

Teacher Satisfaction and Its Determinants: Analysis Based on Data from Nigeria and Uganda

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Abstract

Teachers who are satisfied with their job are more likely to teach well, which in turn should enable their students to better learn while in school. Sub-Saharan Africa is currently experiencing a learning crisis, with close to nine out of ten children not able to read and understand a simple text at age 10. This affects all types of schools and students, including students in Catholic and other faith-based schools. Improving working conditions and job satisfaction among teachers is part of the answer to this learning crisis. This article looks at the level of satisfaction of teachers in Uganda, its determinants, and its impact on the quality teaching. Specifically, four questions are asked: What is the level of teacher job satisfaction in Uganda? How does job satisfaction relate to the characteristics of teachers? What is the impact of teachers' satisfaction on their performance, as it can be measured through various variables of teacher effort? Finally, what are the main factors affecting satisfaction according to teachers? The answers to these questions have implications for policy and practice in faith-based as well as in other schools.

Keywords: Teacher satisfaction, teacher pay, Catholic schools, Africa, Working conditions, Professional development

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Introduction

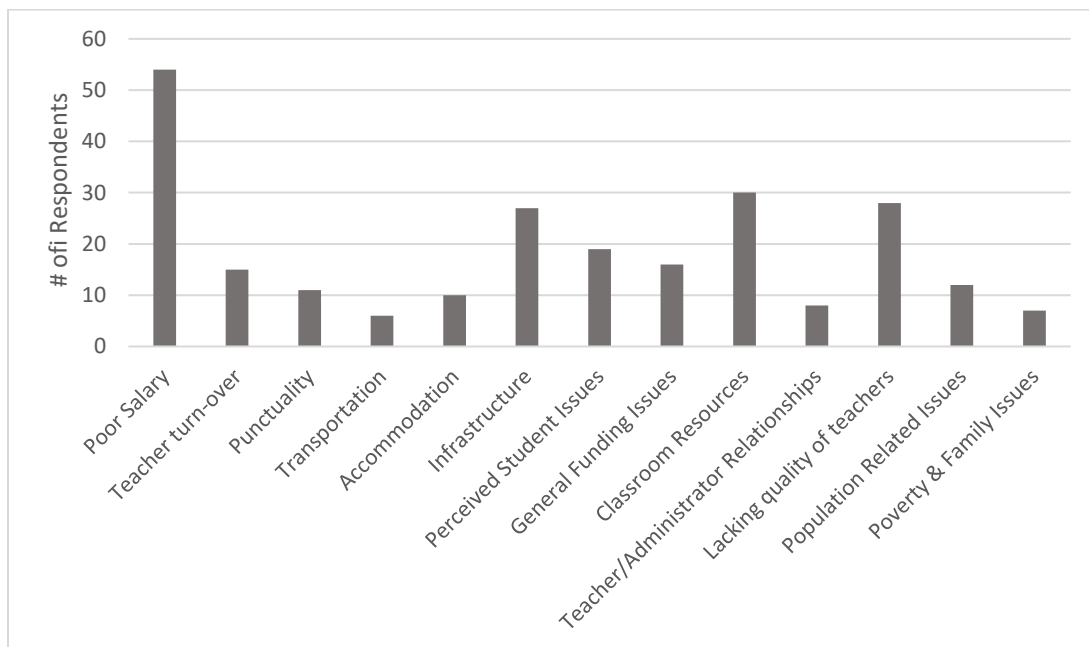
Teachers are not only tasked with imparting knowledge: they also have the power to inspire or suppress intellectual curiosity. Primary school teachers in particular help to lay the foundations upon which pupils' attitudes towards education are built. Satisfaction affects employees' physical and mental well-being, as well as having an impact on job-related behaviors such as productivity, absenteeism, turnover and employee relations. The full benefits of education may not be reaped when teacher job satisfaction levels are low, or when they are plainly dissatisfied with their work or working conditions. Job satisfaction should be a variable of major interest, which should be understood and monitored for the welfare of any institution. This also applies for education systems, whether faith-based or not.

Sub-Saharan Africa, the region where enrollment in Catholic schools is rising the fastest¹, is currently experiencing a learning crisis, with close to nine out of ten children not able to read and understand a simple text at age 10 (Bashir et al., 2018; World Bank, 2018, 2020). The COVID-19 crisis may have further exacerbated these difficulties (Azevedo, 2020). Improving working conditions, training, and job satisfaction among teachers is part of the answer to the learning crisis (World Bank, 2020). In particular, Beteille and Evans (2018) suggest five principles drawn from the literature that should guide teacher policies to improve learning: (1) Make teaching an attractive profession by improving its status, compensation policies and career progression structures; (2) Ensure pre-service education includes a strong practicum component to ensure teachers are well-equipped to transition and perform effectively in the classroom; (3) Promote meritocratic selection of teachers, followed by a probationary period, to improve the quality of the teaching force; (4) Provide continuous support and motivation, in the form of high-quality in-service professional development and strong school leadership, to allow teachers to continually improve; and (5) Use technology wisely to enhance the ability of teachers to reach every student, factoring their areas of strength and development. Clearly, these principles and related policies should (for the most part) improve teacher satisfaction ... but satisfaction needs to be measured!

Despite the importance for student learning of job satisfaction among teachers, few studies are available in sub-Saharan Africa to assess factors that may affect teacher satisfaction. This article aims to address this gap with a case study for primary teachers in Uganda. It seeks to provide answers to the following questions: What is the level of teacher job satisfaction in Uganda? How does job satisfaction relates to the characteristics of teachers? And what is the impact of teachers' satisfaction on their performance, as it can be measured through variables that could be used as proxies (albeit imperfect) of teacher effort? And finally, what may be the implications of answers to these questions?

