

Assessing Primary Teachers' Work Satisfaction: Comparative Insights Across Diverse School Environments

Mr. Suhas Suresh Gulve, Dr. S.B. Kshirsagar

Abstract: *This study looks at how happy primary school teachers are with their jobs paying attention to differences between men and women and between city and country schools. The research checks five main things: the place they work and what they have to work with, how their bosses lead, their pay and perks, how they balance work and life, and chances to get better at their job. The study compared male and female teachers, and also teachers in city and country schools. What they found out is that male teachers say they're a bit happier in all areas, but not by much. When it comes to where they teach, country teachers are a little bit happier than city teachers. But there's a lot of difference within both groups, which shows that each school and what each person expects can make a big difference. The study wraps up by saying that to make teachers happier overall, we need to do things like make schools better, make sure bosses treat everyone, and come up with rules that help teachers have a good work-life balance. This research gives useful information to people who make rules and to educators. It stresses that we need different plans to help with the special problems that male and female teachers face in city and country schools. In the end, this should lead to schools that support teachers better and work better.*

Keywords: *work satisfaction, primary school teachers, work environment, leadership styles, compensation, work-life balance, professional development, urban schools, rural schools, gender differences, teacher retention, teacher performance, educational quality.*

INTRODUCTION

Primary education lays the foundation for a child's academic life molding their thinking, feelings, and social skills. Teachers stand at the center of this life-changing process. Their happiness and health play a key role in how well they teach and how well students do. Work happiness for teachers shows how content they feel with their work duties. This happiness affects their drive, how well they do their job, and if they stay in teaching.

Work satisfaction is vital for all the teachers however few of them do not have the same feeling towards their jobs. The reasons may be due to the place they

are from, the gender, where they work for example rural or urban schools etc. The challenges they may face are coping with the administrative activities and the excess strength of students in one class. In spite of the lack of resources and feeling of isolation, the teachers may have lesser competition and may have a strong network among themselves.

Similarly, gender is an influencing factor when it comes to the teacher's job satisfaction levels. Similarly, male and females deal and respond to their work responsibilities and situations differently as the male teachers have to deal with the major responsibility being the key earner of the family as per the conventional expectations while the female teachers may be facing the challenge of balancing the work and home responsibilities or preconceived notion at the workplace. Evaluating these factors based on the gender of the teachers provides a deeper insight about the elements that affect the work satisfaction of the teachers.

This research study aims at evaluating and comparing the work satisfaction of the primary school teachers' along the gender and the urban and rural school environment. The comparative study seeks to recognise factors that majorly impacts the work satisfaction among the teachers from different demography and across a range of contexts. The findings of the study will provide policy makers, educationists and stakeholders important information on the challenges faced by the teachers in these areas and the unique solutions for the same.

The study enhances the understanding of the impact of the demographic and environmental factors on teacher's experiences in context to the reforms and focused efforts on well-being of teachers across different countries. The outcomes of the study will act as a base for forming the strategies to improve teacher retention ratio, job satisfaction levels and eventually enhance the quality of primary education. The purpose of the study is to suggest ideas which

can provide a supportive and fair and impartial working environment for all the primary teachers through the comparative analysis across these parameters.

Important Elements Affecting Job Satisfaction

The various factors which impacts the job satisfaction of the teachers in addition to the location and / or gender :

- Leadership and Governance: The teachers feel valued if they perceive that the management values their contribution and inputs. Their job satisfaction is strongly influenced by the support they received from the leadership and Governance of the school management.
- Participatory Environment: The participatory environment encourages collaboration among the colleagues which strengthens the bonding and professional skills enhancement.
- Career Development: The opportunities for career development path is closely related to job satisfaction. The teachers feel happier when they find they are progressing in their careers.
- Work-Life Harmony: Many teachers find it difficult to strike a harmony between work and personal life especially in remote places where there is a scarcity of the required resources.
- Pay Package and other welfare benefits: Pay packages and the welfare benefits play an important role in teachers' job satisfaction which are mainly differentiating at a large scale in rural and urban areas and are the reasons for conflict.

