

Level of Teacher Job Satisfaction and Occupational Stress and their Associated Factors: A Web-Based Cross-Sectional Study in Nepal

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Abstract

Background: Stress impacts physical and psychological well-being, affecting mental and physical health. Job satisfaction, influenced by work conditions and relationships, is crucial for productivity and workplace success. In teaching, occupational stress is a significant concern, with workload, pay, and burnout affecting job satisfaction and educational outcomes. Balancing stress and job satisfaction is essential for improving teacher well-being, motivation, and educational quality. **Methods:** A web-based quantitative study conducted in Nepal from August to November 2024 compared job satisfaction and stress levels among teachers using a self-administered questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. Data were collected from 323 school teachers aged 20 to 59 teaching levels from Early Childhood Development (ECD) to Grade 12 through a snowball sampling method. **Results:** ECD teachers have significantly lower job satisfaction levels ($P = 0.036$), while all other teachers are less satisfied than permanent teachers ($P < 0.001$). Teachers with over 20 years of experience are more satisfied ($P = 0.008$), while those who have only passed the SLC exam are less satisfied ($P < 0.001$). Teachers aged over 45 experience significantly lower stress levels ($P < 0.001$). Teachers at the 10+2 quota ($P = 0.003$), secondary level ($P < 0.001$), and lower secondary level ($P = 0.035$) reported lower stress levels, while ECD teachers exhibited higher stress levels ($P = 0.002$). Teachers belonging to the Muslim, Christian, or Kirat religions reported higher stress levels ($P = 0.028$), and unmarried teachers also experienced higher stress levels ($P < 0.001$). **Conclusion:** Policy reforms should prioritize fair salaries, equitable promotions, and improved workload management to support high-stress groups and enhance the teaching environment.

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Introduction

Stress is a complex concept involving both physical and psychological elements, triggered by perceived threats or pressures (Schuler, 1980). It can lead to emotional strain and tension, affecting mental and physical health. While moderate stress can enhance performance, prolonged or excessive stress can result in health issues such as anxiety and depression (Andrews & Wilding, 2004; McEwen, 2008). Understanding stress is crucial for managing its impact on overall well-being. Job satisfaction reflects an individual's contentment and happiness with their job, influenced by factors like work nature, environment, and relationships (Judge, Zhang, & Glerum, 2020). It significantly affects productivity, retention, and organizational success. High job satisfaction leads to increased productivity, retention, and better workplace relationships. Creating a supportive environment through fair compensation and growth opportunities can enhance employee loyalty and productivity. Understanding job satisfaction is essential for building a successful workforce in every profession, including teaching (Irabor & Okolie, 2019).

Teacher stress is a critical issue that requires attention from educational institutions and policymakers (Kyriacou, 2001). Understanding the causes and effects of stress, as well as implementing effective coping strategies, can help teachers improve their well-being and create a positive learning environment for students (Austin, Shah, & Muncer, 2005). This is vital for both the health of educators and the educational outcomes of students. While there have been some improvements in teacher job satisfaction, challenges such as pay, workload, and burnout still need to be addressed to create a more positive teaching environment for the benefit of both teachers and students (Butt & Lance, 2005; Sahito & Vaisanen, 2020).

The relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among teachers is a significant area of research that directly influences educational outcomes and teacher retention (Ertürk, 2022). Teachers often face stressors such as role overload, ambiguity, and conflicts, which can lead to dissatisfaction. For example, teachers reported job satisfaction despite workplace stress during the pandemic-induced shift to distance learning (Papastylianou, Kaila, & Polychronopoulos, 2009). Levels of occupational stress are associated with reduced job satisfaction among school teachers, negatively affecting their work experience. Similarly, studies in Nepal have revealed that teachers experience mild to moderate job stress and are only partially satisfied with their jobs,

often due to unfavorable working conditions (Lama & Shrestha, 2020; Shrestha, 2019). Job satisfaction is a mediator between occupational stress and job performance, where high-stress levels lead to lower satisfaction and poorer performance outcomes (Rizwan, Waseem, & Bukhari, 2014) . Demographic factors such as gender, age, and teaching experience influence job stress and satisfaction levels, shaping teachers' perceptions of their work environments. High occupational stress can result in adverse outcomes like burnout, absenteeism, and decreased productivity, ultimately affecting student engagement and leading to undesirable behaviors.

