

Validation of a Model of the Effect of Organizational Justice on Teachers' Job Satisfaction: The Mediating Roles of Perceived Competence and Responsibility

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aimed to validate a structural model explaining the effect of organizational justice on teachers' job satisfaction through the mediating roles of perceived competence and responsibility.

Methods and Materials: The study used a quantitative, cross-sectional, explanatory-correlational design. The statistical population comprised 18,000 teachers employed in the Mashhad education system during the 2025–2026 academic year. Using Cochran's formula, 376 teachers were selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a 28-item researcher-developed Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire, the Niehoff and Moorman Organizational Justice Questionnaire, Harter's Perceived Competence Scale, and Gough's Responsibility Scale. Construct validity was assessed through confirmatory factor analysis, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Reliability was examined using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Data were analyzed with SPSS version 24 and SmartPLS version 3.8 using one-sample t tests and partial least squares structural equation modeling.

Findings: Confirmatory factor analysis supported four dimensions of teachers' job satisfaction: social, personal, professional, and organizational, ranked respectively by standardized coefficients of 0.847, 0.805, 0.548, and 0.480. One-sample t tests showed that job satisfaction, organizational justice, perceived competence, responsibility, and their dimensions were significantly above their theoretical midpoints ($p < .001$). Organizational justice positively predicted perceived competence, responsibility, and job satisfaction. Perceived competence and responsibility also positively predicted job satisfaction and mediated the relationship between organizational justice and job satisfaction. The model explained 89.7% of the variance in job satisfaction, 19.6% in perceived competence, and 28.9% in responsibility. Predictive relevance values were positive, and the goodness-of-fit index was 0.439, indicating strong overall model fit.

Conclusion: Organizational justice enhances teachers' job satisfaction both directly and indirectly by strengthening their perceived competence and responsibility, with perceived competence exerting the strongest effect; therefore, fair managerial practices, professional empowerment, and supportive school environments are essential for improving teachers' occupational satisfaction.

Keywords: Organizational Justice; Job Satisfaction; Perceived Competence; Responsibility; Teachers; Structural Equation Modeling

1. Introduction

Teachers constitute the central human resource of educational systems, and the quality, continuity, and effectiveness of schooling depend substantially on their psychological, professional, and organizational experiences. Although curriculum, technology, financial resources, and administrative regulations influence educational outcomes, these factors are ultimately enacted through teachers' daily judgments, classroom behaviors, interactions with students, and willingness to invest sustained effort in their work. For this reason, teachers' job satisfaction has become a major concern in educational management, organizational psychology, and human resource development. Job satisfaction refers to the overall evaluative and emotional response individuals develop toward their occupation and working conditions. In the teaching profession, it reflects not only satisfaction with pay, promotion, workload, and supervision but also perceptions of professional meaning, instructional autonomy, social recognition, collegial relationships, opportunities for development, and the capacity to influence students' learning and personal growth. Research has shown that teacher job satisfaction is associated with students' achievement and with a wide range of individual and organizational conditions, indicating that it should be understood as a multidimensional organizational outcome rather than a temporary emotional reaction (Hoque et al., 2023).

The significance of job satisfaction is especially evident in educational organizations because teachers' work requires persistent emotional, cognitive, and relational engagement. Teachers are expected to plan instruction, manage diverse classrooms, evaluate student learning, communicate with families, participate in school decisions, and adapt to changing institutional demands. When these responsibilities are performed in supportive and coherent organizational environments, teachers are more likely to experience motivation, professional identity, psychological well-being, and sustained performance. Conversely, prolonged dissatisfaction can contribute to withdrawal, reduced commitment, burnout, silence, stagnation, and turnover intentions. Evidence indicates that job satisfaction mediates the effects of psychosocial and organizational factors on teachers' mental well-being, demonstrating that satisfaction may function as a central psychological mechanism through which school conditions affect teachers' health and functioning (Capone et al., 2022). Job satisfaction has also been linked to organizational performance and employees'

mental health, further emphasizing its dual importance for individual well-being and institutional effectiveness (Farjam & Malekpour, 2024).

Contemporary studies increasingly conceptualize teacher job satisfaction as the product of interactions among personal capacities, organizational support, leadership practices, professional relationships, and workplace structures. Organizational culture, for example, can shape both work motivation and satisfaction by defining shared values, behavioral expectations, and patterns of communication within schools (Khosravi & Ashtijoo, 2024). Organizational health similarly encompasses conditions that support effective functioning, positive relationships, institutional adaptability, and employees' psychological security (Alaei et al., 2024). Learning-oriented schools may promote better professional functioning by encouraging collaboration, reflection, knowledge exchange, and continuous development (Asadizaveh et al., 2022; Kiani & Zarei Talamarani, 2021). In contrast, organizational stagnation, career plateau, isolation, and silence may erode teachers' willingness to contribute and weaken their connection to the profession (Abd Yaser et al., 2025; Darabi Amarti & Moradi, 2023; Karimianpour et al., 2022; Zeinabadi et al., 2022). These findings indicate that teacher satisfaction emerges from the broader organizational system in which teaching takes place.

