



Exploring the Nexus between Teacher Job Satisfaction and Students' Learning Achievement

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Abstract

Teacher job satisfaction is linked to factors like safety conditions, student achievement, and turnover rates. Studies show that teachers with higher satisfaction perform better. Organizational justice, culture, and administrative decision-making also impact satisfaction. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the relationship between teacher job satisfaction and student achievement, leading researchers to explore this connection through empirical studies. This investigation aimed to explore the link between teachers' job satisfaction and student's learning achievement in secondary schools. This study uses a systematic review to collect, evaluate, and synthesize relevant research. It summarizes and analyzes data from various perspectives. The process includes identifying key documents, reviewing the literature, and categorizing findings. After screening based on set criteria, the most relevant information is extracted. The results showed a strong, positive correlation between the tests. Most studies found that teacher job satisfaction is closely linked to student achievement, though some reported a negative relationship. In nutshell, highly satisfied teachers put more effort into student success by teaching effectively and offering personalized support. This review highlights the importance of prioritizing teacher satisfaction for a successful education system. Most studies indicate that TJS positively impacts student achievement. While some research shows a consistent link between TJS and SLA. These studies are fewer compared to those confirming a strong positive effect. Factors influencing TJS include work environment, stress, coworker relationships, working conditions, attitudes, and recognition. However, only classroom equipment and class size have been proven to improve both TJS and student success.

Keywords: job satisfaction, achievement, TJS, SLA, organizational culture, positive effect

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Context of the Study

As society evolves and changes, teachers take on many roles. They guide learning in the classroom and continue their own professional development to improve teaching (Shah, 2020). Teachers also contribute to the community and help preserve social and cultural values. They can influence political change and support societal transformation. Additionally, they uphold moral standards by teaching basic human values. As noted by Banda and Mutambo (2016) and Becirovic and Akbarov (2015), teachers have a greater impact on learners than any other factor in education, highlighting their critical role in the education system (Shah, 2021; Bektas & Nalcaci, 2012).

Job satisfaction refers to the positive emotional state that arises from an individual's experience with task performance and the work environment (Ejimofofor, 2015). The extent of job satisfaction varies among professionals, with higher levels driving employees to invest greater time, energy, and effort into their work, thereby enhancing performance. Schmidt (2007) similarly defines job satisfaction as the subjective evaluation of the attractiveness of a job, considering both positive and negative outcomes. It reflects an effective response to the job, based on the alignment between actual outcomes and those that are desired, expected, or perceived as deserved (Hoque et al., 2006). There are two primary categories of job satisfaction. The first is global job satisfaction, which pertains to an employee's overall feelings towards their job (Mueller & Kim, 2008). The second is job facet satisfaction, which concerns specific aspects of the job, such as salary, benefits, and interpersonal relationships with colleagues (Mueller & Kim, 2008). Job satisfaction is a complex, multifaceted construct influenced by both individual characteristics and workplace conditions.

The primary component of the school education system is its teachers. Various factors influence Student Learning Achievement (SLA), among which educators play a pivotal role in determining students' academic success (Ma, 2012). Teacher Job Satisfaction (TJS) refers to the degree of happiness teachers experience in their current roles and can be categorized into internal and external factors (Wang, 2019). TJS reflects how content teachers are with their careers, which is influenced by aspects such as the working environment, student engagement, administrative support, and opportunities for professional development. Motivated and effective teachers, who generally experience high levels of job satisfaction, tend to contribute to greater student achievements. Conversely, factors like low remuneration, heavy workloads, and a lack of resources can negatively impact their satisfaction. Ensuring that teachers are recognized and supported is essential to maintaining a positive and productive learning environment (Zong, 2016). For teachers to be fully prepared to impart the knowledge and skills necessary for students' success in SLA, they must be adequately satisfied with their profession. Educators are esteemed as "nation builders," with teachers, particularly in colleges, playing a critical role in developing students into elites with diverse talents. Low TJS could result in a decline in the quality of education (Borah, 2016).