Understanding the intricate relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction is essential for improving teacher well-being and effectiveness (Liu, Namaziandost, Rezai, & Heydarnejad, 2024). While some teachers manage to remain satisfied despite stress, reducing occupational stress can enhance job satisfaction and educational quality. High job satisfaction among teachers contributes to improved educational quality and enhanced job performance. It is closely linked to motivation and plays a crucial role in preventing professional burnout. Job satisfaction, defined as positive feelings toward work or the work environment, is vital for employee well-being and organizational success. Conversely, job dissatisfaction can lead to negative outcomes. The interplay between occupational stress and job satisfaction significantly shapes teachers' experiences and performance in the education sector (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). Addressing these factors is crucial for fostering teacher well-being and improving educational outcomes.

Teaching is a demanding profession, and the well-being of teachers is crucial for the success of any educational system. In Nepal, educators face challenges such as inadequate pay, limited professional development opportunities, scarce resources, and increasing workloads, leading to concerns about teacher job satisfaction and occupational stress. Limited research has been conducted to explore these issues comprehensively in the Nepalese context. The combined impact of job satisfaction and occupational stress on teaching effectiveness, student outcomes, and school performance is significant. When teachers are dissatisfied or stressed, it affects their morale, commitment, and productivity, leading to burnout, absenteeism, and turnover. These challenges are exacerbated by sociocultural factors, policy inadequacies, and evolving educational demands in Nepal.

This study aims to explore the factors influencing teacher job satisfaction and

occupational stress in Nepal, examining how these dynamics intersect and impact educators' professional lives. The findings will guide evidence-based interventions and policies to enhance teacher well-being and effectiveness in the Nepalese education system. The primary objective of this study is to explore the interrelationship between teacher job satisfaction and occupational stress in Nepal's educational context using a cross-sectional design. The study aims to identify key factors contributing to job satisfaction and stress levels among teachers and provide actionable insights for improving teacher well-being and effectiveness.

Methodology

Research Design: A web-based quantitative study was conducted in Nepal from August to November 2024 to compare job satisfaction and stress levels among teachers. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms to collect data using a web-based cross-sectional approach. The questionnaire focused on job satisfaction and stress levels to gather quantifiable data.

Participants: Data were collected from school teachers aged 20 to 59 teaching levels from Early Childhood Development (ECD) to Grade 12 in Nepal. Participants were recruited nationwide through an online survey shared via Google Forms. The inclusion criteria required participants to be teachers in government schools willing to complete the survey voluntarily.

Sample Size and Sampling: The study involved 323 school teachers who participated in an online survey using a snowball sampling method. Data collection lasted three months, with teachers encouraged to share the survey link with colleagues. Data collection ceased after the designated timeline to maintain study criteria.

Instruments: The survey included items from the Job Satisfaction Survey-2 (JSS-2) and demographic details. The JSS-2 is a reliable tool for assessing job satisfaction. Data analysis aimed to identify areas of satisfaction and improvement for teachers.

Data Collection Procedure: Data were collected through an online survey using Google Forms. An informed consent form was included, and teachers were asked to share the survey link with colleagues. Data collection continued until the survey deadline.

Data Analysis: Data were cleaned and processed in Microsoft Excel and SPSS. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were conducted to explore relationships between variables. SPSS Version 28 was used for statistical analysis.

Ethics: Data confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing responses and

removing identifiable information during data cleaning. Consent was obtained through the Google Form.