Among the organizational variables that may explain teacher job satisfaction, organizational justice occupies a particularly important position. Organizational justice refers to employees' perceptions of fairness in the distribution of outcomes, the procedures through which decisions are made, and the interpersonal treatment they receive during the implementation of those decisions. Distributive justice concerns the fairness of rewards, duties, resources, opportunities, and workloads. Procedural justice concerns the consistency, transparency, neutrality, and revisability of organizational decision-making processes. Interactional justice refers to respectful, dignified, honest, and adequately explained treatment by managers and organizational authorities. In schools, these dimensions are reflected in the distribution of teaching hours, administrative responsibilities, professional opportunities, performance evaluations, promotions, rewards, access to educational resources, and the manner in which principals communicate and make decisions.

Perceptions of justice are particularly consequential for teachers because schools are highly relational institutions in which formal rules and interpersonal treatment operate

simultaneously. Teachers continuously compare their responsibilities, resources, recognition, and opportunities with those of colleagues. When differences are perceived as fair and procedures are transparent, teachers are more likely to trust school authorities and accept organizational decisions, even when the immediate outcomes are not entirely favorable. When decisions appear arbitrary, biased, or disrespectful, dissatisfaction may develop even in the presence of adequate material conditions. Research on teachers has demonstrated that organizational justice is associated with performance, loyalty, burnout, and organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational justice can strengthen teachers' loyalty and, through loyalty, contribute to improved performance (Meilando, 2023). It has also been examined in relation to burnout and organizational citizenship behavior, suggesting that fairness perceptions influence whether teachers conserve their energy or voluntarily contribute beyond formal role requirements (Pan et al., 2022).

The potential influence of organizational justice on job satisfaction can be explained through social exchange and reciprocity processes. When teachers perceive that the organization treats them fairly, they may interpret such treatment as evidence that the institution values their contributions and respects their professional status. This perception can generate trust, commitment, cooperation, and positive attitudes toward work. Organizational trust has been associated with teacher job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior, indicating that fair and trustworthy environments encourage constructive discretionary conduct (Hidayat & Patras, 2022). Trust can also reduce turnover intentions through teaching efficacy and job satisfaction, showing that organizational conditions influence both teachers' beliefs about their professional capabilities and their intention to remain in the organization (Zhao et al., 2022). Ethical leadership, organizational legitimacy, and perceived consistency between institutional values and practices likewise shape teacher job outcomes (Kazemi & Heydari, 2021). Therefore, organizational justice is likely to influence job satisfaction both directly and through psychological mechanisms that shape teachers' understanding of themselves and their work.

One such mechanism is perceived competence. Perceived competence refers to individuals' beliefs that they possess the knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal capacities required to perform effectively in relevant domains. For teachers, competence perceptions include confidence in instructional planning, classroom management,

communication, student assessment, problem solving, professional learning, and the ability to respond effectively to educational challenges. Perceived competence is closely related to self-efficacy, empowerment, professional identity, and engagement. Teachers who believe they are capable of performing their responsibilities successfully are more likely to approach difficult tasks with persistence, interpret challenges as manageable, and experience achievement and meaning in their work.

Empirical studies consistently support the relationship between efficacy-related beliefs and teacher job satisfaction. Teacher personality traits, perceived organizational support, and self-efficacy have been shown to predict job satisfaction, suggesting that satisfaction is influenced by both personal dispositions and perceptions of the organizational environment (Li, 2023). Self-efficacy has also been associated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, motivation, and performance among private-school teachers (Rossiandy & Indradewa, 2023). Research examining teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction has further highlighted the role of organizational components in strengthening or weakening this relationship (Fardzadeh et al., 2022). Empowerment may similarly increase job satisfaction by providing teachers with greater influence, autonomy, and confidence in their occupational roles (Mo'tamed & Dibachi, 2023). These findings support the proposition that teachers' evaluations of their own competence may serve as an immediate psychological pathway linking organizational experiences to job satisfaction.

Organizational justice may enhance perceived competence in several ways. Fair access to resources and training gives teachers opportunities to develop their skills. Transparent evaluation procedures provide clearer performance feedback and reduce uncertainty about professional expectations. Respectful interaction with administrators can reinforce teachers' sense of professional worth, while participation in decision-making may strengthen agency and mastery. Perceived organizational support has been found to influence teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction, with work engagement acting as an additional explanatory process (Mei, 2025). The interplay of personality, organizational support, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction also contributes to teacher job performance (Li et al., 2025). Similarly, psychological empowerment influences teachers' performance through professional identity and psychological well-being, demonstrating that teachers' internal evaluations are responsive to

organizational conditions (Taqavi Deilami Pour & Pali, 2025). Accordingly, fair treatment may increase job satisfaction partly because it allows teachers to experience themselves as capable, valued, and effective professionals.

Professional competence is also related to teachers' willingness to speak, participate, and become psychologically invested in their schools. Studies of teachers' professional competence have linked it to organizational silence and job engagement, suggesting that capable teachers may become more engaged when organizational conditions permit them to express ideas and exercise professional judgment (H. Gholami, 2021; Halimeh Gholami, 2021). Job self-efficacy can also alter the consequences of job adjustment and career plateau, indicating that beliefs about occupational capability influence how teachers respond to limited advancement and repetitive work conditions (Farjam et al., 2023). Moreover, job satisfaction and organizational commitment influence teachers' desire to participate in professional development programs, showing that competence development and satisfaction may reinforce one another over time (Qi & Derakhshan, 2023). Thus, perceived competence is not merely an individual attribute; it is a context-sensitive psychological resource that may translate organizational fairness into stronger job satisfaction.

