

DOI(Journal): 10.31703/gssr
DOI(Volume): 10.31703/gssr.2025(X)
DOI(Issue): 10.31703/gssr.2025(X.I)

p-ISSN: 2520-0348

e-ISSN: 2616-793X



GSSR

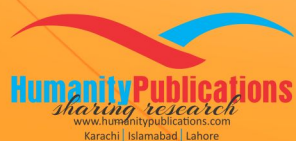
GLOBAL SOCIAL SCIENCES REVIEW

HEC-RECOGNIZED CATEGORY-Y

www.gssrjournal.com

Global
Social Sciences Review
exploring humanity

Volum X, ISSUE I WINTER (MARCH-2025)



Double-blind Peer-review Journal
www.gssrjournal.com
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Article Title

Elevating Teachers' Satisfaction: The Impact of Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment

Abstract

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Keywords: Professional Identity, Psychological Empowerment, Teachers' Satisfaction

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Pages: 16-26

DOI:10.31703/gssr.2025(X-1).02

DOI link: [https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2025\(X-1\).02](https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2025(X-1).02)

Article link: <http://www.gssrjournal.com/article/A-b-c>

Full-text Link: <https://gssrjournal.com/fulltext/>

Pdf link: <https://www.gssrjournal.com/jadmin/Author/31rvl0A2.pdf>

Global Social Sciences Review

p-ISSN: 2520-0348 e-ISSN: 2616-793X

DOI(journal):10.31703/gssr

Volume: X (2025)

DOI (volume):10.31703/gssr.2025(X)

Issue: I Winter (March 2025)

DOI(Issue):10.31703/gssr.2024(X-1)

Home Page

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Volume: IX (2024)

<https://www.gssrjournal.com/Current-issue>

Issue: I-Winter (March-2025)

<https://www.gssrjournal.com/Current-issues/10/1/2025>

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02	Elevating Teachers' Satisfaction: The Impact of Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment		
Authors	Muhammad Saleem Kashar Hafiz Muhammad Arshad Syed Abdul Waheed	DOI	10.31703/gssr.2025(X-I).02
		Pages	16-26
		Year	2025
		Volume	X
		Issue	I

Referencing & Citing Styles

APA	Kashar, M. S., Arshad, H. M., & Waheed, S. A. (2025). Elevating Teachers' Satisfaction: The Impact of Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment. <i>Global Social Sciences Review</i> , X(1), 16-26. https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2025(X-I).02
CHICAGO	Kashar, Muhammad Saleem, Hafiz Muhammad Arshad, and Syed Abdul Waheed. 2025. "Elevating Teachers' Satisfaction: The Impact of Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment." <i>Global Social Sciences Review</i> X (I):16-26. doi: 10.31703/gssr.2025(X-I).02.
HARVARD	KASHAR, M. S., ARSHAD, H. M. & WAHEED, S. A. 2025. Elevating Teachers' Satisfaction: The Impact of Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment. <i>Global Social Sciences Review</i> , X, 16-26.
MHRA	Kashar, Muhammad Saleem, Hafiz Muhammad Arshad, and Syed Abdul Waheed. 2025. 'Elevating Teachers' Satisfaction: The Impact of Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment', <i>Global Social Sciences Review</i> , X: 16-26.
MLA	Kashar, Muhammad Saleem, Hafiz Muhammad Arshad, and Syed Abdul Waheed. "Elevating Teachers' Satisfaction: The Impact of Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment." <i>Global Social Sciences Review</i> X.I (2025): 16-26. Print.
OXFORD	Kashar, Muhammad Saleem, Arshad, Hafiz Muhammad, and Waheed, Syed Abdul (2025), 'Elevating Teachers' Satisfaction: The Impact of Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment', <i>Global Social Sciences Review</i> , X (I), 16-26.
TURABIAN	Kashar, Muhammad Saleem, Hafiz Muhammad Arshad, and Syed Abdul Waheed. "Elevating Teachers' Satisfaction: The Impact of Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment." <i>Global Social Sciences Review</i> X, no. I (2025): 16-26. https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2025(X-I).02 .