The Relationship Between Work Satisfaction and Teacher Performance

Exploring the relationship between work satisfaction and teacher performance reveals a cyclical dynamic: higher work satisfaction typically leads to improved teacher performance, which in turn enhances job satisfaction. Satisfied teachers are more engaged, better prepped, and ultimately provide a better educational experience for their students.

Moreover, demographic factors such as age, years of experience, and educational background also play roles in this relationship. Younger teachers and those

with fewer years of experience often report lower satisfaction levels, influenced by the transition challenges and the pressure to perform effectively.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Teacher job satisfaction plays a crucial role in determining their performance, well-being, and likelihood of staying within the educational system. Research has shown that the work environment and available infrastructure are key elements that affect job satisfaction. Urban schools, despite being better equipped, often struggle with challenges like overcrowded classrooms and high teacher-to-student ratios, which can diminish teacher satisfaction (Kothari & Sharma, 2015). However, despite having fewer physical resources, rural schools frequently benefit from greater community support and closer ties between educators and learners (Sanjay & Rani, 2017). A thorough analysis of several leadership philosophies has also been conducted, and the results show that transformational and participative leadership can improve teacher satisfaction (Peters, 2016). When administrators support them and provide them professional liberty, teachers are more likely to be satisfied (Brock & Grady, 2017). Furthermore, income and benefits play a significant role in job satisfaction; many educators express dissatisfaction with low pay and little benefits (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Many studies have highlighted the biggest challenge mainly for female teachers to balance the work and life harmony (Borman & Dowling, 2008). As job satisfaction has a direct link with the various support provided for the professional development of the teachers like the training programme, this factor has drawn attention and has become essential for keeping the teachers satisfied in their professional life (Guarino et al., 2006). However, it is not equally available to the teachers working in the rural areas as compared to the teachers working in urban areas (Liu & Johnson, 2006).

This research study highlights the need for focused strategies and interventions to address the biases and differences due to the gender and the regions affecting the job satisfaction among the primary school teachers.

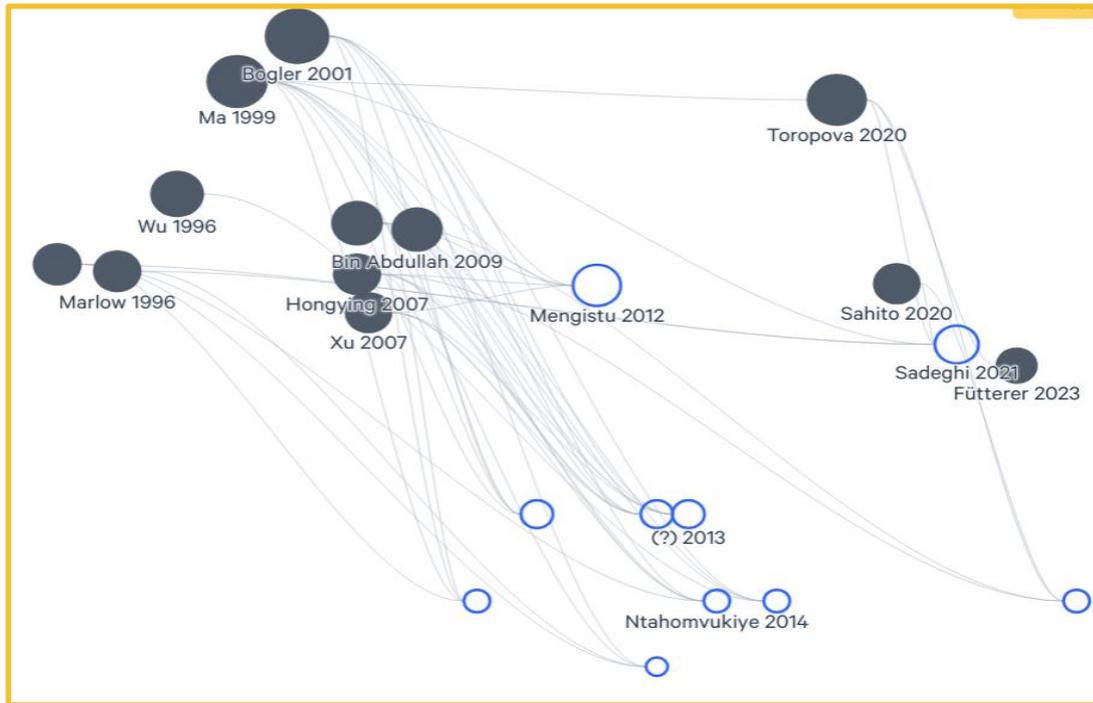


Fig 1: review of literature by Litmap

Objective of Study:

1. To assess the level of job satisfaction among primary school teachers in urban and rural areas.
2. To compare job satisfaction levels between male and female primary school teachers.
3. To identify the key factors influencing job satisfaction in urban and rural schools.
4. To explore the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance across different demographics.