Responsibility represents a second potential mediating mechanism. Responsibility refers to a relatively stable but organizationally expressed tendency to fulfill duties, honor commitments, follow appropriate rules, work diligently, act reliably, and accept accountability for professional conduct. In teaching, responsibility extends beyond completing assigned tasks. It includes preparing lessons carefully, monitoring student learning, maintaining ethical standards, cooperating with colleagues, responding to families, pursuing professional development, and accepting accountability for educational outcomes. Because the teaching profession involves substantial autonomy, many essential behaviors cannot be continuously supervised. Educational quality therefore depends partly on teachers' internalized sense of duty and their willingness to act conscientiously.

Responsibility is closely connected to commitment, productive behavior, and organizational citizenship. Organizational commitment has been identified as a mediator between pedagogical leadership and teachers' job performance, suggesting that teachers' willingness to fulfill professional obligations is strengthened when leadership creates a meaningful and supportive environment (Berhanu,

2023). Commitment also mediates the influence of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction on teacher performance (Ngatimun, 2022). In addition, spirituality in the workplace, self-compassion, organizational commitment, and job resilience contribute to elementary teachers' occupational functioning and capacity to remain engaged under pressure (Abdollahzadeh Qavaglu et al., 2023). School organizational ambidexterity has likewise been associated with organizational entrepreneurship through teachers' productive behaviors, indicating that responsible and proactive conduct is central to institutional adaptability (Ghaderi Sheykhi Abadi et al., 2023).

Fairness may strengthen responsibility because employees are more willing to reciprocate when they believe that the organization has fulfilled its obligations toward them. Teachers who perceive equitable workloads, transparent procedures, and respectful treatment may feel a stronger moral and professional obligation to contribute conscientiously. Conversely, persistent injustice may weaken reciprocity and encourage minimal compliance, silence, emotional withdrawal, or reduced discretionary effort. Perceived organizational support and moral intelligence have been found to predict teachers' job performance, reinforcing the importance of both ethical personal characteristics and supportive institutional treatment (Ahmadi et al., 2022). Perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior are also related to teacher burnout, indicating that organizational reciprocity can affect both positive contributions and psychological depletion (Hosseini et al., 2023). Responsibility may therefore represent a behavioral and moral pathway through which organizational justice influences satisfaction: fair environments encourage teachers to invest effort and identify with their duties, and the successful fulfillment of those duties may generate professional pride, meaning, and satisfaction.

Meaningful work provides another conceptual bridge among justice, competence, responsibility, and satisfaction. Teachers are more likely to experience work as meaningful when they can see the educational value of their actions, exercise professional judgment, and contribute voluntarily to their institutions. Job crafting has been shown to promote teachers' organizational citizenship behavior through meaningful work, demonstrating that active engagement with one's occupational role can strengthen constructive organizational behavior (Fu & Huang, 2024). Instructional leadership, organizational climate, teacher commitment, and job satisfaction are also interrelated, suggesting that school

leadership influences satisfaction by shaping both work structures and teachers' emotional attachment to the organization (Ariansyah et al., 2022). These relationships highlight that satisfaction is not reducible to external rewards; it also reflects the degree to which teachers experience their work as fair, purposeful, manageable, and aligned with their professional identity.

Despite the growing literature, several limitations remain. Many studies have examined job satisfaction in relation to organizational support, leadership, culture, self-efficacy, commitment, burnout, or performance separately. Fewer studies have tested an integrated model in which organizational justice predicts teacher job satisfaction through both a competence-based psychological pathway and a responsibility-based behavioral pathway. Existing findings suggest that organizational support can strengthen efficacy and engagement, that justice can affect loyalty and citizenship behavior, and that commitment and responsibility-related characteristics can influence performance. However, these processes are often investigated in separate models, making it difficult to determine their simultaneous and relative contributions. Furthermore, job satisfaction among teachers is frequently treated as a unidimensional outcome, despite evidence that it encompasses personal, professional, organizational, and social experiences. A multidimensional model can provide a more precise explanation of how teachers evaluate their work and why the same organizational conditions may affect different aspects of satisfaction differently.

The need for such a model is particularly important in large urban educational systems, where teachers work across heterogeneous schools, experience varying managerial practices, and face differences in resources, workloads, student populations, and opportunities for advancement. In these settings, organizational justice may serve as a unifying explanatory construct because it captures teachers' evaluations of whether organizational differences are legitimate, transparent, and respectful. At the same time, teachers' perceived competence and responsibility may determine how those evaluations are translated into professional attitudes. A teacher who experiences fairness may feel more capable because resources, feedback, and opportunities are accessible, and more responsible because the organization is perceived as deserving reciprocal effort. These experiences may subsequently increase satisfaction with the personal meaning, professional character, organizational conditions, and social relationships embedded in teaching.

Accordingly, the aim of the present study was to validate a structural model of the effect of organizational justice on teachers' job satisfaction through the mediating roles of perceived competence and responsibility.

2. Methods and Materials

The present study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional, explanatory-correlational design. From an applied perspective, the study sought to validate a structural model explaining teachers' job satisfaction based on organizational justice, perceived competence, and responsibility. The research was conducted using a survey strategy because the study variables represented teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and psychological characteristics and were therefore most appropriately measured through standardized self-report instruments. The hypothesized relationships were examined within a structural equation modeling framework. Organizational justice was specified as the exogenous predictor variable, teachers' job satisfaction as the principal endogenous outcome variable, and perceived competence and responsibility as parallel mediating variables. This design made it possible to estimate both the direct effect of organizational justice on job satisfaction and its indirect effects through perceived competence and responsibility.