Global Social Sciences Review

www.gssrjournal.com

DOI:<http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gssr>



Cite Us



Title

Elevating Teachers' Satisfaction: The Impact of Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment

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Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Purpose Statement](#)
- [Objectives](#)
- [Hypotheses](#)
- [Delimitation of Study](#)
- [Literature Review](#)
- [Research Design](#)
- [Population](#)
- [Sample of the Study](#)
- [Research Tools & Data Collection](#)
- [Data Analysis](#)
- [Results:](#)
- [Conclusions](#)
- [Discussion](#)
- [Recommendations](#)
- [Suggestions for Future Research](#)
- [References](#)

Abstract

The study focused on elevating teachers' satisfaction: The impact of professional identity and psychological empowerment. A cross-sectional survey design with quantitative techniques was employed to conduct this study. The study sample consisted of 357 secondary school teachers, both male and female, from public high schools in Punjab, Pakistan. A stratified random sampling technique was applied for sample selection. Three adopted tools (The Career Satisfaction Scale, the Professional Identity Scale, and the Psychological Empowerment Scale) were used in this quantitative study to collect data. Tools were converted to Google Forms and disseminated for the collection of data. The data were analyzed by applying descriptive (percentage, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (linear regression analysis). Results revealed a significant positive impact of professional identity and psychological empowerment on teachers' satisfaction. The study recommended that higher authorities may conduct training and conferences to enhance the level of professional identity, psychological empowerment, and teachers' satisfaction.

Keywords:

[Professional Identity](#), [Psychological Empowerment](#), [Teachers' Satisfaction](#)

Introduction

Teachers play a vital role in shaping society and fostering the development of educational institutions. By imparting essential skills,

knowledge, and values, they help to educate the next generation, preparing them to become active and responsible citizens. It is important to admit the value of educators and encourage their



professional development in order to guarantee the prosperity and well-being of societies and individuals at large. Career satisfaction is the most significant element that drives the development of teachers' professional skills. The degree of fulfillment and contentment of individuals with their chosen job and profession is known as career satisfaction (Wong & Liu, [2022](#)).

A teacher significantly influences his learners as well as future teachers and shapes and forms his own professional identity. Educators who completely understand and are constant with their instructional expertise are required to coach the coming group of students and prepare them to cope with upcoming circumstances and make them positive members of society. The teachers who are guides, mentors, advisors, role models, and very competent helpers to the learners could significantly impact the development of professional identities of upcoming educators (Kálmán & Poyda-Nosyk, [2023](#)).

Kohohehko (2022) expressed that the concept of "professional identity" is widely acknowledged. According to certain philosophers, it is the accomplishment of professional self-determination, a person's attitude toward a specific career, while others see it as professional development. A person's self-perception as a professional and his evaluation of the professional environment in which he conducts, evaluates, and plans his own professional activity are the main methods used in most research to define professional identity. It's also important to note that a person's views of their professional identity are a collective characteristic that determines whether or not they feel like they belong to a certain professional group or community. Choosing a prospective job and receiving professional training are the first steps in developing a person's occupational identity. Professional training is a crucial part of professional development and is a collection of information, abilities, and skills that facilitate a person to do a specific job (Abbas et al., [2021](#)).

Ou and Gu ([2023](#)) stated that teachers' professional identity is about the educators' optimistic and strong approach to their job. The desire to remain employed and see a project through to its conclusion is indicative of a deep attachment to the profession. Teachers who are secure in their professional identities are devoted

to their jobs and see education as more than just a means to an end (a calling, really). Career satisfaction, which arises from a feeling of achievement in one's work, is proof of a teacher's professional identity. They have a deep dedication to their work and see teaching as a lifelong passion rather than just a job; they get their intrinsic motivation from seeing their pupils thrive academically and personally. A strong positive correlation exists between one's sense of self and one's level of contentment in one's work life. Wong and Liu (2024) found that teachers reported higher levels of involvement and commitment when they had strong personal identities, which is a strong indicator of job satisfaction.