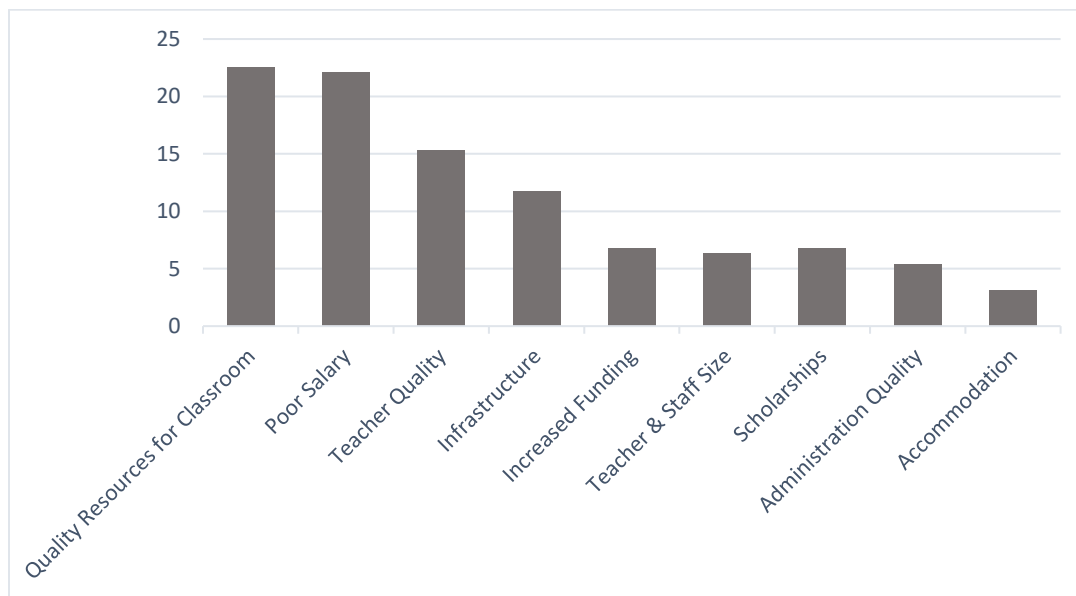
While this article is based on data from Uganda, to set the stage and suggest that the challenges faced in Uganda are likely to also be faced elsewhere, consider recent data collected by one of the authors for teachers in Catholic schools at a conference organized in January 2020 in the Diocese of Nsukka in Nigeria. One of the questions asked to participants was “What specific challenges do you experience in your work?” Respondents could list up to three challenges. Responses were open ended, but could be categorized in key categories, as shown in Figure 1. Poor salaries were mentioned the most, followed by lack of classroom resources and poor infrastructure as well as lack of quality among teachers. Another question asked to participants was “What specific possibilities for improvement do you see for your school?” Again, responses were open ended, but as shown in Figure 2, the answers match the challenges identified in the first question. Teachers perceive the situation in which they must teach as difficult.

Figure 1: Challenges Faced by Catholic Teachers, Nigeria



Source: Authors, based on a survey implemented for conference participants in January 2020.

Figure 2: Possibilities for Improvement in Your School, Share of responses (%), Nigeria



Source: Authors, based on a survey implemented for conference participants in January 2020.

The fact that in much of sub-Saharan Africa, teachers must work in difficult conditions is more than a perception: it is the reality. This article looks at some of those conditions and how they may affect satisfaction and in turn teaching effort. The concept of job satisfaction points to an individual's overall feelings about their job, including what they may like (leading to satisfaction) or dislike (leading to dissatisfaction). According to Locke (1969): *"Job dissatisfaction is the un-pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as frustrating or blocking the attainment of one's job values or as entailing disvalues. Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are a function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from one's job and what one perceives it as offering."*

Different procedures can be used to measure satisfaction, but job satisfaction questionnaires are among the most appropriate instruments (Smith et al., 1969). They tend to be structured around specific areas of satisfaction. Questions may be asked to respondents for them to describe their work and the surveys are often designed to guide respondents in answering such questions. Experience has shown that lack of care in the design of surveys can seriously limit the validity and usefulness of the data collected. Proper attention should be given to the formulation of questions, while also ensuring employee anonymity and using appropriate sampling procedures to achieve representativeness.

For this article, the analysis is based on a small random survey of teachers implemented by the Pôle de Dakar for a report on teachers in Uganda (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2014). The survey is

limited in terms of the length of its questionnaire – only a few key questions were asked (questionnaire in annex), and in terms of sample size (387 respondents). Still, the survey is substantial enough to carry detailed analysis and it provides valuable insights. While the survey does not identify if teachers are in a Catholic or other faith-based schools, it is possible that many teachers from Catholic and faith-based schools were included in the survey since (1) faith-based schools have a fairly large market share in Uganda and (2) most faith-based schools are public schools. In many ways, Catholic and other faith-based public schools are not too different from other public schools in the country².

The structure of the article is as follows. Section 2 provides basic statistics from the survey. Section 3 provides the results of regression analysis for the correlates of satisfaction and its impact on teacher effort. A brief conclusion with some of the implications of the analysis for policy follows.

2. Basic Statistics

The analysis presented in this article is based on data collected through the National Survey on Primary Teacher Satisfaction in Uganda (NASPTSU) organized by the Ministry of Education and Sports in 2012 with the support of UNESCO's Pôle de Dakar. While the data were collected almost a decade ago, it is likely that many of the issues that were identified at the time remain present today. The sample size of the survey was 387 elementary school teachers randomly selected from all regions of the country.