Strengths and limitations: This study has limitations for teachers who use Google links, which may limit the generalizability of the results to the entire teacher of Nepal. Additionally, the study was conducted by students to fulfill a master of education (M.Ed.) degree.

Results

Table 1 present the online survey results revealed that 62.5% of participants were male, while 37.5% were female. The majority of respondents (53.9%) were aged 31-45, followed by those under 30 (36.8%), and the rest were over 45 (9.3%). In terms of ethnicity, 53.3% were Brahmin/Chhetri, 23.2% were Janajati, 16.7% were Dalits, and 6.8% were Madeshi. The Hindu religion was predominant, with 78.3% of participants being Hindu. Regarding marital status, 76.2% were married, 22.6% were unmarried, and 1.2% were widowed. Family size was a significant factor, with 52.9% having five or fewer members. In terms of education, 41.8% had a bachelor's degree, 24.8% had completed intermediate/10+2, 18.9% had a master's degree, 9.3% had a lower qualification like SLC, and 5.3% had an MPhil degree. Regarding work experience, 77.4% had less than 10 years of experience, 15.8% had 10-20 years, and 6.8% had over 20 years. The majority of teachers were permanent (56.3%), followed by those on agreement (23.2%), relief (12.4%), and private resources (8%). In terms of teaching levels, more than half were at the primary level (50.2%), followed by lower secondary (25.2%), secondary (15.5%), ECD (6.2%), and 10+2 (3.1%).

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	Number	Percent
Sex		
Male	202	62.5
Female	121	37.5
Age		
Less than 30	119	36.8
31-45	174	53.9
45 and above	30	9.3
Working Level		
10+2 Quota	10	3.1

Secondary	50	15.5
Lower Secondary	81	25.1
Primary	162	50.2
ECD	20	6.2
Agreement		
Permanent (STATHAI)	182	56.3
Agreement (KARAR)	75	23.2
Relief (RAHAT)	40	12.4
Private resources (NIJI SHROT)	26	8.0
Work experience		
1-10 years	250	77.4
10-20 years	51	15.8
20 and more	22	6.8
Qualification		
SLC	30	9.3
Intermediate /10+2	80	24.8
Bachelors	135	41.8
Masters	61	18.9
Mphil	17	5.3
Caste		
Brahmin/Chhetri	172	53.3
Janajati	75	23.2
Dalit	54	16.7
Madeshei	22	6.8
Religion		
Hindu	253	78.3
Buddhist	41	12.7
Others(Muslim,Christian,Kirat)	29	8.0
Marital status		
Unmarried	73	22.6
Married	246	76.2
Widower	4	1.2
Family member in the household		
Less than 5	171	52.9
5 and more	152	47.1
Total	323	100.0

Table 2 present that 28.8% of participants were dissatisfied with their salaries, while only 8.4% were highly satisfied. Around three-fourths were moderately satisfied with the promotion system. ECD teachers (60%) and those from private resources (53.8%) expressed high dissatisfaction with promotion opportunities. A significant number had average satisfaction with supervision, with over 10% expressing high dissatisfaction. 28.5% had low satisfaction, 22.7% had average satisfaction, and only 9.6% were highly satisfied. Permanent teachers and those with lower education levels showed higher satisfaction. 34.7% reported low satisfaction, 25.5% reported average satisfaction, and 8% reported high satisfaction. Only 5% were highly satisfied with their work nature. Teachers in the 10+2 quota showed extremely high satisfaction. Approximately one-fourth were not satisfied at all, while low satisfaction, average satisfaction, and high satisfaction were in similar proportions. Around 30% had average or low job satisfaction, while 8% were extremely satisfied and 13% were not satisfied at all. 29.4% reported low or no stress, while only 3.7% experienced extremely high occupational stress. ECD teachers reported the highest stress levels at 10%. 11.8% experienced extremely high occupational pleasure, with a higher proportion among widowers (50%) and those with only SLC education (20%). 5.7% experienced extremely high stress, and 8.75% had high stress due to student and teacher misbehavior. Dalit teachers with

