl, 2014; Gündoğdu, 2013; Gündüz, 2008; Kara, 2014; Kılıç, 2013; Kıvılcım, 2014; Mumcu, 2014; Öğretmen, 2013; Özcan, 2013; Sezer, 2015; Tan, 2012; Türkoğlu, 2008). On the other hand, male teachers have been reported to be more satisfied in educational settings than their female colleagues in a number of studies (Çankaya, 2010; Eker, 2006; Şekerli, 2013; Tunacan, 2005). Yet, a few have noted that female teachers are more satisfied than males (Ceyhun, 2009; Tomrukçu, 2010).

In the current study, the educational background of the high school teachers did not have any influence on their teaching satisfaction levels. Although some researches support this finding (Çek, 2011; Eser, 2010; Kale, 2007; Kılıç, 2013), many studies have reported that as participants' become more educated, their teaching satisfaction increases (Elbirlik Tülek, 2008; Gündoğdu, 2013; Kaya, 2005; Özcan, 2013). However, a few studies on teacher satisfaction have implied that teachers with graduate degrees are less satisfied than those with bachelor's degrees (Akkurt, 2008; Aydın, 2006; Canbay, 2007; Dilsiz, 2006; Türkoğlu, 2008).

The present study has also revealed that high school teachers' teaching satisfaction level did not vary in relation to their tenure. The findings stated in the studies of Dilsiz (2006), Kale (2007), Aydın (2006), Canbay (2007), Elbirlik Tülek (2008), Türkoğlu (2008), Boğa (2010), Tomrukçu (2010), Çek (2011), Eser (2010), Dündar (2011), Öğretmen (2013), Kılıç (2013), Özcan (2013), Kıvılcım (2014), Ağırdaş (2014), Eranıl (2014), and Mumcu (2014) are in accordance with our finding. Thus, a broad body of research have found that more experienced teachers have higher levels of teaching satisfaction than the less experienced ones (Akkurt, 2008; Arslan, 2006; Eker, 2006; Gündoğdu, 2013; Gündüz, 2008; Kaya, 2005; Koyutürk, 2014; Sezer, 2015; Tüzemen Gençler, 2004).

The findings of the current study have figured out that the type of high school in which the participants work do not lead to any significant difference in teaching satisfaction level of them. Öğretmen (2013) has also found that the type of high school of the participants do not cause any statistically significant difference on their satisfaction. However, Dilsiz (2006) stated that teachers working in vocational and technical high schools have lower levels of teaching satisfaction than those working in Anatolian or Science high schools.

Overall, taking into account the former studies on teaching satisfaction of teachers, we can conclude that high school teachers generally have moderate levels of teaching satisfaction in Turkey. Thereby, it can be suggested to conduct large scale studies to understand teacher motives in teaching profession, and then attempt to increase the drivers of job satisfaction both in their professional and private lives.

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Authors

Hilal Büyükgöze, Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey. E-mail: buyukgoze@hacettepe.edu.tr

Feyza Gün, Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey. E-mail: feyzagun7@gmail.com