Table 1 provides basic statistics on the characteristics of the sample. The sample is evenly split by gender. Half of the teachers are between 30 and 40 years of age, with 20.4 percent younger than that (22 to 29 years old) and 28.9 percent older (40 to 58 years old). More than eight in ten teachers are married, 11 percent are single, and the others have another marital status. In terms of location, the sample is on purpose relatively evenly distributed among the four main regions, with the Northern region being the most represented (30.8 percent of the sample) and the Western region the least (20.9 percent of the sample). Regarding professional qualifications, a majority (54.7 percent) of teachers are teaching with grade III qualifications, with another 39.4 percent teaching with grade V qualifications. One in twenty is teaching with graduate level qualifications. Regarding academic qualification, the largest groups of teachers has the O' level education (44.7 percent), but many have tertiary education (37.2 percent). In terms of deployment, most teachers teach at the lower and upper levels. Finally, three in four teachers (73.1 percent) are members of the Uganda National teachers' Union (UNATU) that resulted in 2003 from the merger of the Uganda Teacher's Association (UTA) and the Uganda National Teachers (UNUT).

Table 1: Basic Characteristics of Primary School Teachers in the Survey Sample, Uganda

	Gender		Age			Professional level				Region				Total
	Female	Male	22-29	30-40	40-58	Grade V	Grade III	Graduate	No Response	Central	Eastern	Northern	Western	
Gender														
Female	100.0	0.0	48.1	52.3	48.2	52.0	46.2	80.0	33.3	57.7	43.4	42.4	59.3	50.3
Male	0.0	100.0	51.9	47.7	51.8	48.0	53.8	20.0	66.7	42.3	56.6	57.6	40.7	49.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Age group														
22-29	19.6	21.4	100.0	0.0	0.0	7.2	32.2	0.0	0.0	20.2	13.3	26.1	19.8	20.4
30-40	52.6	48.4	0.0	100.0	0.0	54.6	46.9	55.0	100.0	52.9	56.6	45.4	49.4	50.7
40-58	27.8	30.2	0.0	0.0	100.0	38.2	20.9	45.0	0.0	26.9	30.1	28.6	30.9	28.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Professional level														
Grade V	40.9	38.0	13.9	42.4	52.3	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	39.4	27.7	50.9	34.6	39.4
Grade III	50.3	58.9	86.1	50.5	39.6	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	55.8	67.5	44.1	55.6	54.7
Graduate	8.3	2.1	0.0	5.6	8.1	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	4.8	4.8	4.2	7.4	5.2
No Response	0.5	1.0	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	2.5	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Region														
Central	30.9	22.9	26.6	28.1	25.0	27.0	27.5	25.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	26.9
Eastern	18.6	24.5	13.9	24.0	22.3	15.1	26.5	20.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	21.5
Northern	25.8	35.4	39.2	27.6	30.4	39.5	24.6	25.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	30.8
Western	24.7	17.2	20.3	20.4	22.3	18.4	21.3	30.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	20.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Marital status														
Divorced	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	1.2	0.5
Married	75.3	88.5	72.2	84.2	84.8	82.9	81.5	75.0	100.0	73.1	90.4	84.9	80.3	81.9
Separated	4.6	1.6	0.0	4.1	3.6	7.2	0.5	0.0	0.0	3.9	1.2	4.2	2.5	3.1
Single	12.9	9.4	27.9	9.2	2.7	5.3	14.7	20.0	0.0	21.2	7.2	5.9	9.9	11.1
Widowed	6.2	0.5	0.0	2.0	8.0	4.0	2.8	5.0	0.0	1.9	1.2	4.2	6.2	3.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Authors' estimation using the NASPTSU survey.

Table 1 (Continued): Basic Characteristics of Primary School Teachers in the Survey Sample, Uganda

	Gender		Age			Professional level				Region				Total
	Female	Male	22-29	30-40	40-58	Grade V	Grade III	Graduate	No Response	Central	Eastern	Northern	Western	
Professional level														
Grade V	40.9	38.0	13.9	42.4	52.3	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	39.4	27.7	50.9	34.6	39.4
Grade III	50.3	58.9	86.1	50.5	39.6	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	55.8	67.5	44.1	55.6	54.7
Graduate	8.3	2.1	0.0	5.6	8.1	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	4.8	4.8	4.2	7.4	5.2
No Response	0.5	1.0	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	2.5	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Academic level														
-	2.6	1.6	2.5	2.6	0.9	2.0	1.4	5.0	0.0	2.9	2.4	1.7	1.2	2.1
A Level	3.1	9.9	3.8	7.1	7.1	6.6	7.1	0.0	0.0	2.9	10.8	6.7	6.2	6.5
O Level	50.5	38.5	44.3	44.4	45.5	40.8	49.8	25.0	33.3	24.0	60.2	42.9	58.0	44.7
Primary	2.1	1.0	1.3	0.0	4.5	2.0	0.5	10.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	3.4	0.0	1.6
Tertiary	32.5	42.2	44.3	35.7	34.8	40.1	39.3	0.0	0.0	59.6	19.3	37.8	25.9	37.2
University	8.3	3.1	2.5	7.1	5.4	5.9	0.5	55.0	33.3	8.7	3.6	4.2	6.2	5.7
Wrong Response	1.0	3.7	1.3	3.1	1.8	2.6	1.4	5.0	33.3	1.9	1.2	3.4	2.5	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Deployment														
Both Lower & Upper	7.2	4.2	8.9	7.1	0.9	4.6	6.6	5.0	0.0	4.8	7.2	6.7	3.7	5.7
Lower	46.4	9.4	31.7	28.6	24.1	28.3	28.4	15.0	33.3	30.8	28.9	22.7	30.9	27.9
No response	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.3
Upper	45.9	86.5	59.5	63.8	75.0	67.1	64.5	80.0	66.7	64.4	63.9	70.6	64.2	66.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Member of UNATU														
No	23.2	28.7	55.7	20.4	14.3	13.2	36.0	20.0	0.0	23.1	28.9	25.2	27.2	25.8
No Response	1.6	0.5	2.5	0.5	0.9	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.7	1.2	1.0
Yes	75.3	70.8	41.8	79.1	84.8	86.8	62.1	80.0	100.0	76.0	71.1	73.1	71.6	73.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Authors' estimation using the NASPTSU survey.