The statistical population consisted of all teachers employed by the Mashhad education system during the 2025–2026 academic year. According to the latest official statistics obtained from the statistics and information division of the Mashhad Department of Education, the population included approximately 18,000 teachers. The required sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula for a finite population. The calculation was performed by assuming a 95% confidence level, a sampling error of 0.05, and the maximum population variance, with both the estimated proportion of the population possessing the relevant characteristic and its complement set at 0.50. On this basis, a minimum sample of 376 teachers was required. To compensate for incomplete or unreturned questionnaires, 385 questionnaire packages were distributed. Following the exclusion of incomplete questionnaires, 376 usable questionnaires were retained for the final analyses, corresponding to the sample size calculated through Cochran's formula.

Participants were selected using proportionate stratified random sampling. The relevant educational districts and administrative categories were treated as sampling strata, and the number of teachers selected from each stratum was

determined in proportion to its representation in the total teacher population. Teachers within each stratum were then selected randomly. This sampling procedure was used to improve the representativeness of the sample and reduce the likelihood that teachers from larger or smaller educational units would be disproportionately represented. Eligibility was restricted to teachers who were actively employed in schools administered by the Mashhad education system during the data-collection period and who completed the study questionnaires sufficiently for statistical analysis. Questionnaires with substantial missing data or response patterns that prevented valid scoring were excluded before the main analyses.

Data were collected using a questionnaire package comprising a demographic information form, the Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire, the Niehoff and Moorman Organizational Justice Questionnaire, Harter's Perceived Competence Scale, and the Responsibility Scale derived from the California Psychological Inventory. The demographic form was used to record relevant individual and occupational characteristics of the participants. Before testing the structural model, the measurement properties of all questionnaires were examined in the target sample. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, while construct validity was assessed through confirmatory factor analysis, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Coefficients exceeding 0.70 were regarded as evidence of acceptable internal consistency.

Teachers' job satisfaction was measured using a 28-item researcher-developed questionnaire designed specifically for teachers. The instrument assessed four dimensions of job satisfaction: personal, professional, organizational, and social satisfaction. The personal dimension addressed teachers' perceived effectiveness, professional growth, work-life balance, psychological pressure, and emotional well-being in the workplace. The professional dimension assessed a sense of professional mission, perceived influence on students, instructional autonomy, participation in educational decision-making, opportunities for professional development, and professional identity. The organizational dimension covered the adequacy of educational facilities, physical working conditions, workload, equitable allocation of duties, managerial support, fairness of organizational procedures, job security, and access to effective training and promotion opportunities. The social dimension examined supportive relationships with colleagues, school belonging, perceived social respect for teaching, positive interpersonal

interactions, recognition, feedback from students, and parental support.

The job satisfaction items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1, indicating strongly disagree, to 5, indicating strongly agree. Total scores could range from 28 to 140, with higher scores representing greater job satisfaction. The face and content validity of the questionnaire were evaluated by specialists in organizational behavior, human resource management, public administration, education, and occupational psychology. Quantitative content validity was also examined through the content validity ratio and content validity index. The item-level content validity ratios exceeded the minimum acceptable value of 0.42 for an 18-member expert panel, and the content validity indices were within acceptable ranges. In the present sample, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were 0.870 for personal satisfaction, 0.914 for social satisfaction, 0.897 for professional satisfaction, 0.815 for organizational satisfaction, and 0.858 for the total job satisfaction scale. The corresponding composite reliability coefficients were 0.908, 0.928, 0.919, 0.872, and 0.889, respectively. These values indicated satisfactory internal consistency for the dimensions and the overall construct.

Organizational justice was assessed using the Organizational Justice Questionnaire developed by Niehoff and Moorman in 1993. The instrument contains 20 items organized into three dimensions: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice. Distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of outcomes, including workload, rewards, responsibilities, and organizational resources. Procedural justice concerns the perceived fairness and consistency of the procedures used to make organizational decisions. Interactional justice addresses the extent to which teachers perceive that they are treated respectfully, honestly, and appropriately by administrators during the implementation and communication of organizational decisions. The distributive and procedural justice dimensions each contain five items, while the interactional justice dimension contains ten items.

The organizational justice items were scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Higher scores indicated a stronger perception of fairness within the school and the broader educational organization. Previous Iranian studies have reported acceptable to excellent internal consistency for the questionnaire and its dimensions. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were 0.845 for distributive justice, 0.891 for procedural justice, 0.885 for interactional

justice, and 0.741 for the overall organizational justice construct. Composite reliability coefficients were 0.889, 0.902, 0.908, and 0.743, respectively. Thus, the reliability coefficients for the three dimensions and the overall construct exceeded the minimum acceptable criterion.

Perceived competence was measured using Harter's Perceived Competence Scale. The scale evaluates individuals' perceptions of their abilities across cognitive, social, physical, and academic domains. It is based on the proposition that perceived competence is a multidimensional psychological construct and that individuals may hold distinct evaluations of their capabilities in different areas of functioning. The questionnaire used in this study consisted of 28 items distributed across the four competence dimensions. Each item presented descriptions representing different levels of perceived ability, and respondents selected the option that best reflected their self-perception. Responses were scored on a four-point scale, with a score of 1 reflecting low perceived competence and a score of 4 reflecting high perceived competence. Higher dimension and total scores therefore represented stronger perceptions of competence.