2. What are the gender-based differences in job satisfaction among male and female primary school teachers?
3. What factors most significantly influence the job satisfaction of primary school teachers across urban-rural and gender divides?

Research questions:

1. How do the levels of job satisfaction among primary school teachers differ between urban

Population and sample

This study for Primary teachers work in government schools which are aided and privately aided from Perbhani district, Maharashtra.

Sample:

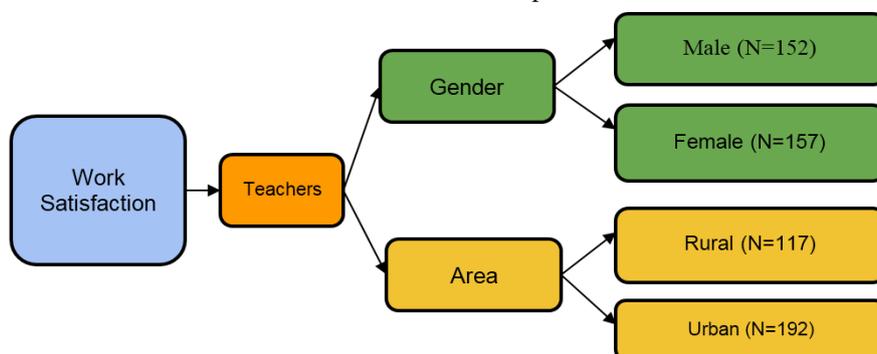


Fig 2: Sample for study

Research Procedure:

The research study was conducted with the objective to assess the job satisfaction among the primary school teachers from rural as well as urban areas. The

objectives of the study were set to assess the job satisfaction among the male and female teachers of primary school from both the areas. The key parameters influencing the satisfaction levels were identified to find the link between the job satisfaction

and the teachers performance. To make the study more comprehensive, an extensive literature review was conducted by the researcher which has resulted in identifying the research gaps. A stratified random sampling technique was used to have an adequate representative sample of teachers across both the genders and the areas. A standardized survey was developed to assess the job satisfaction levels of the primary school teachers and distributed for their inputs. The collected data was then analysed using the SPSS software. The tools used were descriptive statistics, inferential statistics and regression analysis. The results showed significant differences in the job satisfaction levels between the male and

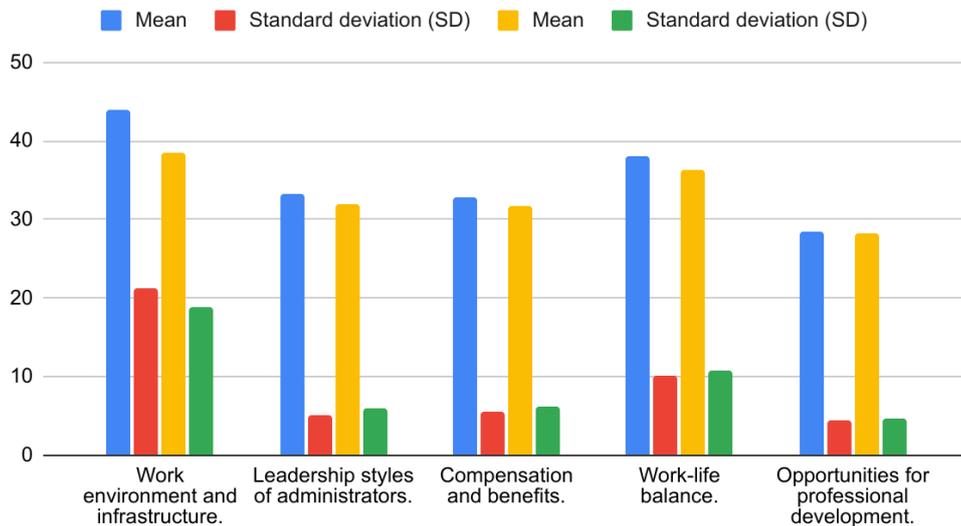
female teachers as well as between rural and urban areas. The significant factors influencing the job satisfaction levels of the teachers were identified and also the relationship between the performance of the teachers and the job satisfaction was explored. The findings of the research study were also interpreted with respect to the literature review highlighting the insights.