Table 2: Distribution of Job Satisfactions and Occupational Stress

SN	Statement	Not at all	Low	Average	High	Extremely High
		N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)
Job Satisfaction						
1	Satisfied with payment/ salary	93(28.8)	63(19.5)	73(22.6)	67(20.7)	27(8.4)
2	Satisfied with promotion	42(13.0)	79(24.5)	96(29.7)	68(21.1)	38(11.8)
3	Satisfaction with supervision	44(13.6)	83(25.7)	120(37.2)	50(15.5)	26(8.0)
4	Satisfied with contingent rewards/benefits	45(13.9)	92(28.5)	88(27.2)	67(20.7)	31(9.6)
5	Satisfied with operating co-workers' conditions	34(10.5)	112(34.7)	82(25.4)	69(21.4)	26(8.0)
6	Satisfied with the nature of the work	62(19.2)	83(25.7)	109(33.7)	53(16.4)	16(5.0)

7	Satisfied with communication with others	78(24.1)	72(22.3)	75(23.2)	80(24.8)	18(5.6)
8	General satisfaction with their work	42(13.0)	94(29.1)	97(30.0)	64(19.8)	26(8.0)
Occupational Stress						
1	General occupational stress	95(29.4)	95(29.4)	81(25.1)	40(12.4)	12(3.7)
2	Stress about workload	85(26.3)	66(20.4)	92(28.5)	42(13.0)	38(11.8)
3	Stress about students' misbehavior	114(35.3)	100(31.0)	63(19.5)	28(8.7)	18(5.6)
4	Stress with other school teachers	127(39.3)	108(33.4)	51(15.8)	19(5.9)	18(5.6)
	Stress about the lack of classroom resources	129(39.9)	106(32.8)	52(16.1)	20(6.2)	16(5.0)
6	Stress based on level of job	155(48.0)	72(22.3)	60(18.6)	22(6.8)	14(4.3)
7	Stress overwhelmed by the amount of work needed to complete	124(38.4)	103(31.9)	48(14.9)	42(13.0)	6(1.9)
8	Stress challenging to managing student behavior	157(48.6)	103(31.9)	51(15.8)	6(1.9)	6(1.9)

SLC education and those in ECD settings had higher stress levels. Teachers aged 45 and above were more likely to experience extremely high stress. 4.3% reported extremely high-stress levels, and 6.8% reported high stress levels due to job satisfaction. 10+2 quota and those with an MPhil education showed extremely high-stress levels related to job satisfaction. Only a small percentage reported high-stress levels due to managing student behavior, with ECD and Muslim teachers finding it challenging

Table 3: Association of Job Satisfaction Level with Socio-demographic variable

Socio-demographic variable	Coef.(B)	P Value	95% CI	
			Lower limit	Upper limit
Sex				