Numerous studies demonstrate a strong positive correlation between Teacher Job Satisfaction (TJS) and job performance. However, other investigations have been unable to establish a significant connection between TJS and SLA (Ejimofofor, 2015; Borah, 2016). Despite these mixed findings, the prevailing assumption is that TJS meaningfully and directly influences SLA (Fisher, 2003). Furthermore, the Teaching and Learning International Survey revealed that TJS is a dynamic factor influencing the performance of both teachers and schools, as well as students' academic achievement (Lopes & Oliveira, 2020). The survey also highlighted that interpersonal relationships are the strongest predictors of job satisfaction. It recommended that schools should focus on addressing interpersonal challenges, particularly in the classroom, where much of the surface-level job satisfaction is often found. The results also showed that teacher efficacy, one of the personal attributes of instructors, has a significant impact on job satisfaction (You et al., 2017). Since the conditions in different countries have varying effects on TJS, studies from diverse regions have been included in this review to present a comprehensive overview of findings based on different contextual variables. The review's findings have identified the factors associated with TJS and their implications for student learning achievement.

This review study aims to pursue the following objectives:

- To explore the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction (TJS) and students' learning achievement (SLA).
- To identify the factors that influence both teacher job satisfaction (TJS) and students' learning achievement.

Collective Overview in the Field

Research examining the relationship between TJS and SLA has grown significantly from 2010 to 2024. Job satisfaction is a critical factor in assessing employee efficiency and organizational effectiveness (Fisher, 2003). The concept of teacher job satisfaction has gained widespread recognition, particularly with the increasing emphasis on lifelong learning. Academics have shifted focus toward the emotional experiences associated with the workplace, which professional groups - such as teachers - must navigate. Broadly speaking, TJS refers to a teacher's overall emotional experience and perceptions of their profession, work environment, and social status. There is a global consensus that TJS, as an emotional attitude variable, encompasses a range of factors and, more importantly, directly influences teachers' motivation and commitment to their profession. Regular work efficiency and effectiveness are also critical determinants of SLA.

Furthermore, from the perspective of organizational commitment, enhancing TJS is a critical means of strengthening their sense of belonging to the school and elevating their professional appeal. From a logical standpoint, teachers often experience that "the greatest satisfaction comes from the unexpected achievements of students." Additionally, phrases such as "great teachers produce exceptional students," commonly used in professional discourse, suggest that SA should also be regarded as a significant contributor to TJS (Wang & Zhang, 2020).

Factors affecting the teachers' job satisfaction. Studies have explored a variety of factors that may influence teachers' job satisfaction directly, indirectly, or not at all. In their research on teachers' job satisfaction, Shi et al. (2011) exposed that workplace culture, pressure from superiors, leadership style, age, gender, and other factors all have varying degrees of impact on teachers' satisfaction with their work. The elements that influence TJS are typically categorized into four levels by the existing research: person, school, work, and others. Subjective and objective elements can be used to categorize the influencing factors at the individual level. Subjective aspects include job engagement and occupational desire, whereas objective factors include teachers' teaching experience and years of education, gender, professional title, monthly wages, and workload. The two main influencing variables at the school level are students and working condition. While the organization aspect comprises the institutional culture of the school and student management, the student aspect includes the student's learning environment. Workplace considerations include things like opportunities for learning exchanges, pressure at work, and the atmosphere for professional progress. Other levels include things like the school's location (eastern, central, or western) and whether it's in an urban or rural area. (Nkengne et al., 2021).

A study conducted by Sh et.al. (2011) identified several factors influencing TJS. Professional title, educational background, and job satisfaction are among the variables that teachers can modify; however, these factors exhibit very low correlations and cannot be effectively utilized as descriptive variables in a regression model. Conversely, age serves as a variable that can elucidate job satisfaction, despite its inadequate association with it. The most significant school-related factor affecting TJS is salary level. Salary represents the primary output that organizations provide to teachers and is a critical element that teachers seek from their institutions. The degree of alignment between teachers' expectations and their compensation emerges as the most substantial determinant of TJS in terms of person-role fit.

