

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54937/dspt.2023.23.2.60-67>

## **The Young Municipal School Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan)**

### **Pracovní spokojnost mladých učitelův městských škol v Bishkeku (Kyrgyzsko)**

Ainuru Zholchieva, Aelita Zholchieva, Özden Özlü

#### **Abstract**

It is known that there is a significant positive relationship between the school's organizational climate and the teachers' job satisfaction. The school climate is a feeling of job practice towards visible characteristics of the organization. It can influence work practitioners' behavior and attitude. It is important to cause one's affect working efficiency as well. That is why the teachers' job satisfaction is an integral indicator leading to effectiveness at schools. If the teachers are satisfied with job practice at schools, they would be easily successful. The study deals with a few key factors of young Kyrgyzstan municipal teachers' job satisfaction, including teaching hours, leadership, autonomy, and decision-making principles. These factors can affect the teachers' job performance specifically. The results of the study demonstrate that professional cooperation and a supportive working environment at schools are important variables explaining young teachers' professionalism.

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction. Education. Language teachers. Motivation. Well-being. Cooperation.

#### **Contextual background**

Kyrgyzstan is a tiny and mountainous independent country in Central Asia. Its territory is about 200,000 kilometers, bordering China, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan.

It is landlocked and one of the poorest countries in the Europe and Central Asia region. Kyrgyzstan was previously one of the 15 republics of the former Soviet Union of Socialist Republics (The USSR).

In Soviet times the work of a teacher was not considered prestigious but was sufficiently respected in society (Belova, 2015). Despite the respect for the teaching profession, the standard of living of teachers throughout the Soviet period was low; the period that began with the collectivization and industrialization of the country was particularly difficult, teachers had to

combine two or three positions, they had to do public work at the same time. The teachers were under constant stress during the "checks and cleansing" organized by the Communist Party organs (Belova, 2015). Relying on survey materials about the situation of teachers in the Soviet time, which showed that there was a fear of the Party and its policies among teachers, Belova (2015) argues that the accusations of anti-Soviet orientation were not always baseless.

Teacher education in Kyrgyzstan is funded by public budgets. The annual public spending on educating future teachers amounts to at least 100 million soms. Every year, more than 2000 students fill budget-funded places in pedagogical institutes with the annual tuition fee ranging from 25 000 to 45 000 soms. During the study, a number of students of pedagogical faculties change their specialty. After graduation, about 25 percent of graduates do not pursue a teaching career. Within three years of being hired, about 60 percent of young teachers leave their jobs. As a result, only 20 percent of graduates of pedagogical institutes stay working as teachers.

The new project called "Deposit for Young Teachers" was introduced in 2004 by the Government of Kyrgyzstan to keep young teaching graduates working at rural public schools. To initiate the project, the Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic organized a competitive recruiting campaign to select young teachers.

Bishkek is the only city where a deposit of a young teacher program works. According to the project a teacher should work under this program for three years, and after it, he or she is paid 90,000 soms. The selected teachers were trained and were under contract to work for three years at the assigned schools. The Government officials hoped that these young teachers at village schools will be adapted and will continue their commitment to teaching at the same schools. In 2021 1,606 teachers received a specific distribution and 454 of them received the right to free distribution (for example, pregnant women, persons with children under 3 years old, etc.) among public sector graduates. The press service of the Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic reports that every year the number of young teachers in schools increases by more than 1000 young professionals.

### **Statement of problem**

With the typical personal and institutional adjustments to the culture, rules, and regulations of the school, children with different needs, and school management problems, the young teachers face challenges that are specific to the emerging realities in society.

Any research on job satisfaction is usually carried out according to the requests of employers to discover the level of job satisfaction of the staff. The satisfaction of teachers can be investigated from different points of view and

using different variables, such as the degree of teacher motivation, and satisfaction with the created conditions.

Every educational organization has a unique climate influencing the behavior and feelings of its teachers. It seems that there is a linkage between school organizational climate and teacher job satisfaction (Afshin, 2019). Further, Afshin understood that teachers' job satisfaction is mostly affected by a few key factors, including teaching load, principal leadership, autonomy, decision-making, and intimacy and warmth. It appears that school organizational climate may be one of the key factors in making the teachers feel satisfied and, accordingly, making their job performance more productive, functional, and desirable. The researcher suggests taking steps to assess the climate of schools and identify the dimensions which are critical for the health of schools, proving the findings of Zahoor (2011) where it was stated that to help teachers feel satisfied with their job it should be constructed in a favorable organizational climate at schools. Parlar et al. (2017) indicated in their research that professional cooperation, school administrator's support, and the level of a supportive working environment at schools and teacher leadership give positive and significant relationships. Professional cooperation and supportive working environments at schools are important variables explaining teacher professionalism.