Male (Ref)	1	-	-	-
Female	-0.909	0.083	-1.937	0.120
Age				
31-45 years (Ref)	1	-	-	-
Less than 30	-0.229	0.672	-1.291	0.833
45 and above	1.890	0.036	0.125	3.655
Working Level				
Primary (Ref)	1	-	-	-
10+2 Quota	1.670	0.241	-1.129	4.470
Secondary	-0.070	0.922	-1.460	1.320
Lower Secondary	0.883	0.138	-0.286	2.052
ECD	-5.230	<0.001	-7.266	-3.193
Agreement				
Permanent (STATHAI) (Ref)	1	-	-	-
Agreement (KARAR)	-5.783	<0.001	-6.738	-4.828
Relief (RAHAT)	-3.048	<0.001	-4.264	-1.832
Private resources (NIJI SHROT)	-7.885	<0.001	-9.344	-6.425
Work experience				
1-10 years (Ref)	1	-	-	-
10-20 years	1.182	0.089	-0.182	2.547
20 and more	2.664	0.008	0.689	4.638
Qualification				
Bachelors (Ref)	1	-	-	-
SLC	-3.359	<0.001	-5.133	-1.585
Intermediate /10+2	-0.176	0.780	-1.416	1.064
Masters	0.117	0.866	-1.239	1.473
Mphil	1.439	0.212	-0.823	3.700
Caste				
Brahmin/Chhetri (Ref)	1	-	-	-
Janajati	0.231	0.715	-1.014	1.476
Dalit	-0.594	0.406	-1.997	0.809
Madeshei	0.561	0.588	-1.476	2.598
Religion				
Hindu(Ref)	1	-	-	-
Buddhist	0.093	0.835	-0.787	0.974
Others(Muslim,Christian,Kirat)	-0.934	0.268	-2.591	0.722
Marital status				
Married(Ref)	1	-	-	-

Unmarried	-1.556	0.010	-2.743	-0.368
Widower	0.081	0.972	-4.410	4.572
Family members in the household				
Less than 5(Ref)	1	-	-	-
5 and more	-0.716	0.159	-1.715	0.283

Source: Web-based survey 2024

Table 3 presents the association between various independent variables and job satisfaction levels. ECD teachers' working level is significantly lower ($P = 0.036$). In agreement with this, all other teachers are less satisfied than permanent teachers ($P < 0.001$). Teachers who have worked for more than 20 years are more satisfied ($P = 0.008$). Additionally, teachers who have only passed the SLC exam are less satisfied ($P < 0.001$).

Table 4: Association of Occupational Stress with Socio-demographic Variables

Socio-demographic variable	Coef. (B)	P Value	95% CI	
			Lower limit	Upper limit
Sex				
Male (Ref)	1	-	-	-
Female	-0.372	0.462	-1.365	0.622
Age				
31-45 years (Ref)	1	-	-	-
Less than 30	0.402	0.426	-0.591	1.395
45 and above	-3.803	<0.001	-5.454	-2.153
Working Level				
Primary (Ref)	1	-	-	-
10+2 Quota	-4.015	0.003	-6.646	-1.384
Secondary	-3.355	<0.001	-4.661	-2.048
Lower Secondary	-1.185	0.035	-2.284	-0.086
ECD	3.085	0.002	1.171	4.999
Agreement				
Permanent (STATHAI) (Ref)	1	-	-	-
Agreement (KARAR)	2.757	<0.001	1.645	3.869
Relief (RAHAT)	0.902	0.211	-0.513	2.317
Private resources (NIJI SHROT)	4.846	<0.001	3.147	6.545

Work experience				
1-10 years(Ref)	1	-	-	-
10-20 years	-1.450	0.028	-2.744	-0.156
20 and more	-3.730	<0.001	-5.603	-1.857
Qualification				
SLC(Ref)	1	-	-	-
Intermediate /10+2	1.919	0.024	0.255	3.582
Bachelors	0.385	0.515	-0.778	1.548
Masters	-2.300	<0.001	-3.571	-1.029
Mphil	-3.591	<0.001	-5.712	-1.471
Caste				
Brahmin/Chhetri (Ref)	1	-	-	-
Janajati	0.136	0.822	-1.059	1.332
Dalit	0.922	0.179	-.426	2.269
Madeshei	-0.748	0.452	-2.704	1.208
Religion				
Hindu(Ref)	1	-	-	-
Buddhist	-0.150	0.727	-0.992	0.693
Others(Muslim,Christian,Kirat)	1.776	0.028	0.192	3.361
Marital status				
Married (Ref)	1	-	-	-
Unmarried	2.184	<0.001	1.058	3.310
Widower	3.472	0.110	-0.787	7.730
Family members in the household				
Less than 5(Ref)	1	-	-	-
5 and more	-0.412	0.401	-1.375	0.552