The reliability of the perceived competence instrument has been supported in previous research. In the present sample, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were 0.876 for cognitive competence, 0.877 for social competence, 0.876 for physical competence, 0.815 for academic competence, and 0.855 for the overall perceived competence construct. Composite reliability coefficients were 0.907, 0.907, 0.892, 0.878, and 0.861, respectively. These findings demonstrated adequate internal consistency and supported the use of perceived competence as a latent mediating construct in the proposed model.

Teachers' responsibility was assessed using the 42-item Responsibility Scale associated with the California Psychological Inventory developed by Gough. The instrument measures behavioral and personality characteristics associated with responsible functioning, including commitment, a sense of responsibility, rule-governed behavior, hard work, trustworthiness, logical conduct, orderliness, and conscientiousness. Responses were recorded dichotomously as agreement or disagreement. Items were scored as either 0 or 1 according to the scoring key, with positively keyed items receiving one point for agreement and negatively keyed items receiving one point for disagreement. Higher total scores represented a stronger tendency toward responsible, dependable, disciplined, and conscientious behavior.

In the present study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were 0.798 for commitment, 0.783 for sense of responsibility, 0.871 for rule-governed behavior, 0.868 for hard work, 0.793 for trustworthiness, 0.844 for logical conduct, 0.726 for orderliness, 0.869 for conscientiousness, and 0.860 for the total responsibility score. The corresponding composite reliability coefficients were 0.807, 0.776, 0.885, 0.873, 0.821, 0.912, 0.806, 0.869, and 0.864. All coefficients exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that the responsibility measure and its dimensions possessed satisfactory reliability in the study sample.

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 24 and SmartPLS version 3.8. Data screening was conducted before the evaluation of the measurement and structural models. The dataset was examined for incomplete responses, coding errors, missing values, implausible values, and response patterns that could compromise the validity of the analyses. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were calculated to summarize the participants' characteristics and the distribution of the principal study variables. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used as an initial assessment of the distribution of the observed scores. However, because partial least squares structural equation modeling is a variance-based procedure that does not require strict multivariate normality, evaluation of the proposed model was not dependent on the assumption of normally distributed data.

The measurement model was assessed before the structural relationships were interpreted. Indicator reliability was examined using the standardized outer loadings of the questionnaire items. Internal consistency reliability was evaluated through Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, with values of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable. Convergent validity was assessed through the magnitude and statistical significance of the indicator loadings and the average variance extracted for each latent construct. An average variance extracted value of at least 0.50 was considered evidence that a construct explained an adequate proportion of the variance in its indicators. Discriminant validity was examined to establish that organizational justice, perceived competence, responsibility, and job satisfaction represented empirically distinguishable constructs. This assessment was performed by comparing the shared variance among constructs with the variance extracted by each construct and by examining the relationships between the indicators and their intended latent variables.

After confirmation of the measurement model, the structural model was evaluated. Collinearity among the predictor constructs was examined before estimating the structural paths. The explanatory capacity of the model was assessed using the coefficient of determination for the endogenous constructs. Predictive relevance was examined through the cross-validated redundancy criterion, and effect-size indices were used to determine the relative contribution of the predictor variables to the explained variance of perceived competence, responsibility, and job satisfaction. Overall model adequacy was considered using the relevant fit and predictive indices available in partial least squares structural equation modeling.

The research hypotheses were tested by estimating the standardized path coefficients among organizational justice, perceived competence, responsibility, and job satisfaction. The statistical significance of the direct and indirect path coefficients was determined using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. A path was considered statistically significant when its bootstrapped *t* value exceeded 1.96 at the 95% confidence level and the corresponding *p* value was below 0.05. The analysis first examined the direct effects of organizational justice on job satisfaction, perceived competence, and responsibility, as well as the direct effects of perceived competence and responsibility on job satisfaction.

The mediating roles of perceived competence and responsibility were subsequently tested by estimating the specific indirect effects of organizational justice on job satisfaction through each mediator. Mediation was

supported when the relevant indirect effect was statistically significant based on the bootstrapped confidence interval. The direct effect of organizational justice on job satisfaction was then considered together with the indirect effects to determine whether each mediation pathway represented partial or full mediation.

3. Findings and Results

The final sample consisted of 376 teachers employed in the Mashhad education system. Examination of the participants' demographic characteristics showed that the sample included teachers from different age groups, both genders, three levels of academic qualification, and varying lengths of professional experience. As presented in Table 1, teachers older than 45 years constituted the largest age group, accounting for 37% of the sample. Teachers aged 31–35 years represented 21%, those aged 25–30 years represented 16%, those aged 36–40 years represented 14%, and those aged 41–45 years represented 12% of the respondents. Women constituted 58% of the sample, whereas men constituted 42%. Most respondents held a master's degree, representing 65% of the sample, while 29% held a bachelor's degree and 6% held a doctoral degree. Regarding teaching experience, the largest proportion of respondents, 44%, had between 16 and 20 years of professional experience. Teachers with 6–10 years of experience accounted for 24%, those with 11–15 years accounted for 21%, and those with 1–5 years accounted for 11%.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	25–30 years	62	16
	31–35 years	79	21
	36–40 years	52	14
	41–45 years	44	12
	Older than 45 years	139	37
Gender	Male	158	42
	Female	218	58
Educational qualification	Bachelor's degree	109	29
	Master's degree	244	65
	Doctoral degree	23	6
Work experience	1–5 years	41	11
	6–10 years	90	24
	11–15 years	80	21
	16–20 years	165	44