Based on the results, recommendations were provided to improve job satisfaction among primary school teachers. The research concluded with a summary of the main findings, implications, and suggestions for future research.

Table no. 1: Analysis of Primary Teachers’ Work Satisfaction Scale Based on the Gender

Sr. No	Parameters	Male (N=152)		Female (N=157)	
		Mean	Standard deviation (SD)	Mean	Standard deviation (SD)
1	Work environment and infrastructure.	43.88	21.18	38.39	18.79
2	Leadership styles of administrators.	33.29	5.19	32.04	6.07
3	Compensation and benefits.	32.85	5.50	31.83	6.10
4	Work-life balance.	38.09	10.09	36.22	10.68
5	Opportunities for professional development.	28.41	4.53	28.25	4.78

Male and Female



Graph no. 1: Analysis of Primary Teachers’ Work Satisfaction Scale Based on the Gender

Analysis and Interpretation

Work Environment and Infrastructure

- Male Teachers: Mean = 43.88, SD = 21.18

- Female Teachers: Mean = 38.39, SD = 18.79
- Analysis: Male teachers reported a slightly higher satisfaction with the work environment and infrastructure compared to female teachers. However, the large standard deviation indicates

significant variability in responses within both groups, suggesting differing experiences based on specific school settings or personal expectations.

- Interpretation: Schools may need to focus on improving infrastructure and creating a more supportive environment, particularly for female teachers, who might perceive these aspects less favorably.

Leadership Styles of Administrators

- Male Teachers: Mean = 33.29, SD = 5.19
- Female Teachers: Mean = 32.04, SD = 6.07
- Analysis: Both male and female teachers showed similar satisfaction levels with the leadership styles of administrators, with male teachers slightly more satisfied. The relatively small standard deviations suggest consistent perceptions within each group.
- Interpretation: The effects of leadership behaviours seem to be rather evenly distributed among the sexes. To guarantee that leadership adequately supports male and female teachers equally, there is space for improvement.

Compensation and Benefits

- Male Teachers: Mean = 32.85, SD = 5.50
- Female Teachers: Mean = 31.83, SD = 6.10
- Analysis: Compared to female instructors, men teachers expressed a somewhat higher level of satisfaction with pay and perks. The close means imply that there is potential for improvement in this area for both groups.

- Interpretation: In order to increase teacher satisfaction, schools should think about examining and adjusting pay and benefit plans, with an emphasis on maintaining equity and openness.

Work-Life Balance

- Male Teachers: Mean = 38.09, SD = 10.09
- Female Teachers: Mean = 36.22, SD = 10.68
- Analysis: Compared to female teachers, male instructors expressed a marginally higher level of satisfaction with work-life balance. Both genders' reaction variability is equivalent, as seen by the comparable standard deviations.
- Interpretation: Support measures like flexible working hours or workload management techniques may be necessary for female instructors who may encounter significant difficulties juggling their personal and professional obligations.

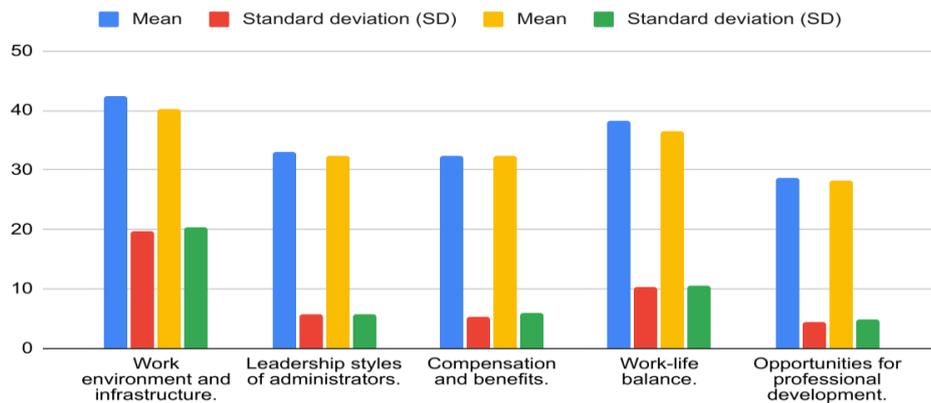
Opportunities for Professional Development