Source: Web-based survey 2024

Table 4 illustrates the relationship between various independent variables and levels of job satisfaction among teachers. Teachers aged over 45 experience significantly lower stress levels ($P < 0.001$). Additionally, teachers at the 10+2 quota ($P = 0.003$), secondary level ($P < 0.001$), and lower secondary level ($P = 0.035$) reported significantly lower stress levels, while ECD teachers exhibited higher stress levels ($P = 0.002$). Furthermore, teachers belonging to the Muslim, Christian, or Kirat religions reported significantly higher stress levels ($P = 0.028$), and unmarried teachers also experienced significantly higher stress levels ($P < 0.001$).

Discussion

An online study was conducted in Nepal with 323 teachers to measure job satisfaction and occupational stress levels. The survey revealed that the majority of participants were male, aged between 31 and 45 years. Most identified as belonging to the Brahmin/Chhetri ethnic group and practiced Hinduism. Many were married and lived in households with five or fewer members. Education-wise, most had a bachelor's degree, while others had qualifications ranging from high school to MPhil. The majority had less than 10 years of work experience, with permanent teaching positions being common. More than half of the teachers worked at the primary level, with others teaching at different school levels.

In terms of job satisfaction, the relationship between various factors and job satisfaction among teachers varies. Early Childhood Development (ECD) teachers generally have lower job satisfaction levels, and teachers in non-permanent positions tend to report lower job satisfaction compared to permanent teachers. It may be due to, ECD teachers being very low in salary and temporary teachers feeling uncomfortable with their jobs. Experience and education are also significant factors in job satisfaction. Teachers with more than 20 years of experience tend to be more satisfied, while those who have only completed the SLC exam report lower levels of satisfaction. The teacher works many more years, they get a higher salary, and promotion then is definitely satisfied with their job. We found similar results in various research (Pfeffer & Langton, 1993), studies in Bangladesh (Tasnim, 2006), Kenya (George, 2011), and Sweden (Toropova, Myrberg, & Johansson, 2021). The teacher may be highly satisfied in terms of others if they have only lower educational achievement. The highly educated teacher will be dissatisfied with the position (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

Similarly, the relationship between different factors and job satisfaction among teachers shows distinct patterns. Older teachers, especially those over 45, tend to have lower stress levels. Teachers in the 10+2 quota, secondary level, and lower secondary level also report lower stress levels, while ECD teachers face higher stress. Religious background and marital status also play a role in stress levels, with teachers from Muslim, Christian, or Kirat communities experiencing higher stress. Similar results were found in research on different ethnic groups (Staton, 2018), studies in Italy (Chirico, 2017), Israel (Zadok Boneh, Feniger-Schaal, Aviram Bivas, & Danial-Saad, 2022), Unmarried teachers tend to have significantly higher stress levels compared to married teachers.

Conclusion

Teaching in Nepal presents numerous challenges, including low pay, limited professional development opportunities, inadequate resources, and heavy workloads. These challenges can negatively impact job satisfaction, leading to stress and potentially affecting teaching quality and student performance. Overall, teacher job satisfaction in Nepal is moderate, with permanent and less-qualified teachers reporting higher levels of satisfaction. However, dissatisfaction with salary is a common issue, particularly among ECD and private contract teachers. Occupational stress is prevalent, especially among ECD and contract teachers, with factors such as job security, student behavior management, and limited promotion prospects contributing to stress levels. Variations in stress levels are observed across different demographic and professional groups, with older teachers, Dalit educators, and marginalized positions experiencing higher levels of stress, highlighting disparities in workplace experiences. Policy reforms in Nepal should prioritize fair salary structures, equitable promotion opportunities, and addressing disparities in job satisfaction and stress to create a more inclusive teaching environment. Implementation strategies should focus on supporting high-stress groups like ECD and contractual teachers by improving workload management.

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