Three main questions were asked in the survey to measure capture job satisfaction or dissatisfaction: 1) Generally speaking, how would you rate your overall satisfaction with your job as a teacher?; 2) If you had the opportunity to start over in a new career, would you choose to become a teacher?; and 3) Generally speaking, do you believe that the teachers with whom you work are satisfied with their job? The first question captures teachers' point of view of their level of satisfaction. The second question provides a second measure of how happy teachers feel with their job. The third question captures teachers' perception of their colleagues' level of satisfaction, which is often tainted by their own feelings. For the first question teachers could provide one of four answers: they were very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied; or very dissatisfied. For the other two questions, a yes/no answer was requested. The second question measuring the willingness rate is generally accepted as the best proxy to capture job satisfaction and dissatisfaction rates. Most studies show that direct questions to employees on their level of satisfaction, such as done in the first question, may yield biased results. The third question is also subject to criticism since respondents provide perceptions on the satisfaction of their colleagues. Overall, the three questions combined are likely to provide a better assessment of satisfaction than any of the three questions alone.

Table 2 provides basic statistics on satisfaction rates. On the four point rating scale from very satisfied to very dissatisfied, slightly more than half of the teachers are somewhat satisfied (44.2 percent) or very satisfied (8.6 percent). A fifth (18.2 percent) are very dissatisfied, and 28.2 percent are somewhat dissatisfied. When asked whether they would choose to become a teacher if they had the opportunity to start over, only 41.9 percent say that they would, while 56.9 percent state that they would not. As to perceptions of other teachers' satisfaction, less than a fourth of teachers (22.3 percent) believe that their colleagues are satisfied while three in four (75.7 percent) believe that their colleagues are not satisfied. Clearly satisfaction rates are low.

There are differences between groups, as visualized in Figure 3 for answers to the first question on satisfaction. Teachers tend to be least satisfied in the Western region and most satisfied in the Eastern region. Men are slightly more satisfied than women. Older teachers tend to be less satisfied than younger teachers. Teachers at grade III tend to be more satisfied than teachers at the graduate level, with teachers at grade V being the least satisfied. All these comparisons do not however control for other variables and some results change when considering some of the other questions. For example, when considering the question on starting over as a teacher, more women would do this than men. The regression analysis in

the next section tests in a more systematic way for the impact at the margin of the various characteristics of teachers on an overall index of satisfaction combining information from the three questions.

Factors that determine teachers' levels of satisfaction could be multiple (Gesinde and Adejumo, 2012). Altering teachers' working conditions and their professional environment can affect satisfaction levels, as can many other factors including the level of pay provided. The survey examined eight major potential factors affecting satisfaction: professional recognition, opportunities for professional growth, interpersonal relationships/social activities with colleagues, salaries, benefits, working conditions, regular performance assessments, and the quality of head teacher leadership and supervision. Respondents were requested to rank these factors according to the importance of their impact on job satisfaction. The analysis of the findings follows two approaches for ranking the eight factors: (i) the number of times each factor was chosen as the main source of satisfaction; or (ii) the mean mark received by each of the factors, considering the number of times each factor was mentioned in each position (the most influential factor would be the one with the lowest mean). Both approaches yield similar findings.

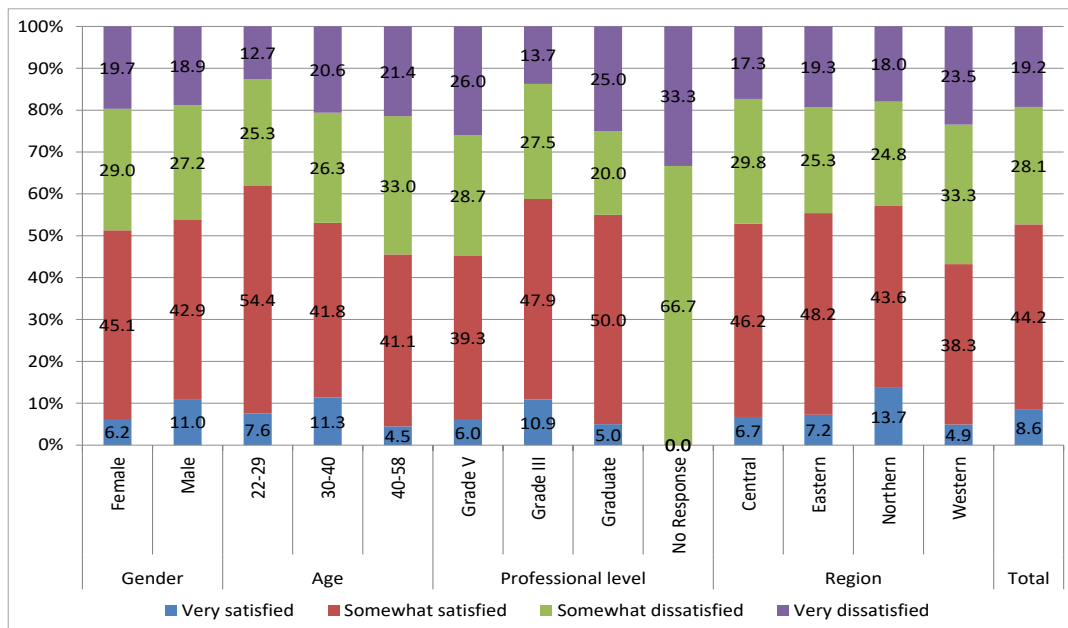
As shown in Table 3 and Figure 4, salaries are by far mentioned the most as the number one factor influencing satisfaction (echoing the data shared earlier for teachers in Catholic schools in Nigeria). After salaries, many of the other factors affecting job satisfaction were ranked in somewhat similar ways, with slight differences depending on the ranking methodology used. Overall, salaries are clearly the main factor affecting satisfaction, but other factors may also have an impact on satisfaction and deserve attention.