The study deals with the category of teachers who are young (21-35 years old) and less experienced. They emerge as caring and considerate people who adopted a variety of responses, including values and performance, while at the same time coping to influence others as they protect themselves from critics. The social strategies and political tactics proved useful in examining the young teachers' positions and specific strategies of addressing the crucial challenges.

Khora (2008) examined the role of social support in teachers' careers, and it was found that motivated teachers differ from unmotivated teachers in two respects - their value orientation - educational beliefs, or curricular ideologies that appear to influence programmatic decisions (Ennis, C. D., & Chen, A. 1995) and the social support they receive. Research by Bentea et.al. (2012) recommends that young school leaders focus on the social environment of their organization and encourage teamwork and positive interpersonal relationships, explaining that a teaching degree should become a professional position that teachers in the education system can pursue as their teaching career progresses.

The factors that influence a teacher's motivation are focused on personal expectations satisfaction, and work climate (Budi Utomo, 2000) to explore the role of personal expectations, satisfaction, and work climate that affect teacher motivation to learn, the researcher argues that teachers are to be adapted to the conditions of the school where they teach. In Budi's opinion, teachers should have this ability, because when they can adapt to the school climate, they can fulfill personal expectations by their needs and, thus, feel

psychologically satisfied, which has a corresponding additional influence on their motivation to teach. In the research by Balogun (2016), it was discovered from his hypothesis that there is a positively strong relationship between motivation and job satisfaction as the result of his analysis showed a strong positive efficiency. Some theorists argue that 50% of motivation comes from within the person and 50% from their environment (J.D. Singh, 2015).

Although the study focuses on job satisfaction with young teachers, it also analyzed the literature on closely related factors such as employee turnover and teacher retention. Given the fact that there are very few articles by Kyrgyz researchers that determine the factors influencing the well-being or job satisfaction of young teachers, this study contains references to foreign literature, and local articles and publications relating to the performance of young teachers.

### **Data analyses**

85 young teachers from 100 population could fill out the questionnaire, most of the respondents were primary school teachers and young language teachers with less than 5 years of experience.

The collection of data was analyzed by using standard deviation, and *p*-value for interpretation of the data. *P*-value was used for the responses' comparison according to language instruction at schools (Kyrgyz or Russian) and respondents' years of experience. The respondents were grouped according to their *P*-value. We analyzed responses to the specific questions and compared their answers. We also used histograms and tables to show the distribution responses' ratio. The respondents were not different in their answers to many statements, and the *p*-value of most of their responses was statistically insignificant. We divided the data analysis' part into three sections: distribution of responses based on school language (Kyrgyz or Russian), distribution of responses according to years of experience, the overall job satisfaction analyses.

The range of responses to the statement "My workload is comfortable" for the young teachers from Russian schools is 0.8, and for the teachers from schools with Kyrgyz - 0.7916, and their difference is 0.00833, the standard error is 0.3447. We find out that the *p*-value of the difference in the average responses of teachers answering the question is 0.98, and this difference is statistically not meaningful. This result was expected because the Ministry of Education KG does not give teachers different workloads depending on the language of instruction. The weekly teaching load, as a rule, cannot exceed 31 hours per week per teacher, which is equivalent to the official salary rate. Young teachers for both Kyrgyz and Russian language instruction schools are satisfied with their teaching loads.

**Table 1.** Distribution of teachers based on language instruction

Question code	Average value for Russian speaking schools	Average value for Kyrgyz lang schools	Difference in means	Standard Error	t statistics	p value
Q16	2,58	4,5	-1,92	0,327999	-5,85368	0,00000016
Q30	4,18	2,416666667	1,763333	0,362846	4,859727	0,00001495
Q26	3,76	2,166666667	1,593333	0,347119	4,590164	0,00003954
Q15	3,82	2,166666667	1,653333	0,370863	4,458068	0,00006368
Q18	2,16	3,75	-1,59	0,369215	-4,30644	0,00008055
Q33	2,54	4	-1,46	0,365593	-3,99351	0,00022320
Q35	3,46	2,125	1,335	0,344852	3,871229	0,00036935
Q17	3,8	2,625	1,175	0,39758	2,955383	0,00529441
Q34	2,66	1,791666667	0,868333	0,328769	2,641168	0,01085409
Q14	3,2	3,833333333	-0,63333	0,334622	-1,89268	0,06512594