- Male Teachers: Mean = 28.41, SD = 4.53
- Female Teachers: Mean = 28.25, SD = 4.78
- Analysis: There was very little variation in mean values between male and female teachers' satisfaction levels with professional development opportunities.
- Interpretation: This measure demonstrates consistent levels of pleasure for both sexes. For further improvement, schools might concentrate on growing and customising professional development programs to meet the requirements and interests of specific teachers.

Table no. 2: Analysis of Primary Teachers' Work Satisfaction Scale Based on the Area

Sr. No.	Parameters	Rural (N=117)		Urban (N=192)	
		Mean	Standard deviation (SD)	Mean	Standard deviation (SD)
1	Work environment and infrastructure.	42.43	19.64	40.21	20.47
2	Leadership styles of administrators.	33.04	5.68	32.43	5.69
3	Compensation and benefits.	32.42	5.43	32.29	6.07
4	Work-life balance.	38.19	10.44	36.51	10.47
5	Opportunities for professional development.	28.59	4.37	28.18	4.83

Rural and Urban Area



Graph no. 2: Analysis of Primary Teachers’ Work Satisfaction Scale Based on the Area

Analysis and Interpretation

1. Work Environment and Infrastructure

- Rural Teachers: Mean = 42.43, SD = 19.64
- Urban Teachers: Mean = 40.21, SD = 20.47
- Analysis: Compared to their urban counterparts, instructors in rural areas expressed somewhat greater satisfaction with the infrastructure and work environment. Nonetheless, both groups' standard deviations are high, suggesting a significant difference in perceptions.
- Interpretation: Although instructors in rural areas appear to be a little happier, the wide range of responses indicates that both urban and rural schools struggle to provide reliable facilities and a comfortable workplace.

2. Leadership Styles of Administrators

- Rural Teachers: Mean = 33.04, SD = 5.68
- Urban Teachers: Mean = 32.43, SD = 5.69
- Analysis: Both rural and urban teachers have similar satisfaction levels with leadership styles, with rural teachers showing slightly higher satisfaction. The standard deviations indicate consistent perceptions within both groups.
- Interpretation: Leadership practices are generally similar across rural and urban schools. Efforts to strengthen leadership styles could benefit teachers in both environments.

3. Compensation and Benefits

- Rural Teachers: Mean = 32.42, SD = 5.43
- Urban Teachers: Mean = 32.29, SD = 6.07
- Analysis: Both rural and urban teachers reported nearly identical satisfaction levels with compensation and benefits. The

slightly lower variability for rural teachers suggests a more uniform perception among them.

- Interpretation: Compensation and benefits are perceived similarly across contexts. Policies to enhance fairness and adequacy in compensation could improve satisfaction universally.

4. Work-Life Balance

- Rural Teachers: Mean = 38.19, SD = 10.44
- Urban Teachers: Mean = 36.51, SD = 10.47
- Analysis: Rural teachers are marginally more satisfied with their work-life balance compared to urban teachers. The similar standard deviations suggest comparable variability in responses within both groups.
- Interpretation: Urban teachers may face additional challenges such as longer commute times and higher workloads. Strategies to support work-life balance in urban settings might help bridge this gap.

5. Opportunities for Professional Development

- Rural Teachers: Mean = 28.59, SD = 4.37
- Urban Teachers: Mean = 28.18, SD = 4.83
- Analysis: Both groups show similar satisfaction levels, with rural teachers slightly more satisfied. The higher variability in urban teachers indicates a broader range of experiences regarding professional development opportunities.
- Interpretation: Professional development is valued similarly in both rural and urban areas. Urban schools might need to ensure consistent access to high-quality professional growth opportunities to reduce variability.