The descriptive statistics for the study variables are reported in Table 2. Among the dimensions of job satisfaction, personal satisfaction had the highest reported mean, followed by professional and organizational satisfaction. The mean score of overall job satisfaction was 3.25. The mean scores for distributive, procedural, and interactional justice were 3.77, 3.60, and 3.66, respectively, while the overall organizational justice mean was 3.67. The mean score of perceived competence was 3.43, with social competence showing the highest dimensional mean. The

responsibility indicators also generally had relatively high mean scores.

The minimum and maximum values were within the theoretically possible scoring ranges of the respective questionnaires, indicating that the responses had been coded and entered according to the scoring procedures. The absolute values of skewness and kurtosis were generally below 2.00. Thus, none of the observed variables demonstrated extreme univariate skewness or kurtosis.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness	Kurtosis
Personal job satisfaction	376	3.74	0.89	1.00	5.00	-0.77	0.42
Social job satisfaction	376	3.06	0.47	1.00	3.86	-0.91	0.67
Professional job satisfaction	376	3.66	0.83	1.00	5.00	-0.68	0.49
Organizational job satisfaction	376	3.52	0.74	1.20	4.80	-0.75	0.08
Overall job satisfaction	376	3.25	0.61	1.06	4.31	-0.94	1.16
Distributive justice	376	3.77	0.74	1.50	5.00	-0.57	0.09
Procedural justice	376	3.60	0.73	1.60	5.00	-0.64	-0.37
Interactional justice	376	3.66	0.65	1.83	5.00	-0.28	-0.02
Organizational justice	376	3.67	0.57	2.19	5.00	-0.56	-0.15
Cognitive competence	376	3.52	0.53	1.80	4.00	-1.02	0.34
Social competence	376	3.57	0.55	1.50	4.00	-1.30	0.81
Physical competence	376	3.35	0.66	1.67	4.00	-0.76	-0.64
Academic competence	376	3.29	0.62	1.17	4.00	-0.67	-0.12
Overall perceived competence	376	3.43	0.47	2.04	4.00	-0.85	-0.10
Conscientiousness	376	0.89	0.48	0.00	1.00	1.03	0.67
Commitment	376	0.73	0.46	0.00	1.00	-0.86	-0.94
Hard work	376	0.99	0.95	0.00	1.00	1.30	1.29
Orderliness	376	0.80	0.47	0.00	1.00	0.12	0.19
Trustworthiness	376	0.89	0.07	0.00	1.00	-1.65	0.47
Rule-governed behavior	376	0.99	0.05	0.00	1.00	-1.39	-0.37
Logical conduct	376	0.91	0.25	0.00	1.00	-1.12	0.73
Sense of responsibility	376	0.84	0.072	0.00	1.00	1.52	0.13
Overall responsibility	376	1.00	0.95	0.50	1.00	-0.92	0.45

The data were screened before evaluation of the measurement and structural models. All 376 records contained valid values for the study constructs, and no missing values were identified. Therefore, no imputation procedure was required. Response-pattern screening was also conducted to identify respondents who had marked questionnaire options without sufficient differentiation. The standard deviation of each participant's responses was examined, with values below 0.30 considered indicative of an undifferentiated response pattern. No cases met this exclusion criterion, and all 376 completed questionnaire sets were retained.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov results indicated that some variables deviated significantly from a normal distribution, whereas others did not demonstrate statistically significant

deviation. Personal, social, and organizational job satisfaction and distributive justice were among the variables for which significant departures from normality were reported. Professional job satisfaction, overall job satisfaction, procedural justice, the perceived competence dimensions, overall perceived competence, and most responsibility indicators were reported as approximately normal. Because normality was not consistently supported across all variables, partial least squares structural equation modeling was used. This variance-based method was appropriate because it does not require strict multivariate normality.

Sampling adequacy and the factorability of the correlation matrices were examined using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index and Bartlett's test of sphericity. As

shown in Table 3, the KMO coefficients ranged from 0.887 to 0.895, substantially exceeding the minimum acceptable criterion of 0.60. Bartlett's tests were statistically significant

for all four instruments, indicating that the item correlation matrices differed significantly from identity matrices and were appropriate for factor analysis.

Table 3

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Indices and Bartlett's Tests

Construct	KMO	Bartlett's χ^2	df	p
Job satisfaction	0.895	7089.67	325	< .001
Organizational justice	0.894	4978.51	190	< .001
Perceived competence	0.893	6532.97	378	< .001
Responsibility	0.887	12091.51	861	< .001

Confirmatory factor analyses were conducted for job satisfaction, organizational justice, perceived competence, and responsibility. All retained indicators had standardized factor loadings greater than 0.40. In addition, the bootstrapped t values for the indicator loadings exceeded 1.96, demonstrating that the indicators loaded significantly on their intended latent constructs at the 95% confidence level. Consequently, no questionnaire item was removed from the measurement models.