There are differences between groups in the rating of factors affecting satisfaction. For example, teachers in the Central and Western regions attributed more importance to salary than teachers in the other two regions. Opportunities for professional growth were ranked higher in the Central and Northern regions, whereas professional recognition was deemed more important in the Eastern and Northern regions. The quality of leadership and supervision by head teachers was considered more important in the Eastern and Western regions. Overall though, despite some differences including by gender, the differences by region, gender, grade, or other categories tend to be somewhat limited.

Finally, Table 4 provides data additional questions asked to teachers. The findings indicate that (at the time of the survey) around 60 percent of teachers would like to obtain an administrative position in the education sector. Most teachers (84 percent) would like to resign from teaching within the next two years, which is very large as a proportion. It can also be shown that the declared desire to abandon the teaching profession is much higher among dissatisfied teachers than among satisfied teachers. In terms of the measures of effort, four indicators are used: the amount of homework assigned to pupils,

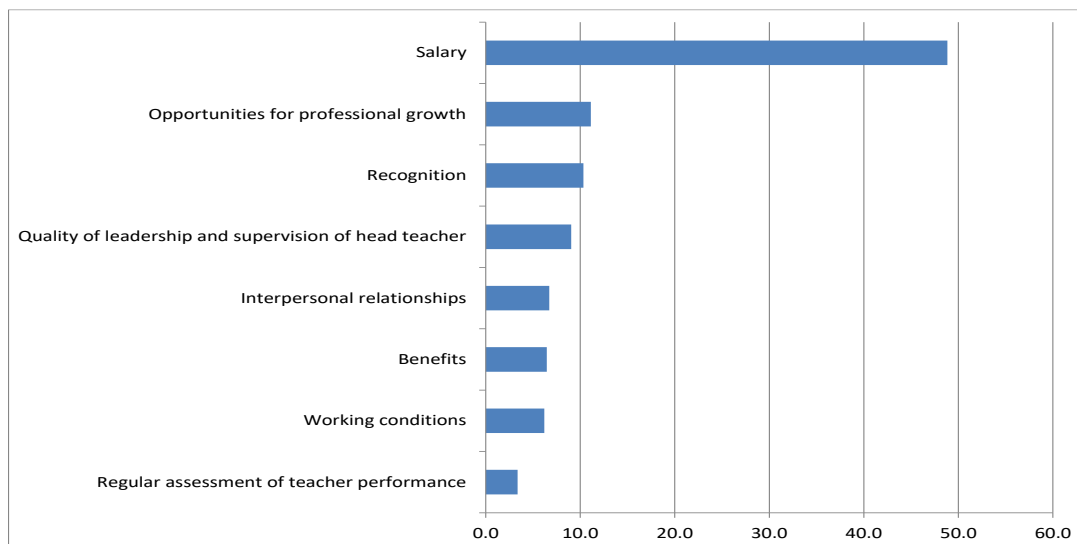
the time spent teaching, the time spent preparing lectures, the total time spent teaching and preparing lecture, and finally the degree of absenteeism (with permission from the school; teachers might not have responded honestly about absenteeism without permission). Rather than discussing those measures in and by themselves, we will focus in the next section on how they are affected by job satisfaction.

Figure 3: Overall Satisfaction Ratings for Teachers (%), Uganda



Source: Authors' estimation using the NASPTSU survey.

Figure 4: Factors Affect Job Satisfaction (Share Ranked Highest), Uganda



Source: Authors' estimation using the NASPTSU survey.

Table 2: Satisfaction Rates among Primary School Teachers, Uganda

	Gender		Age			Professional level				Region				
	Female	Male	22-29	30-40	40-58	Grade V	Grade III	Graduate	No Response	Central	Eastern	Northern	Western	Total
Satisfaction														
Very satisfied	6.2	11.0	7.6	11.3	4.5	6.0	10.9	5.0	0.0	6.7	7.2	13.7	4.9	8.6
Somewhat	45.1	42.9	54.4	41.8	41.1	39.3	47.9	50.0	0.0	46.2	48.2	43.6	38.3	44.2
Somewhat not	29.0	27.2	25.3	26.3	33.0	28.7	27.5	20.0	66.7	29.8	25.3	24.8	33.3	28.1
Very dissatisfied	19.7	18.9	12.7	20.6	21.4	26.0	13.7	25.0	33.3	17.3	19.3	18.0	23.5	19.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Starting over														
No	55.2	58.3	51.9	57.1	59.8	63.2	52.6	60.0	33.3	53.9	51.8	56.3	66.7	56.9
No Response	1.0	1.6	0.0	2.0	0.9	1.3	0.5	5.0	33.3	1.0	1.2	1.7	1.2	1.3
Yes	43.8	40.1	48.1	40.8	39.3	35.5	46.9	35.0	33.3	45.2	47.0	42.0	32.1	41.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Teachers satisfied														
No	77.8	73.4	76.0	74.0	78.6	79.0	73.0	80.0	66.7	76.0	73.5	68.1	88.9	75.7
No Response	2.1	2.6	2.5	2.0	2.7	2.0	2.4	0.0	33.3	1.9	1.2	3.4	2.5	2.3
Yes	20.1	24.0	21.5	24.0	18.8	19.1	24.6	20.0	0.0	22.1	25.3	28.6	8.6	22.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Authors' estimation using the NASPTSU survey.