We can see the Table 1 that in the range of the average value of responses to the statement “I am satisfied with my involvement in school events” (Q16) for the teachers from the schools with Russian language instruction is 2,58 and for the Kyrgyz school teachers is 4, 5 and their difference is -1, 82. the p-value for the difference in averages is less than 0.0001, which is significant. We find that the teachers from the schools with Russian language instruction are not satisfied with their involvement in organizing and participating in school activities when Kyrgyz school teachers express their agreement with this statement.

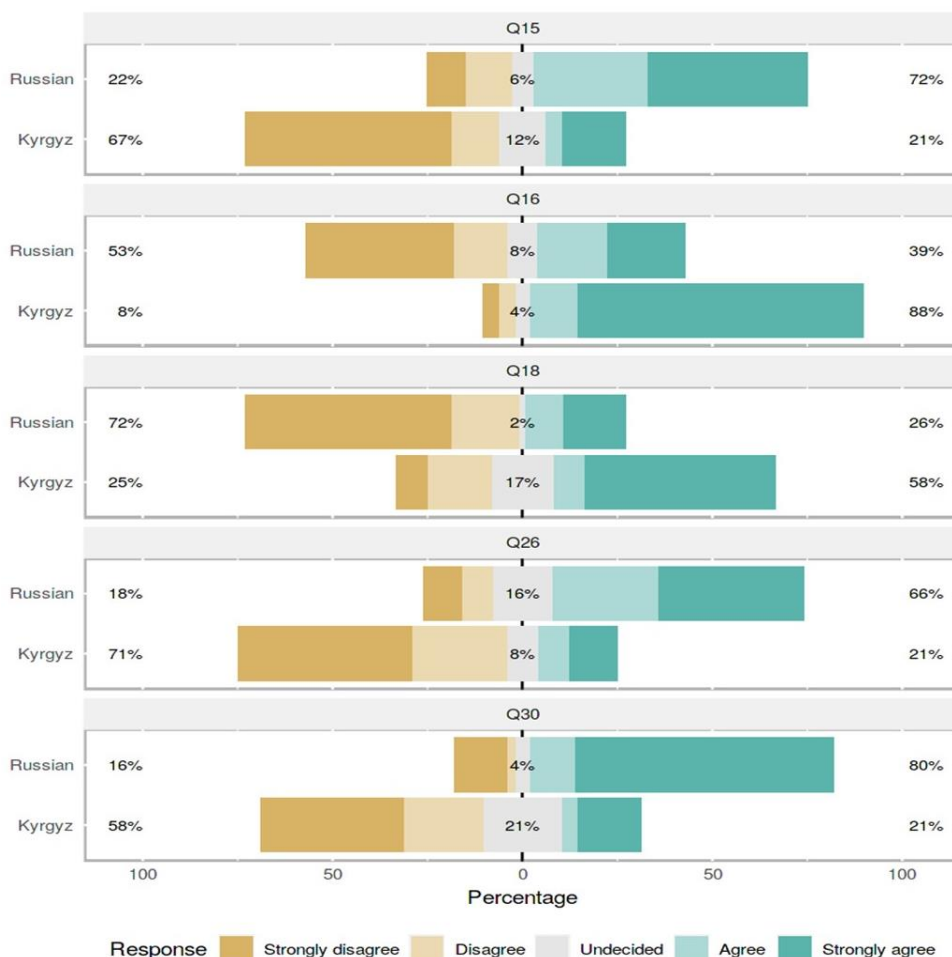
Statistically, the significant value was shown by the result of the responses to the statement “Parents sometimes react negatively to my feedback on the achievements of their children” (30). We find that the teachers who work in schools with Russian language instruction sometimes feel a negative reaction from the parents' side, and the teachers with Kyrgyz language instruction express disagreement with the statement. A possible explanation for this difference is that the teachers from the schools with Russian language instruction give feedback to their students often and work closely with the parents where sometimes the parent's dissatisfaction may be manifested. We see that a statistically significant *p*-value is shown in the result of the responses to the state parents’ initiate equipping the classroom where I teach” (Q26). We find that the teachers from the Russian schools on average agree with the statement, and the schools from Kyrgyz schools do not agree that the parents support them financially.