The reliability and convergent validity findings are reported in Table 4. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the job satisfaction dimensions ranged from 0.815 to 0.914, and their composite reliability coefficients ranged from 0.872 to 0.928. Average variance extracted values ranged from 0.581 to 0.630. For the organizational justice dimensions,

Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.845 to 0.891, composite reliability values ranged from 0.889 to 0.908, and AVE values ranged from 0.508 to 0.782.

The perceived competence dimensions also demonstrated satisfactory measurement properties. Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.876 to 0.913, composite reliability coefficients ranged from 0.892 to 0.935, and AVE values ranged from 0.619 to 0.743. For the responsibility dimensions, Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.726 to 0.871, composite reliability coefficients ranged from 0.776 to 0.912, and AVE values ranged from 0.502 to 0.760. All alpha and composite reliability coefficients exceeded 0.70, and all AVE values exceeded 0.50. These findings supported the internal consistency reliability and convergent validity of the measurement models.

Table 4

Reliability and Convergent Validity of the Measurement Models

Construct	Cronbach's α	Composite Reliability	AVE
Personal job satisfaction	0.870	0.908	0.630
Social job satisfaction	0.914	0.928	0.618
Professional job satisfaction	0.897	0.919	0.619
Organizational job satisfaction	0.815	0.872	0.581
Interactional justice	0.885	0.908	0.508
Distributive justice	0.845	0.889	0.616
Procedural justice	0.891	0.902	0.782
Social competence	0.877	0.907	0.619
Academic competence	0.876	0.892	0.655
Cognitive competence	0.876	0.907	0.623
Physical competence	0.913	0.935	0.743
Commitment	0.798	0.807	0.502
Sense of responsibility	0.783	0.776	0.601
Rule-governed behavior	0.871	0.885	0.609
Hard work	0.868	0.873	0.603
Trustworthiness	0.793	0.821	0.699
Logical conduct	0.844	0.912	0.760
Orderliness	0.726	0.806	0.654
Conscientiousness	0.869	0.869	0.620

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. For the job satisfaction model, the square roots of the AVE values reported on the principal diagonal were greater than the corresponding interconstruct correlations. The same pattern was observed for the distributive, procedural, and interactional justice dimensions. The square roots of the AVE values for the perceived competence dimensions were also greater than their correlations with the other competence dimensions. Similarly, the responsibility dimensions demonstrated stronger relationships with their own indicators than with the other responsibility dimensions.

Taken together, the significant indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha coefficients, composite reliability coefficients, AVE values, and Fornell–Larcker results supported the adequacy of the four measurement models. The instruments therefore demonstrated acceptable reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity for subsequent structural modeling.

The confirmatory factor analysis supported a four-dimensional structure for teachers' job satisfaction, consisting of personal, social, professional, and organizational dimensions. As shown in Table 5, the standardized coefficient for the social dimension was 0.847, making it the strongest dimension of job satisfaction. The

personal dimension had a standardized coefficient of 0.805, followed by the professional dimension with a coefficient of 0.548 and the organizational dimension with a coefficient of 0.480.

The social dimension explained 71.7% of the variance in its indicators and consisted of human relationships and social support, together with recognition and positive feedback. The personal dimension explained 64.8% of its variance and consisted of personal motivation and competence, as well as occupational and psychological balance. The professional dimension explained 30.1% of its variance and included the meaning and mission of teaching and instructional autonomy. The organizational dimension explained 23.0% of its variance and comprised educational facilities and resources, workload and task organization, and management and organizational justice.

At the subdimension level, instructional autonomy had the highest standardized coefficient within the professional dimension, whereas management and organizational justice had the strongest coefficient within the organizational dimension. Human relationships and social support had a coefficient of 0.725, while recognition and positive feedback had a coefficient of 0.688. All dimensions and subdimensions had *t* values greater than 1.96 and were therefore statistically significant.

Table 5

Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Ranking of Job Satisfaction Dimensions

Main dimension	Standardized coefficient	<i>t</i>	R ²	Rank	Subdimension	Standardized coefficient	<i>t</i>	R ²
Social	0.847	59.59	0.717	1	Human relationships and social support	0.725	20.95	0.526
					Recognition and positive feedback	0.688	20.92	0.474
Personal	0.805	40.38	0.648	2	Personal motivation and competence	0.607	15.95	0.369
					Occupational and psychological balance	0.619	17.36	0.383
Professional	0.548	12.87	0.301	3	Meaning and mission of teaching	0.750	35.65	0.563
					Instructional autonomy	0.777	33.43	0.603
Organizational	0.480	12.67	0.230	4	Educational facilities and resources	0.593	16.86	0.352
					Workload and task organization	0.364	7.05	0.133
					Management and organizational justice	0.676	24.56	0.457

One-sample *t* tests were conducted to compare the observed means with the theoretical midpoint of each instrument. Job satisfaction and organizational justice were compared with a midpoint of 3.00 because their items were scored on five-point scales. Perceived competence was compared with a midpoint of 2.50 because its items were

scored from 1 to 4. Responsibility was compared with a midpoint of 0.50 because its items were dichotomously scored.

As reported in Table 6, the mean scores of overall job satisfaction and its dimensions differed significantly from the theoretical midpoint. The reported mean differences

were positive for personal, professional, organizational, and overall job satisfaction. The supplied social satisfaction result was also statistically significant. On the basis of the reported tests, teachers' job satisfaction was interpreted as being at a relatively favorable level.