Table 3: Factors Affecting Satisfaction Rates According to Teachers, Uganda

	Gender		Age			Professional level				Region				Total
	Female	Male	22-29	30-40	40-58	Grade V	Grade III	Graduate	No Response	Central	Eastern	Northern	Western	
Ranked first (%)														
Recognition	8.2	12.5	12.7	9.2	10.7	8.6	10.9	20.0	0.0	3.8	13.3	19.3	2.5	10.3
Professional growth	9.3	13.0	10.1	11.7	10.7	13.8	9.0	15.0	0.0	13.5	13.3	11.8	4.9	11.1
Relationships	8.2	5.2	6.3	7.7	5.4	10.5	4.3	0.0	33.3	4.8	6.0	10.9	3.7	6.7
Salary	51.0	46.4	54.4	47.4	47.3	45.4	51.7	45.0	33.3	57.7	38.6	37.8	64.2	48.8
Benefits	5.2	7.8	5.1	6.6	7.1	7.2	5.7	10.0	0.0	5.8	6.0	5.9	8.6	6.5
Working conditions	8.8	3.6	8.9	4.6	7.1	7.2	6.2	0.0	0.0	4.8	7.2	7.6	4.9	6.2
Performance assessment	3.1	3.6	3.8	3.6	2.7	2.6	4.3	0.0	0.0	1.9	3.6	3.4	4.9	3.4
Leadership quality	9.3	8.9	3.8	10.7	9.8	9.9	8.5	5.0	33.3	6.7	10.8	11.8	6.2	9.0
Average ranking														
Recognition	4.7	4.3	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.7	3.7	4.0	5.1	4.6	3.8	4.9	4.5
Professional growth	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.7	3.7	4.5	4.0
Relationships	4.9	5.0	5.2	4.8	5.1	4.7	5.1	5.3	2.7	5.5	4.9	4.5	5.1	5.0
Salary	2.7	3.2	2.6	3.1	3.0	3.2	2.8	2.5	5.7	2.4	3.3	3.7	2.3	3.0
Benefits	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.2	7.0	3.7	4.7	5.0	3.5	4.3
Working conditions	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.6	4.4	4.3	4.4	5.8	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.8	4.4	4.4
Performance assessment	5.3	5.3	5.1	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.3	5.8	4.7	5.5	5.2	5.0	5.6	5.3
Leadership quality	5.2	5.2	5.6	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.3	5.0	4.0	5.3	5.1	4.9	5.7	5.2

Source: Authors' estimation using the NASPTSU survey.

Table 4: Index of Satisfaction, Earnings, and Level of Effort, Uganda

	Gender		Age			Professional level				Region				Total
	Female	Male	22-29	30-40	40-58	Grade V	Grade III	Graduate	No Response	Central	Eastern	Northern	Western	
Index 1														
Mean	0.260	0.281	0.295	0.282	0.231	0.225	0.307	0.230	0.148	0.272	0.294	0.315	0.177	0.270
Median	0.093	0.093	0.296	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.296	0.093	0.148	0.296	0.296	0.093	0.093	0.093
Index 2														
Mean	0.602	0.579	0.591	0.584	0.598	0.571	0.608	0.525	0.808	0.566	0.611	0.599	0.584	0.589
Median	0.771	0.771	0.771	0.771	0.771	0.771	0.771	0.771	0.808	0.771	0.771	0.771	0.771	0.771
Index 3														
Mean	0.667	0.637	0.688	0.635	0.655	0.634	0.671	0.635	0.341	0.733	0.618	0.544	0.741	0.652
Median	0.742	0.659	0.764	0.697	0.686	0.669	0.726	0.744	0.195	0.801	0.625	0.566	0.836	0.704
Salary														
Mean	335,110	399,912	291,837	361,123	430,982	361,778	370,523	385,211	378,395	313,251	367,811	368,898	432,827	367,586
Median	320,845	320,000	309,400	316,673	347,300	330,238	313,950	350,000	359,550	310,000	320,000	320,000	332,789	320,000
Other income														
Mean	15,225	51,707	34,395	34,629	30,589	18,627	47,243	2,941	51,667	36,771	47,324	31,513	18,718	33,420
Median	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55,000	0	0	0	0	0
Total income														
Mean	350,335	451,619	326,233	395,751	461,571	380,405	417,767	388,153	430,061	350,021	415,135	400,411	451,545	401,006
Median	330,516	335,000	310,000	330,000	357,000	340,250	330,000	357,023	459,550	321,690	340,000	338,558	340,500	333,000
Homeworks														
Mean	13.9	11.6	12.8	12.4	13.2	12.1	13.1	13.3	14.7	15.7	11.5	7.9	17.2	12.7
Median	20.0	10.0	20.0	15.0	20.0	12.0	20.0	17.5	20.0	20.0	10.0	4.0	20.0	16.0
Teaching														
Mean	22.6	22.4	20.0	24.2	21.4	22.5	22.8	20.9	20.3	23.9	19.9	19.4	28.1	22.5
Median	20.0	19.5	18.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	13.5	16.0	20.0	17.0	15.0	25.0	20.0
Prep. time														
Mean	11.4	11.9	10.6	11.5	12.7	12.7	11.5	7.7	0.0	11.2	12.0	9.0	15.6	11.6
Median	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	5.0	0.0	10.0	8.0	4.0	12.0	10.0
Total time														
Mean	34.0	34.3	30.6	35.7	34.1	35.2	34.2	28.6	20.3	35.1	31.9	28.5	43.7	34.2
Median	30.0	31.0	25.0	33.5	32.5	33.5	30.0	26.0	16.0	34.0	30.0	20.0	40.0	30.0
Absences														
Mean	4.0	4.2	3.5	4.4	4.0	4.4	3.9	4.1	2.7	4.6	3.9	4.2	3.6	4.1
Median	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0

Source: Authors' estimation using the NASPTSU survey.