The researcher reviewed the literature and identified multiple studies examining professional identity, psychological empowerment, and teacher satisfaction across various contexts and levels. Limited research has identified factors contributing to teachers' satisfaction, specifically the roles of professional identity and psychological empowerment within the context of Pakistan. It is essential to investigate the relationship between teachers' satisfaction and the factors of professional identity and psychological empowerment.

Purpose Statement

Teachers are responsible for fostering the holistic development of students at the secondary school level. It needs a high level of satisfaction, professional identity, and psychological empowerment. The recent study aimed to investigate the effect of professional identity and psychological empowerment on enhancing teachers' satisfaction.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To analyze the impact of professional identity on the satisfaction of teachers.
2. To evaluate the impact of psychological empowerment on teacher satisfaction.

Hypotheses

1. The hypotheses of the study were as follows: Professional identity does not significantly affect teacher satisfaction.

2. Psychological empowerment does not have a significant effect on teachers' satisfaction.

Delimitation of Study

The study focused exclusively on secondary school teachers in public high schools in Punjab, Pakistan.

Literature Review

Teachers' professional identity is considered the subject of significant importance and vital in shaping educators, self-awareness and perceptions of different parts of their job, containing intellectual investigation, classroom strategies, course plan, pedagogical methods and techniques, and their collaboration in academic settings. The teacher professional identity scale can motivate pre-service educators' readiness and guide and teach them to grow into competent educators. It provides upcoming and pre-service teachers with the tools to determine their conduct, ethics, beliefs, and views about education and teaching that may support them in establishing themselves as competent educators. A teacher's professional identity influences pedagogical skills and teaching strategies (Zeng & Liu., 2024).

Maryne et al. (2024) described that the role of a guide for upcoming teachers is crucial and significant. The study concentrated on enlightening the particulars of the establishment of upcoming educators' identity as professionals and considering the character of a guide as an instructor, consultant, and specialized associate for upcoming educators. They further said that professional identities are significant for individual development, which is considered a high level of competence of a professional, specifically an educator. Mentors and coaches may play a vital part in the construction of upcoming educators' professional identities. It was concluded that master-level learners admit to the value and significance of tutoring and coaching for future teachers in the formation of professional identity among teachers.

Awaje and Amaha (2022) described that the study concluded that both career satisfaction and professional self-respect are positively linked with professional identity. Professional identity may be determined by occupational self-respect and work satisfaction. However, professional self-actualization and esteem influence emphasize the

significant and strong association between teachers' job satisfaction and professional identities. According to a recent study, schools, colleges, and universities that offer teacher education programs may focus on developing their professional identities. Teachers may also be conscious of their professional recognition and the influencing elements, and teachers' self-respect and job satisfaction may be helpful in enhancing the image of employees and occupation. Professional self-esteem and the prestige of a profession are essential to improve reputation and faith in the occupation (Anwer et al., 2015). Moreover, representatives and stockholders may focus on teachers' professional development to increase the reputation and the attraction of the occupation.

Zhang et al. (2021) highlighted that psychological empowerment is important to lighten work stress, frustration, and uncertainty; however, it contributes a major part to increasing career satisfaction in employees within an organization. Psychological empowerment is deliberated as an initiative to provide employees with liberation in order to decrease the opinion of powerlessness and reduce the issues and obstacles in the environment of an organization. It motivates the workers to do extra work in a good way and enhances their performance. Empowered employees fulfill their assigned tasks with motivation, commitment, and dedication, enhancing the output of an organization.

Faremi and Jita (2019) described that the career satisfaction of teachers is important in increasing the teachers' work outputs in village learning environments. A positive organizational environment improves the level of teachers' satisfaction and improves their performance; on the other hand, a problematic organizational environment reduces the effectiveness of scientific instructors in learning environments in rural areas. If the science teachers and administrators of an institution are sincere in creating a positive and conducive organizational environment and display positive leadership behavior, there will be development in the work performance of science teachers. Furthermore, clashes and issues may be resolved in a useful manner by establishing issues management groups. The conflicts and issues have a negative impact on the workers' performance and organizational environment and obstruct attaining the goals and objectives of the institution.