Student learning achievement (SLA). Evaluating a student's academic performance presents a significant challenge. Student success on standardized assessments in core subjects, such as reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and history, is undoubtedly the most commonly utilized indicator of achievement. SLA reflects substantial growth over the course of the academic year. Their commitment to addressing

complex issues is evident through consistently strong performance across various subjects. In addition to academic success, students exhibit innovation in problem-solving and collaboration. Their progress is also apparent in their ability to apply critical thinking and adapt to novel situations. We take pride in their achievements and look forward to their continued success. Academic attainment is influenced by a range of factors, including the quality of educators and institutions, students' previous performance and experiences, as well as numerous other variables (Cunningham, 2012). Consequently, researchers have examined academic levels, achievement status, graduation and dropout rates, and overall student and school performance over time, alongside student success. Academic achievement is the capacity to complete tasks. These achievements may be broad or subject-specific. Academic achievement is a collection of a student's marks, percentages, or any other type of scale of marks from courses, curricula, and books that they have studied. (Borah, 2016). It's important to emphasize that academic performance includes involvement in extracurricular activities, social events, cultural events, athletics, and other programs offered by academic institutions and organizations in addition to test and exam scores.

Design of the Study

The present study employs a systematic review methodology. A systematic review is a structured approach to research that aims to collect, assess, and synthesize all relevant studies pertaining to a specific research question or topic. This methodology is designed to minimize bias and ensure that the findings are as reliable and accurate as possible, following a systematic and transparent process (Creswell, 2019; Moher et al., 2009). The research methodology is grounded in a literature review, which systematically summarizes and analyzes data to examine the topic from various dynamic perspectives (Creswell, and Creswell, 2018). The initial steps in this process involve identifying relevant documents, reviewing the literature, and categorizing the findings. Subsequently, the most pertinent information is extracted after screening the relevant literature based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria (Bearman et al., 2012).

Data sources

The data for this review were extracted from major academic databases: Scopus, Google Scholar, and Research4Life. The review aimed to consider all recognized and pertinent sources reporting studies published in English within the designated timeframe of 2000 to 2024. The primary objective of the search was to identify all relevant literature without deviating excessively, thereby minimizing the generation of an overwhelming number of irrelevant results. After applying the established inclusion and exclusion criteria to the initial set of 934 papers, 26 papers were identified as applicable to the study's objectives.

Data screening

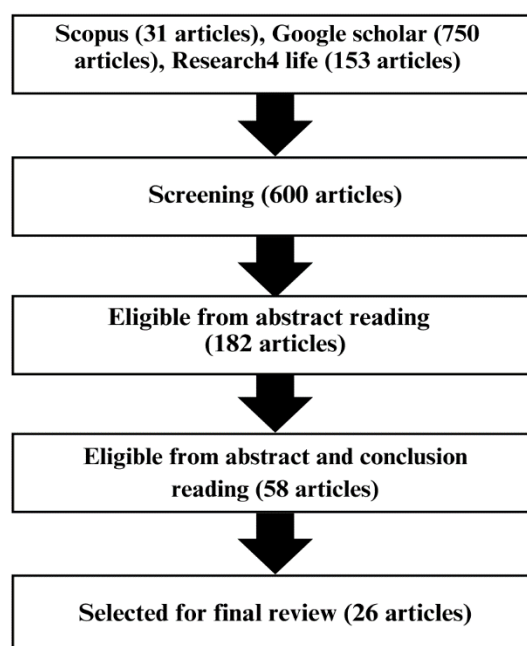
The relevant documents were searched using the following keywords: "teacher job satisfaction," "student learning achievement," and "teacher job satisfaction and student learning achievement." A substantial body of literature exists on the relationship between TJS and SLA. Given that the focus of this review was on the influence of TJS on SLA, the literature search was conducted in two phases to ensure the inclusion of all pertinent studies. In the first phase, which concentrated on TJS, the following search terms were utilized: "teacher job satisfaction" and "teacher satisfaction," combined with the term "SLA." This initial search yielded a total of 934 papers related to these keywords. The second phase focused on the effect of TJS on SLA, selecting from the papers identified in the first phase. After screening for keywords and applying the publication year criteria of 2000 to 2024, 600 documents were found. Subsequently, I limited the search to peer-reviewed articles based on their titles and abstracts, resulting in 182 articles deemed eligible for review. Following a thorough examination of the abstracts and findings, 58 documents were selected for detailed study, and ultimately, 26 articles were chosen for inclusion in the review.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The review of the most recent journals on the subject was conducted to ensure that the data collected were valid and of high quality. Prior to selecting a journal for evaluation, particular attention was paid to reviewing its findings and abstract. To facilitate the author's understanding of the literature and to effectively assess the research findings, the literature analysis utilized a narrative approach (De Rijdt et al.,

2013). Subsequently, each article was thoroughly reread to identify the key components relevant to the research area. Key informational paragraphs that focused on the proposed research question were extracted using content analysis methods. As mentioned in an earlier section, the PRISMA guidelines were applied to the inclusion and exclusion criteria for this review.