Correlates of Satisfaction and Impact of Satisfaction on Effort

This section provides an analysis of the correlates of job satisfaction among teachers, and of the extent to which job satisfaction may affect teacher effort. Results of the analysis are provided in Table 5 using categorical or linear models depending on the dependent variable being considered.

Consider first the results for job satisfaction. Teachers with more years of experience are slightly more satisfied with each year of experience resulting in a 1.7 percentage point increase in satisfaction, but the effect is only marginally statistically significant and the effect could be due to teachers less satisfied being more likely to leave the profession earlier (so there may be an endogeneity effect at work here). Teachers with tertiary education are less satisfied, perhaps because their career prospects outside of the profession are better than for teachers with less education. Women teachers tend to be more satisfied, while those who are divorced or separated, as well as those who are single, tend to be less satisfied. Teachers who are members of the Uganda National Teacher Union (UNATU) tend to be less satisfied, with the effect being both large in percentage points and highly statistically significant (there may be endogeneity here if those teachers who are less satisfied are more likely to join the union).

Consider next the results for the relationship between satisfaction and effort. Standard ordinary least square regressions are estimated. As mentioned earlier, four different measures of effort are used: the amount of homework assigned to pupils, the time spent teaching, the time spent preparing lectures, the total time spent teaching and preparing lecture, and finally the degree of absenteeism (with permission from the school; teachers might not have responded honestly about absenteeism without permission). Given that there may also be endogeneity issues which cannot be properly instrumented with the available data, the results should be considered as descriptive and may not imply causality.

In comparison with the reference category of the Central region, the level of effort tends to be lower in the Northern region, and to some extent also in the Eastern region. In the Western region, the sign of the results depends on the measure used. Older teachers tend to spend more time preparing lectures than younger; while the effects are smaller at the margin (negative coefficient for squared values of experience), the marginal effects remain positive for additional years of experience. This effect carries as well for the total time preparing lectures and teaching. Single teachers spend less time preparing lectures and this effect also carries for the total time preparing lectures and teaching. There is also some evidence that highly satisfied teachers spend less time teaching, although the coefficient is only marginally statistically significant. The effect on absenteeism is stronger both in magnitude and in terms of statistical significance, with a higher level of satisfaction reducing the number of absences from school.

Table 5: Correlates of Primary School Teacher Satisfaction and Level of Effort

	Index of satisfaction	Homework assigned to pupils	Time spent teaching	Time preparing lectures	Teaching and preparation time	Absenteeism
Region						
Eastern	-0.0676	-2.5859*	-4.4998	0.1626	-4.3372	-1.2121*
Northern	-0.0401	-5.9122***	-5.9041**	-2.7562	-8.6603**	-0.6747
Western	-0.0731	2.7055**	2.2176	2.8670	5.0846	-1.6223**
Qualifications						
Years of experience	0.0166*	0.0341	0.4312	0.6784**	1.1096*	-0.0273
Experience squared	-0.0004	-0.0014	-0.0197*	-0.0169*	-0.0366**	-0.0006
Deployed in lower	-0.0190	0.2806	0.6283	1.5582	2.1865	0.3665
Has tertiary education	-0.1065**	1.6553*	-1.8491	-0.2963	-2.1454	-0.8288
Grade III	0.0353	1.0376	1.1660	-0.9410	0.2250	-0.4590
Graduate/missing	-0.0555	0.7928	-1.8767	-6.2789***	-8.1555	-0.9136
Socio-demographics						
Female	0.0804*	0.7357	0.1507	-0.8463	-0.6956	-0.1379
Divorced/Sep./Widowed	-0.1525*	2.5867	-3.5077	-3.3443	-6.8520	-1.0748
Single	-0.1749**	-1.4818	-7.8054*	-5.0787**	-12.8841**	0.3191
Has no children	0.0189	3.0168**	4.5128	5.2007	9.7135	-0.6809
Salary/other incomes						
Wage	0.1672	-6.4150	13.7237	-1.3623	12.3614	3.5241
Wage squared	-0.0394	1.1622	-3.9782	0.8576	-3.1206	-0.9693
Second source of income	0.0417	-1.5086	-1.6932	3.0388*	1.3457	0.9657
Union membership						
Member of UNATU	-0.1548***	0.1035	2.3043	-0.8269	1.4774	0.5934
Satisfaction						
Medium satisfaction	-	-0.1148	-2.1183	-2.7693	-4.8876	0.4549
High satisfaction	-	0.6495	-0.3267	-2.6924*	-3.0191	-1.1196**
Constant	0.5789***	14.5239***	19.9247***	10.9327**	30.8574***	4.8262**
Number of observations		302	317	317	317	257
R-squared		0.252	0.094	0.085	0.100	0.039

Source: Authors' estimation (OLS) using the NASPTSU survey.

Note on levels of statistical significance: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Conclusion

Are teachers happy with their job? If they were able to start over, would they choose teaching as a career? Are they satisfied? Conceptually, job satisfaction is known to have an impact on employee well-being, productivity, absenteeism, and turnover. As a result, the full benefits of education may not be reaped when teacher job satisfaction levels are low, or when teachers are plainly dissatisfied with their work or working conditions. Job satisfaction among teacher should be a major variable of interest not only for Ministries of Education, but also for children and parents, and thereby for societies as a whole. And yet few national studies have been conducted in developing countries to date to try to capture the level of teachers' satisfaction with their careers, and some of its correlates.

This article looked at the level of satisfaction of teachers in Uganda and the relationship between teacher satisfaction and effort. Four questions were asked: What is the level of teacher job satisfaction in Uganda? How does job satisfaction relate to the characteristics of teachers? What is the impact of teachers' satisfaction on their performance, as it can be measured through various variables of teacher effort? Finally, what are the main factors affecting satisfaction according to teachers? The analysis was based on a random survey of teachers implemented by the Pôle de Dakar for a report on teachers in Uganda. The data are a bit old (they were collected in 2012), and some conditions affecting teachers may have changed since then, but the core relationships in terms of what matters for teacher satisfaction and the effects of satisfaction on proxies for teacher effort are likely to remain valid.