Autonomy, support, and independence may be granted to science teachers to increase their performance. The current study indicated the necessity for institutions' heads and investors to focus on the elements that are essential to enhance the performance of the teachers while highlighting the problems of deficiency and inclination of science teachers in teaching rural ecologies.

Ahmad et al. (2024) revealed that teachers at the secondary level were quite contented and enthused by their methods of teaching. However, in terms of rewards and advantages, they demanded a higher level of job satisfaction, which was followed by physical facilities and working conditions. The study recommended developing educators' job happiness, which in turn improves teaching, the learning process, and the standards of education. Administrators and policymakers should give at propriety salary, benefits, working settings, and physical abilities.

Teacher work contentment is a critical component of high-quality education, and it affects learner accomplishment. Teachers are considered the leading powers in every educational institution. Students will do well and produce the proposed results if their teachers are contented and motivated at their jobs. A satisfied teacher spends most of his time with learners and instruction. A happy and content teacher has a significant positive impact on the performance of the learners. Teachers must be at ease in order to be more effective and productive. They will also give better outcomes for the learners and workplace management if they are satisfied in their positions (Zaman et al., 2019).

Toropova et al. (2021) expressed that the benefits, intrinsic motivation, compensation, working situation, interactive connections, and physical facilities are the common components of teacher job satisfaction. The most common reason for teacher turnover is an unpleasant work environment, according to global studies. In certain instances, compensation may be a contributing cause to the decline in the popularity of the teaching profession. Further, poor facilities are contributing to the decline of education, which makes it difficult to find new teachers.

Hussain et al. (2022) described that most Pakistani teachers, whether they work for the government or private schools, are thought to be

uncontended in their current positions for several reasons. Teacher satisfaction may be impacted by a number of aspects, including the school's location, the lack of physical facilities, the instructor's gender, the lesson's scheduling, previous work experience, and a lack of administrative support. Others thought that teachers' level of satisfaction was influenced by their pay benefits (Haider, Ahmad & Ali, 2024). But some people believe that working conditions are more important than pay. Others believe that job performance is significantly impacted by the intrinsic motivational qualities of the profession (Hafeez et al., 2021).

According to research, two important elements influencing job burnout among university professors are job satisfaction and professional identity. Based on the results of this study, schools should do more to help college professors feel more secure in their roles and happier in their work. Job burnout, the merit of online education, and sustainable development are the three main goals of this strategy. The study found that professional identity positively influences job satisfaction. Robust professional identities in educators are associated with increased job satisfaction, potentially reducing the likelihood of burnout. Conversely, job satisfaction may decrease job burnout and improve the professional self-reliance of university instructors. University instructors exhibiting higher job satisfaction frequently demonstrated an enhanced sense of professional identity (Chen et al., 2020).

Hussain and Hussain (2022) described that employee empowerment has a positive impact on overall job contentment. With the exception of the meaningfulness dimension, which was determined to have no bearing on job happiness, overall job satisfaction was significantly impacted by the competence and influence dimensions. More value for money, a lack of motivation to labor, etc., could be the cause of the absence of the meaningfulness dimension. The study concluded that employee empowerment had a positive effect on workers' overall job satisfaction. However, more research was required to determine the effects of work profile and demography on overall job satisfaction.

Al-Omari et al. (2019) expressed that the goal of empowerment as an organizational approach is to increase each employee's ability to take initiative and make decisions in their day-to-day job. Putting

into practice an employee empowerment plan helps foster a trusting workplace. Managers show their trust in their staff when they give them authority. Employees are encouraged to take on new challenges and a larger portion of the workload as a result. Moreover, it increases job satisfaction, which can boost output. A positive correlation was identified by the study between teachers' professionalism and resilience, suggesting the need for further interventions to improve this relationship (Zaman et al., 2024).