FINDINGS

Table 1: The information reveals both parallels and discrepancies in elementary school teachers' levels of job satisfaction. Although the differences are not very noticeable, male teachers expressed somewhat greater levels of satisfaction across all categories. The variation within groups raises the possibility that responses may be greatly influenced by elements like the classroom setting, the circumstances of instruction, and personal expectations. Targeted interventions that address particular needs, like work-life balance assistance, equitable leadership practices, and infrastructure upgrades, should be put into place to increase overall work satisfaction.

Table 2: According to the statistics, primary school teachers in rural and urban areas had slightly different levels of job satisfaction across all categories. The results showed teachers in rural areas indicated notable job dissatisfaction as against the teachers from urban areas. Although, the standard deviation indicates that there are remarkable gaps in the opinions by the teachers from both the groups based on their individual experiences. There is a need for planned and focused strategies and interventions to address the issues like striking the right urban work-life balance and assuring the equal and fair access to training programmes and required resources to the primary school teachers of rural and urban areas. This will result in enhancing the job satisfaction levels of the teachers.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study sheds important information on the job satisfaction levels of the primary school teachers based on the two key factors: the differences of gender and the region. The results of the study shows that the male teachers have higher levels of job satisfaction as against the female teachers in terms of work culture, pay packages, professional development, work-life harmony and leadership. However, there are differences within the groups which indicates the impact of personal and work culture factors although the differences are not that meaningful distinct.

It also shows that the teachers from rural areas have slightly more work satisfaction as compared to the teachers from urban areas. Although the differences are negligible there is a scope to improve on specific

areas in urban regions for example work-life harmony and career development.

In summary, the results emphasise the importance and necessity to address the distinct and prevalent challenges that the primary school teachers face from different settings and demographic backgrounds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide the adequate resources and required facilities equally in urban as well as rural schools making the working environment more suitable and comfortable.

- The Governance should ensure encouragement of transparent and fair leadership techniques to deal with the context-specific issues and establish an inclusive work environment ensuring equal opportunities for male and female teachers.
- Organise various professional development programmes according to the specific requirements of the teachers from urban and rural areas.
- Introduce policies and welfare schemes to accommodate the work-life balance challenges of the teachers specially female teachers or teachers from the urban areas. Additionally, workshops can be conducted to help teachers to enhance work-life balance, especially for urban and female educators.

The results and the outcomes generated through the comparative analysis can provide the actual insights to the educationists, policymakers, academicians and other stakeholders to lay the processes and policies which will encourage the inclusive and specific approaches to enhance the job satisfaction levels of the primary teachers. Not only this, the students and the entire educational system will yield benefits from the schools dealing with these issues as they will be in a position to provide a healthy and happy working environment to the teachers who will in turn be more dedicated and productive.

REFERENCES

- [1] Borman, G. D., & Dowling, N. M. (2008). Teacher attrition and retention: A meta-analytic and narrative review of the research. *Review of Educational Research*, 78(3), 367-409.
- [2] Brock, B. L., & Grady, M. L. (2017). The influence of leadership styles on teacher

- satisfaction. *International Journal of Educational Leadership*, 12(3), 123-138.
- [3] Guarino, C. M., Santibañez, L., & Daley, G. A. (2006). Teacher recruitment and retention: A review of the recent empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(2), 173-208.
- [4] Johnson, S. M., & Birkeland, S. E. (2003). Pursuing a sense of success: New teachers explain their career decisions. *American Educational Research Journal*, 40(3), 581-617.
- [5] Kothari, D., & Sharma, R. (2015). Work environment and teacher work satisfaction in urban schools: A study. *Educational Research Review*, 18(1), 34-47.
- [6] Liu, E., & Johnson, S. M. (2006). The effects of induction and mentoring on teachers' professional growth. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 28(4), 329-346.
- [7] Peters, M. L. (2016). Leadership styles in education: The impact on teacher motivation and satisfaction. *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 13(2), 145-160.
- [8] Sanjay, P., & Rani, M. (2017). Teacher satisfaction in rural education settings. *International Journal of Rural Education*, 5(1), 20-32.