Fig.1 PRISMA diagram for document screening process



Results

The review of 26 empirical studies has provided the following findings in relation to the aforementioned research objectives. The findings are organized in accordance with these objectives.

Connection of TJS with SLA

An analysis of studies conducted between 2010 and 2024 reveals that a significant majority of research from various countries indicates a positive relationship between TJS and SLA (McWherter, 2012; Farooqi & Shabbir, 2016). The commitment of teachers is closely associated with the educational outcomes of their students (Sabin, 2015). When teachers experience dissatisfaction in their roles, this discontent often manifests in behaviors such as increased absenteeism. Such conditions can adversely affect students, ultimately impeding their academic performance (Crawford, 2017).

Research findings indicate that teachers who perceive their profession as respected tend to experience greater job satisfaction, which in turn motivates them to enhance student outcomes (Armstrong, 2009). A study conducted in Uganda and Nigeria explored the levels of teacher satisfaction, its underlying causes, and its impact on the quality of teaching and learning (Nkengne et al., 2021). There is a strong interconnection between teachers' job satisfaction and students' learning achievements. When teachers feel valued and satisfied in their roles, they are more likely to be motivated, enthusiastic, and committed to delivering high-quality instruction. This positive atmosphere fosters an educational environment conducive to improved student understanding and engagement. Furthermore, satisfied teachers are more likely to invest in their professional development, thereby enhancing their pedagogical strategies. This, in turn, leads to higher student achievement as learners benefit from improved instruction and support (Ihuez et al., 2018).

In the study conducted by Mainali and Belbase (2023), teachers expressed a relatively high level of satisfaction with their profession, which positively influenced their working environment. However,

several factors are crucial for the job satisfaction and professional growth of teachers. The three primary components identified were: training and educational resources, school infrastructure, and financial incentives. Satisfied teachers are more capable of fully utilizing their knowledge and skills in the classroom with a positive attitude. The study also found a significant relationship between teachers' cooperation with learners and their job satisfaction. Additionally, job satisfaction was linked to opportunities for professional development and teachers' sense of efficacy (Mainali & Belbase, 2023).

Research indicates that satisfied teachers are more likely to provide high-quality instruction, which can enhance student learning outcomes in the classroom. For employees to be encouraged to take on greater responsibilities, the nature of the tasks must meet certain standards, including adequate salary and safe working conditions. When teachers are content with their roles, they tend to invest more time in fostering student engagement (Ihueze et al., 2018). Conversely, whether supported by existing theoretical frameworks or practical experience, low job satisfaction adversely affects teachers' enthusiasm for their work and their ability to maintain a positive teaching attitude. This can lead to diminished teaching effectiveness and ultimately harm students' academic performance. Additionally, low job satisfaction negatively impacts in-service teachers' organizational commitment and diminishes the overall appeal of the profession (Wang and Zhang, 2020).

The study indicates that student success is directly correlated with the influence of both personal and school-related factors on work values and job satisfaction. It was found that when assessing positive work environments, key elements to consider include job and personal security, health, motivation, and socioeconomic factors. When employees are fully satisfied with their roles, they tend to contribute more effectively. Teachers are most likely to perform at their highest level when they feel content with their compensation, benefits, and overall work environment (Hoque et al., 2023).

While some early studies on TJS report compelling results, a significant relationship between TJS and student performance remains elusive, consistent with the findings of Banerjee et al. (2017). Their longitudinal study, which followed young children from kindergarten to fifth grade, indicated no significant association between student reading growth and teacher job satisfaction, although a minor but positive correlation was observed. While this may appear to contradict expectations, it aligns with prior research (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Fisher, 2003), which also found no substantial relationships between TJS and children's academic achievements (Ejimofo, 2015). Additionally, the connection between TJS and SLA may be minimal, suggesting that teacher job satisfaction does not significantly influence SLA outcomes (Borah, 2016). Despite these findings, many scholars support the idea that teacher job satisfaction is indicative of their motivation and commitment to enhancing students' learning performance (Manandhar et al., 2021).