Employee empowerment gives employees the power and means to decide matters relating to their jobs. Access to decision-making and a platform to express ideas can promote teamwork and give workers a sense of worth and respect. This gives workers confidence and motivates them to come up with creative ideas. Empowerment can improve performance, including enhancing teamwork and problem-solving skills and providing workers with a stronger sense of control over their work. Their work becomes better as a result, which boosts output and performance (Malk et al., 2021).

Alshemmari (2023) revealed that employee empowerment is a proactive method to enhance employee performance and satisfaction. Employees become more dedicated to the success of their organization when they are given the autonomy to take responsibility for their work, are permitted to make decisions based on their expertise, and are told that their efforts are esteemed, which results in more enthused and happy workers as well as higher job satisfaction and better performance. By developing an atmosphere of empowerment, a company can encourage employees to express their creativity, take initiative, and embrace risks, ultimately increasing production.

Research Design

Cross-sectional studies aim to describe generalized relations between distinct conditions and elements. Moreover, these studies aimed at developing general models that connect various elements with one another under specific conditions. One significant benefit of cross-sectional research is its capacity to enable cross-case analysis (Hunziker & Blankenagel, 2024). This technique is appropriate for various research objectives in social sciences and healthcare, as it addresses the attitudes, knowledge, and perceptions underlying population

behavior (Taha & Nawaiseh, 2023). The study focused on elevating teachers' satisfaction: The impact of professional identity and psychological empowerment. This research was primarily descriptive in nature. We conducted a survey through cross-sectional research for this study.

Population

All secondary school teachers who work in Punjab's public high schools constituted the study population. The targeted population of the study comprised 3326 secondary school teachers (both male and female) from public high schools in the three districts of Punjab, Pakistan: Chakwal, Okara, and Bahawalpur.

Sample of the Study

The population is first divided into groups by shared characteristics, and then we take random selections from each group. Each subgroup receives a random selection to include representatives of all population groups (Buntin 2020). The research examined secondary school teachers of both genders who worked at public high schools across Punjab province in Pakistan. There were three geographically separate divisions within the province of Punjab: The researchers selected Upper Punjab, Central Punjab, and Southern Punjab (Zaman et al., 2024). We selected one high school from each region: Upper Punjab District Chakwal, Central Punjab District Okara, and Southern Punjab District Bahawalpur. The study sample followed Yamane's approach (1967) through $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$. For this study, we selected 357 secondary school teachers (male and female) from all public schools across Punjab in Pakistan. We used stratified random sampling to obtain a representative group from this extensive teacher population.

Research Tools & Data Collection

We gathered data through three adopted scales, including the "Career Satisfaction Scale" (Greenhaus et al., 1990) along with the "Professional Identity Scale" (Wei, 2008) and the "Psychological Empowerment Scale" (Spritzer, 1995). The reliability of tools was tested through Cronbach's alpha test. Cronbach alpha values of tools were .71, .73, and .83. Data were gathered via Google Forms disseminated by WhatsApp and

email, in addition to direct visits to public secondary schools conducted by the researcher.

Descriptive and inferential statistical methods and tools were used to examine the data. Descriptive statistics like percentage, mean, and standard deviation, as well as inferential statistics like linear regression, were used to analyze the collected data.

Data Analysis

Results:

Demographic Information

Table 1

Gender of Sample Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	78	21.8
Male	279	78.2
Total	357	100.0

The distribution of the sample by gender is illustrated in table 1. The sample comprised 78.2% male and 21.8% female secondary school teachers.

Table 2

Locality of Sample Respondents

Locality	Frequency	Percentage
Urban	199	57.7
Rural	158	44.3
Total	357	100.0

Table 2 indicates that the study comprised 57.7% urban participants and 44.3% rural participants.