The difference between the responses to the statement “I think that my work is not appreciated by the school administration” (Q15) is 0.37. And the *p*-value for this difference is 0.000056, which is also statistically significant. We find that Kyrgyz school teachers, on average, do not agree with this statement that the administration does not support their effort in the classroom; they believe that the school assessment of their professional performance is quite good. And the teachers of schools with Russian language instruction on average agree With the statement that the school administration

does not evaluate their performance appropriately. One possible explanation for this difference is that the administration in schools assesses/appreciates the work of teachers differently.

The *p*-value for the difference in averages is less than 0.065 of the responses to the statement “Our school administration keeps each of us well informed about its policy” (Q14). And it is statistically significant. We find that the majority of Russian - teaching school teachers express dissatisfaction with the statement they get sufficient information from the administration about the activities carried out, while teachers with the Kyrgyz language of instruction willingly agree with this statement. A possible explanation for the result is tschoolsschools’ administrations in schools do not clearly state the policy of running the educational system for their teachers.

**Table 2.** Distrubution of teacher responses by school language



The table shows that the majority of the teachers with less than years of experience (62%) agree with the statement and most of the teachers with more than 5 years of experience express their disagreement. A possible explanation for this difference is that the law "On the status of a teacher" does not provide any benefits for the length of service of a teacher, teachers can receive awards for good work and not all teachers manage to receive high awards for their work. And young teachers might not seek to receive awards at the beginning of their careers.

Bishkek municipal young school teachers have shown positive attitudes towards their work. We concluded that young teachers try not to pay attention to the salary size at school but try to improve their professional skills. Young teachers still do not feel satisfied with their relationship with their colleagues, they are only adapting to new places. In conclusion, we would like to note that teachers deserve more respect than they currently receive from society. We do not blame school administrations for not giving due attention to their teachers, but we encourage them to be open to them, to study and develop programs taking into account the government's capabilities that support teachers morally and financially. The research results become the main object of future research and a topic for further detailed study.

## **Bibliography**

- BELOVA N.A. 2015. *Повседневная жизнь учителей*.  
<https://obuchalka.org/20181109105121/>
- BENTEA C.C. & ANGHELACHE V. 2012. Teachers' motivation and satisfaction for professional activity. In: *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 33, p. 563-567. ISSN 1877-0428.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.01.184>
- Government Decree of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2011. *ПРОГРАММА "Депозит молодого учителя"*. <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/55864>
- PARLAR H., CANSOY R. & KILINÇ A. Ç. 2017. Examining the Relationship between Teacher Leadership Culture and Teacher Professionalism: Quantitative Study. In: *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 8, p. 13-25.  
<https://doi.org/10.11114/jets.v5i8.2499>
- The Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On the Status of Teachers"*. 2001.  
<http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/391f>
- UTOMO H. B. 2018. Teacher Motivation Behavior: The Importance of Personal Expectations, Need Satisfaction, And Work Climate. In: *International Journal of Pedagogy and Teacher Education (IJPTE)*, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 333-341. <https://doi.org/10.20961/ijpte.v2i2.24036>

- UNICEF. 2019. *Kyrgyz Republic: Education Sector Analysis 2007-2017. Strategic Choices for the Government to Improve Education.*
- SHAMATOV D. A. 2006. Beginning teachers' professional socialization in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan: The challenges and coping strategies. In: *Quality in education: Teaching and leadership in challenging times*, 2, 601-613.
- SHAMATOV D. A. 2013. Everyday realities of a young teacher in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan: The case of a history teacher from a rural school. In: Akçalı, P. & Engin-Demir, C. (Eds.). *Politics, Identity and Education in Central Asia: Post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203385616>

**Assoc. Prof. Ainuru Zholchieva, Ph.D.**

Department of Pedagogy and Psychology  
International Ala-Too University, Faculty of Social Sciences  
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan  
[ainuru.zholchieva@alatoe.edu.kg](mailto:ainuru.zholchieva@alatoe.edu.kg)

**Mgr. Aelita Zholchieva**

Education Department of Bishkek City  
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan  
[azholchieva@gmail.com](mailto:azholchieva@gmail.com)

**Assoc. Prof. Özden Özlü, Ph.D.**

Maltepe University, School of Foreign Languages  
Istanbul, Turkey  
[ozdenozlu@maltepe.edu.tr](mailto:ozdenozlu@maltepe.edu.tr)