An analysis that combines survey and test data from TALIS 2013 and PISA 2012 reveals four primary correlations between teachers' job satisfaction indices and student test scores across various countries (OECD, 2016; TALIS, 2013). The first correlation identifies countries with strong student performance and high teacher job satisfaction. Examples of such countries include Finland, Canada, Australia, and the Netherlands, where both educators and students achieve notable success. The second correlation pertains to countries where teachers report high levels of job satisfaction, yet student performance remains significantly low. This group includes Mexico, Malaysia, Chile, and Italy, highlighting a disparity between teacher contentment and student outcomes. The third correlation involves countries where teachers' job satisfaction is markedly below average, while student test scores are considerably high, often ranking among the best globally. Notable examples include China, South Korea, Japan, and Singapore, as well as other East Asian countries and regions, illustrating the complexities of the relationship between teacher satisfaction and student achievement. Finally, the fourth correlation encompasses countries that experience both low teacher job satisfaction and low student test scores, such as Bulgaria, Brazil, and Russia. This combination suggests a challenging environment for both educators and learners, warranting further investigation into the underlying factors affecting these outcomes.

There exists a strong correlation between SLA and teachers' job satisfaction. Firstly, in countries characterized by a high-power distance index, teachers generally report lower levels of job satisfaction. Secondly, the degree of individualism varies across different nations, and there appears to be a potential positive correlation between individualism and teacher job satisfaction. Furthermore, countries with a high long-term orientation index tend to exhibit lower teacher job satisfaction, while those with a low long-term orientation show the opposite trend. Lastly, countries that score high on the indulgence index also tend to have higher levels of teacher job satisfaction.

In conclusion, there is a general tendency for teachers' job satisfaction to be positively associated with students' learning achievements (Wang and Zhang, 2020). The findings suggest that national culture plays a significant role in influencing teachers' job satisfaction, a factor that should not be overlooked. Therefore, it can be inferred that for effective SLA, teachers' job satisfaction must also be prioritized.

Factors that influencing on TJS and SLA

TJS has a positive impact on both educational quality and the teaching-learning process. The factors influencing TJS can also affect broader educational outcomes. However, improvements in TJS do not always translate into higher academic achievement, as both TJS and SLA are influenced by diverse and distinct factors. The goals of improving student performance and enhancing professional satisfaction often conflict rather than complement one another (Michaelowa, 2002). Although teachers frequently express dissatisfaction with system control variables and incentive structures, these mechanisms have been shown to significantly improve teacher performance, despite the lack of job security.

A study conducted by Tsai and Antoniou (2021) in Taiwan, involving 113 teachers and 2,334 students, explored the relationships between teacher attitudes toward teaching, teacher self-efficacy, student achievement, and teacher job satisfaction. The findings indicated that teacher attitudes toward teaching, classroom efficacy, and student achievement partially account for variations in teacher job satisfaction. Teacher attitudes toward teaching were the primary factor explaining most of the variance in job satisfaction, which, in turn, may contribute to enhanced teacher efficacy and student achievement. This research underscores that improving educational quality is a multifaceted process influenced by variables such as teachers' attitudes, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction (Khalid, 2014).

Similarly, Rutkowski et al. (2013) conducted a study involving 81 elementary school teachers from a large urban school district in the United States. The findings revealed that participation in a professional development program significantly enhanced teachers' pedagogical knowledge and subject-matter expertise, with teachers demonstrating a higher level of proficiency in content knowledge and instructional methods upon completion of the program.

In their study, Dicke et al. (2020) found that for both teachers and principals, the working context was linked to student achievement; however, the disciplinary climate perceived by students was only associated with the overall working environment aspects of teacher job satisfaction. Data from international assessments such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) indicate that in countries with high academic performance, teachers generally report moderate levels of job satisfaction (OECD, 2016; TALIS, 2013). For instance, over a two-year period, the PISA test results from Shanghai, China, highlighted by the World Bank, revealed that despite strong student performance, teacher job satisfaction was significantly lower according to the TALIS 2013 survey results (Liang et al., 2016). Similarly, PISA (2015) data further demonstrate that, despite exceptional student achievement, teacher job and occupational satisfaction in East Asian countries and regions remain at moderate levels (Chen, 2017).