Table 3

Academic Qualification wise Sample Distribution

Category	Frequency	Percentage
BA/BSc	28	7.8
M.A/MSc	213	59.7
MPhil	103	28.9
PhD	13	3.6
Total	357	100

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of educational qualifications among the secondary school teachers in the sample, with 7.8% holding a BA/BSc, 59.7%

possessing an M.A/MSc, 28.9% having an MPhil, and 3.6% achieving a PhD.

Table 4

Professional Qualification wise Sample Distribution

Program	Frequency	Percentage
B.Ed	152	42.6
M.Ed	205	57.4
Total	357	100.0

Table 4 shows that 42.6% were B.Ed and 57.4 % were M.Ed secondary school teachers in the sample.

Objective 1: To analyze the impact of professional identity on the satisfaction of teachers
 H₀₁ “Professional identity does not significantly affect teacher satisfaction.”

Table 5

Regression Analysis

Model Summary and Estimates of Parameter							
Equation	Model Summary					Parameter Estimate	
	R Square	F	R Square	F	R Square	F	R Square
Linear	.147	61.395	.147	61.395	.147	61.395	.147

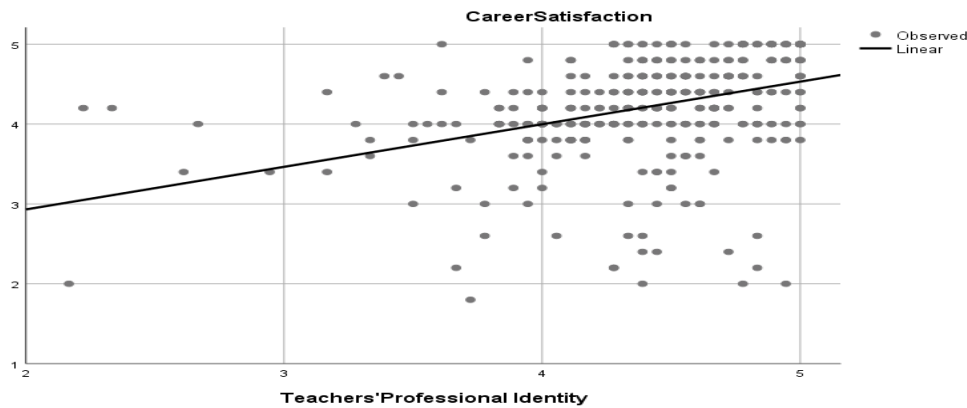
Dependent Variable: Teachers' Satisfaction
 The independent Variable: Professional Identity

Table 5 shows the results acquired by regression analysis. The results indicated that professional identity (Sig. =.000 < .05, R-Square = .147, β=.533, F= 61.395) had a significant positive impact on teachers' satisfaction. It may be concluded that

professional identity had a significant positive impact on teachers' satisfaction. Therefore, H₀₁ “Professional identity does not significantly affect teacher satisfaction” was not accepted.

Figure 1

Curve Estimation



Objective 2: To evaluate the impact of psychological empowerment on teacher satisfaction.

H₀₂: Psychological empowerment does not have a significant effect on teachers' satisfaction.

Table 6

Regression Analysis

Model Summary and Estimates of Parameter							
Equation	Model Summary					Parameter Estimate	
	R Square	F	df1	df2	Sig.	Constant	b1
Linear	.328	173.574	1	355	.000	1.197	.701

Dependent Variable: Teachers' Satisfaction
 The independent Variable: Psychological Empowerment

Table 6 demonstrates the results obtained by regression analysis. The results revealed that psychological empowerment (Sig. =.000 < .05, R-Square = .328, β =.701, F= 173.574) had a significant positive effect on teachers' satisfaction. It may be

concluded that there was a significant positive psychological effect on teachers' satisfaction. Therefore, H₀₂ "Psychological empowerment does not have a significant effect on teachers' satisfaction" was not accepted.