On a four point rating scale from very satisfied to very dissatisfied, slightly more than half of the teachers were somewhat satisfied or very satisfied, and a fifth are very dissatisfied. When asked whether they would choose to become a teacher again if they had the opportunity to start over, less than half said so. As to perceptions of other teachers' satisfaction, less than a fourth of the teachers believed that their colleagues were satisfied.

Teachers were asked what mattered most for their satisfaction. Eight major factors were listed: professional recognition, opportunities for professional growth, interpersonal relationships/social activities with colleagues, salaries, benefits, working conditions, regular performance assessments, and the quality of head teacher leadership and supervision. Salaries are the main factor affecting job satisfaction for slightly more than half of the teachers, but other factors also play a role and deserve attention. It should be noted that although the issue of timely payment of salaries was not considered in the survey, it is likely that part of the discontent of teachers in Uganda is related to the fact that they often do not get paid on time. The process of payments also appears to be vulnerable to corruption, including in terms of ghost teachers. The Government has been taking steps in the years following the survey to roll out an Integrated Personnel and Payroll System that should have led to a more efficient payroll process.

It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss whether teacher salaries in Uganda – a key determinant of the satisfaction of teachers, are too low or not. Such assessments must be done very carefully, given that teacher salaries account for the lion's share of education budgets. There have also been adjustments to teacher pay since the survey used in this article was used. But whatever the right level of pay for teachers may be depending on market and budgetary conditions, it is clear that teachers play an essential role in educating children, which is simply essential for the future of nations³. It is also

clear – including in Uganda according to our research, that job satisfaction affects the level of effort of teachers, and thereby education outcomes for children.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Nkengne is with Pôle de Dakar. Pieume is with UNESCO's Inclusive Policy Lab. Tsimpo and Wodon are with the World Bank. Ezeugwu is with Boston College. The analysis and views expressed in this paper are those of the authors only and may not reflect the views of their organizations, their Executive Directors, or the countries they represent.

NOTES

¹ On the importance of sub-Saharan Africa for Catholic education globally, and the role played by Catholic schools in the region to ensure education pluralism and thereby the fulfillment of the right to education, see Wodon (2021a, 2021b, 2021c).

² See for example Wodon and Tsimpo (2021) in this journal on student performance in Catholic public and private schools in Uganda, D'Agostino (2017) on differences in school culture and management in public and private Catholic schools, Wodon (2017) on whether Catholic schools have benefitted from programs aiming to increase secondary school enrollment, and Wodon (2020) on whether the Catholic Church manages to reach the poor when building new schools.

³ As noted in Lange et al. (2018), human capital wealth, defined as the present value of the future earnings of the current labor force, accounts for two thirds of the changing wealth of nations, well above natural wealth (such as oil or forests) and produced wealth (such as factories or roads). To realize this wealth, countries must invest more in their people.

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Annex: Questionnaire of the Teacher Job Satisfaction Survey

NB: Dear Teacher, this questionnaire seeks to solicit information to contribute to a Diagnostic Study of Teacher Issues in Uganda. For each item, please indicate your response in front of the question, rank or circle the appropriate number where applicable. Please do not write your name, telephone number or contact on this questionnaire. Thank you.

1.1. Age

1.2. Sex

1.3. District origin

1.4. Marital status (single, married, separated, divorced, widowed)

1.5. Number of children (if applicable)

1.6. Highest academics level of education (Primary, OL; AL; Tertiary, University)

1.7. Highest professional level of education (Grade III, Grade V, Graduate)

1.8. Number of years of teaching experience

1.9. Teaching deployment (Lower, Upper)

1.10. Teaching area (for P1 to P4 teacher) or teaching subjects (for P5 to P7 teacher)

1.11. Member of UNATU (yes or no)

1.12. Total monthly income: (a) Salary; (b) Estimation of other incomes

Question No.		Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
1.	Generally speaking, how would you rate your overall satisfaction with your job as a teacher?	1	2	3	4
				YES	NO
2.	If you had the opportunity to start over in a new career, would you choose to become a teacher?			1	2
3.	Generally speaking, do you believe that the teachers with whom you work are satisfied with their job?			1	2

4.1. How often do you give assignments/homework to your pupils per month?

4.2. How much time (hours) do you spend in teaching in a week?

4.3. How much time per week do you spend in lesson preparation and marking assignments and homework?

4.4. How many times have you been absent from school with permission this year?

4.5. What is your job expectation in the next two years? (Circle one option in the table):

Stay in the education sector as a teacher	Be promoted to an administrative position in the education sector	Be promoted to an administrative position out of the education sector	Find a position in the private sector
1	2	3	4

5. Rank the 8 factors in the table below using figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 in respect to their effect/impact on your job satisfaction as a teacher. Note that: 1 is the most important and 8 is the least important and that no figure from 1 to 8 can be repeated.

FACTORS	1 is the most important and 8 is the least important, do not repeat any figure
Recognition (e.g., receiving praise from authorities, parents, students, or others)	
Potential/opportunities for professional growth (e.g., possibility of improving one's own professional skills, additional responsibilities)	
Interpersonal relationships/social activities with colleagues	
Salary	
Benefits (health security, housing, transport, specific status for teachers, etc.)	
Working conditions (e.g., infrastructure, class size, workload, facilities and equipment at work)	
Regular assessment of teacher performance	
Quality of leadership and supervision of head teacher	

According to you, what is the main (one) measure the government can take to significantly improve your level of satisfaction? (Please write below, not more than two lines).