Several factors have been shown to positively influence both TJS and SLA. One such factor pertains to classroom equipment, which has a favorable effect on teachers' well-being. Access to material resources within a supportive working environment enhances teachers' engagement in their profession, which, in turn, plays a crucial role in fostering meaningful learning experiences for students (Benevene et al., 2020). While many equipment-related variables show no significant correlation with SLA, the availability of

student learning materials stands out, as it is strongly associated with both SLA and teacher job satisfaction. Therefore, improving the provision of textbooks is a viable policy recommendation (Hee et al., 2019). Regarding class size, it has a substantial impact on teacher job satisfaction (Hee et al., 2019). Reducing class size remains the most effective approach to managing high student numbers for the benefit of both teachers and students, as alternative solutions, such as double-shifting, have serious drawbacks, particularly in cases where classes reach up to 100 students.

There is a positive correlation between teacher efficacy and the presence of well-structured classroom procedures, which can lead to improved student performance (Perera et al., 2022). Moreover, highly effective teachers are able to provide stronger pedagogical support, thereby enhancing both teaching and learning outcomes. This study provides limited evidence to support the common belief that low teacher job satisfaction and low SLA are primarily due to low salaries and large class sizes, as these factors showed no significant impact on SLA. The analysis suggests that implementing a costly program to increase teacher salaries may not be the most appropriate solution.

In contrast, in countries where student performance on the PISA test is less ideal, teacher job satisfaction is often significantly higher than average (Wang and Zhang, 2020). A study involving 1,539 teachers from 306 secondary schools in New Delhi and Kolkata found that instructional management had unexpected effects on teaching and learning, while the social and emotional climate of the classroom had a direct impact on teacher job satisfaction, which in turn influenced student achievement (Dutta & Sahney, 2016). De Vries et al. (2013) conducted a study on teacher professional development, aiming to explore the long-term effects of a professional development (PD) program on teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and skills. The findings indicated that ongoing professional development for teachers is directly linked to improved student outcomes. The results showed that teacher job satisfaction positively influenced teachers' attitudes and knowledge. Teachers who participated in the professional development program had higher levels of knowledge and were more enthusiastic about the benefits for their students.

From a labeled thinking perspective, there exists a notable correlation between various cultural backgrounds and teachers' job satisfaction, although this may not be a direct causal relationship. Several factors influence teaching competency, including societal conditions, the local social context, curriculum quality, professional environment, ongoing professional development, pedagogical practices, and the personal attributes and private lives of educators, as well as their overall job satisfaction. Consequently, the environment plays a pivotal role in shaping teachers' job satisfaction, which subsequently impacts students' academic performance.

Conclusion

Over the past 15 years, numerous studies from various countries have extensively focused on the impact of TJS and SLA. The majority of research indicates that TJS has a positive correlation with student achievement (McWherter, 2012; Crawford, 2017; Andrew, 2017; Iqbal et al., 2016). Although a small subset of studies suggests a consistent relationship between TJS and student learning outcomes, the number of such studies is considerably lower compared to those affirming a positive influence of TJS on student achievement (Ejimofo, 2015; Borah, 2016). Several factors contribute to TJS, including work environment, job stress, relationships with colleagues, working conditions, employee attitudes, and social recognition. However, research highlights that only classroom equipment and class size have a demonstrable positive effect on both TJS and student achievement. Research suggests that cultures of any country have an undeniable and significant impact on teacher job satisfaction. Furthermore, contrary to the conventional belief that "students' high academic performance leads to greater teacher job satisfaction," the correlation between these two variables is more complex and nuanced (Hoque et al., 2023). The influence of cultural differences on teacher job satisfaction is widely acknowledged, particularly in the evaluation of this relationship. For example, it is crucial for scholars to develop a framework that assesses teacher job satisfaction within specific societal and cultural contexts. Additionally, they must incorporate new dimensions into reflective practices and subsequent evaluations. This approach is essential to improving

overall teacher satisfaction, which in turn enhances their effectiveness and well-being, while fostering greater student engagement in learning activities that lead to higher-quality educational outcomes.

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Ethical approval

This manuscript does not contain any studies with human participants performed by any of the authors

Informed consent

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