Figure 2
Curve Estimation



Table 7
Regression Analysis

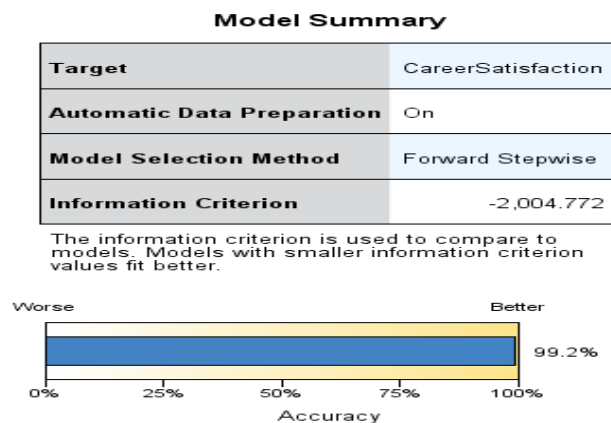
Coefficients					
Model 1	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.B
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
	1.270	.275	4.618	1.270	
	.726	.074	.594	9.782	.726
	-.042	.084	-.030	-.493	-.042

Dependent Variable: Teacher Satisfaction
The independent Variable: Professional Identity and Psychological Empowerment

Table 7 shows the regression analysis results. The results indicated that professional identity ($B = -.042$, $P = .000 < .05$) and psychological empowerment ($B = .726$, $P = .000 < .05$) had positive

effect on career satisfaction. It may be concluded that higher levels of professional identity and psychological empowerment strongly contribute to higher teachers' satisfaction.

Figure 3
Model Summary



Conclusions

The results led to the formulation of conclusions. This investigation sought to explore the influence of professional identity on the satisfaction levels of teachers. The results demonstrate a noteworthy positive influence of professional identity on teacher satisfaction. The second objective of the study was to assess how psychological empowerment influences teacher satisfaction. The results demonstrate that psychological empowerment plays a crucial role in improving teachers' satisfaction.

Discussion

The current study identified a significant positive impact of professional identity on the satisfaction of teachers. Different earlier studies have expressed the same findings. For example, Pham (2020) described that work happiness, organizational commitment, and career satisfaction were significantly influenced by organizational and professional identity. Being professional affects how satisfied you feel about your career through your pursuit of purpose. Our study supports previous research outcomes in this area of study. Research shows that employee performance is directly linked to influence, competency, self-independence, and meaning, which are important factors (Rania et al., 2021). Psychological empowerment and well-being significantly contribute a significant impact on job satisfaction (Kesawa et al., 2019).

The study revisits several findings that measured the impact of teachers' psychological empowerment and professional identity on teachers' satisfaction with other elements of teachers' performance and the quality of their teaching. As a result, such conclusions emphasize the need for further research and practice concerning the strengthening of professional identity and psychological empowerment to enhance the satisfaction of teachers in view of educational practices (Sun et al. 2022).

Recommendations

Following are the recommendations of this study.

1. Training may be provided to improve

teachers' skills and knowledge.

2. Professional standards for secondary school teachers should be developed.
3. A supportive and collaborative environment may be provided to the teachers to develop their relations with one another and the community.
4. Guidance and counseling should be given to secondary school teachers to increase their level of professional identity.
5. Recognition and appreciation may be offered to teachers' achievements to develop their level of professional identity.
6. Autonomy should be given to teachers when making decisions regarding classroom management, instructional methods, and curriculum.
7. Opportunities should be provided to teachers for their professional development.
8. Social events and activities may be organized to enhance unity and build relationships between teachers and the community.
9. Initiatives should be taken to increase monetary and non-monetary benefits for teachers.
10. Authorities may take steps to provide adequate facilities to teachers.
11. Teachers' satisfaction may be improved by addressing issues, i.e., reducing workload, promoting teaching facilities, personal development, and offering teachers professional development programs.

Suggestions for Future Research

1. Teachers of different demographic groups may take part in future research.
2. Research may be conducted across all educational institutions, both (public and private) in Pakistan.
3. Future research may integrate the findings with the extent of teachers' career satisfaction. Professional identity and psychological empowerment across various nations.
4. Interviews and observational research may also be conducted to gather insights from teachers' perspectives.

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