The perceived competence dimensions and the overall perceived competence score were all significantly higher than the theoretical midpoint of 2.50. Social competence showed the largest mean difference, followed by cognitive competence, overall perceived competence, physical competence, and academic competence. These findings indicated a relatively favorable level of perceived competence among the teachers.

All organizational justice scores were significantly higher than the midpoint of 3.00. Distributive justice showed the largest mean difference, followed by overall organizational justice, interactional justice, and procedural justice. Organizational justice and its dimensions were therefore interpreted as being at relatively favorable levels.

The responsibility dimensions and the total responsibility score were also significantly different from the midpoint of 0.50. Based on the reported positive mean differences, teachers demonstrated relatively favorable levels of conscientiousness, commitment, hard work, orderliness, trustworthiness, rule-governed behavior, logical conduct, sense of responsibility, and overall responsibility.

Table 6

One-Sample t Tests for the Main Study Variables

Variable	Test value	t	p	Mean difference	95% CI lower	95% CI upper
Personal job satisfaction	3.00	24.16	< .001	0.74	0.65	0.83
Social job satisfaction	3.00	38.52	< .001	0.93	-0.98	-0.88
Professional job satisfaction	3.00	15.50	< .001	0.66	0.58	0.75
Organizational job satisfaction	3.00	13.72	< .001	0.52	0.45	0.60
Overall job satisfaction	3.00	7.90	< .001	0.25	0.18	0.31
Cognitive competence	2.50	36.95	< .001	1.02	0.96	1.07
Social competence	2.50	37.11	< .001	1.07	1.01	1.12
Physical competence	2.50	24.88	< .001	0.85	0.78	0.92
Academic competence	2.50	24.37	< .001	0.79	0.72	0.85
Overall perceived competence	2.50	38.06	< .001	0.93	0.88	0.98
Distributive justice	3.00	20.14	< .001	0.77	0.69	0.84
Procedural justice	3.00	16.05	< .001	0.60	0.53	0.68
Interactional justice	3.00	19.70	< .001	0.66	0.59	0.72
Overall organizational justice	3.00	22.76	< .001	0.67	0.62	0.73
Conscientiousness	0.50	15.58	< .001	0.39	0.34	0.44
Commitment	0.50	9.73	< .001	0.23	0.18	0.27
Hard work	0.50	10.00	< .001	0.49	0.39	0.59
Orderliness	0.50	12.26	< .001	0.30	0.25	0.374
Trustworthiness	0.50	8.50	< .001	0.32	0.24	0.39
Rule-governed behavior	0.50	131.69	< .001	0.49	0.49	0.50
Logical conduct	0.50	187.00	< .001	0.50	0.48	0.61
Sense of responsibility	0.50	59.16	< .001	0.48	0.72	0.12
Overall responsibility	0.50	55.41	< .001	0.53	0.51	0.56

The hypothesized structural model treated organizational justice as the exogenous predictor, job satisfaction as the principal endogenous outcome, and perceived competence and responsibility as parallel mediators. The estimated standardized paths indicated positive relationships between organizational justice, perceived competence, responsibility, and job satisfaction. The bootstrapped t statistics showed

that the estimated structural relationships were statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

The explanatory power of the structural model was examined using the coefficient of determination. As shown in Table 7, the model explained 89.7% of the variance in teachers' job satisfaction, indicating substantial explanatory power. Organizational justice explained 19.6% of the variance in perceived competence and 28.9% of the variance

in responsibility. According to the conventional criteria for partial least squares modeling, the R^2 value for job satisfaction was strong, while the values for perceived competence and responsibility were acceptable.

Predictive relevance was evaluated using the Stone–Geisser Q^2 index. All Q^2 values were greater than zero,

demonstrating that the model had predictive relevance for each endogenous construct. The Q^2 value for job satisfaction was 0.591, indicating strong predictive relevance. The values for perceived competence and responsibility were 0.127 and 0.134, respectively, indicating small-to-moderate but acceptable predictive relevance.

Table 7

Explanatory Power and Predictive Relevance of the Structural Model

Endogenous construct	R^2	Interpretation	Q^2	Interpretation
Perceived competence	0.196	Acceptable	0.127	Acceptable predictive relevance
Job satisfaction	0.897	Strong	0.591	Strong predictive relevance
Responsibility	0.289	Acceptable	0.134	Acceptable predictive relevance

The effect-size and collinearity findings are reported in Table 8. Perceived competence had the largest effect on job satisfaction, with an f^2 value of 3.869. Organizational justice had a medium effect on perceived competence and job satisfaction and a large effect on responsibility. Responsibility had a small effect on job satisfaction. These findings showed that perceived competence was the most influential proximal predictor of teachers' job satisfaction in the model.

Variance inflation factor values ranged from 1.000 to 1.801. All values were substantially lower than the criterion

of 5.00, indicating that multicollinearity did not adversely affect the estimation of the structural paths.

The global goodness-of-fit index was calculated using the geometric mean of the average communality and average R^2 . The reported average communality was 0.41875, and the average R^2 was 0.4607. These values produced a GOF of 0.4392. Because this value exceeded the criterion of 0.36 for a strong fit, the overall model demonstrated strong goodness of fit.

Figure 1

Model with Beta Coefficients



Figure 2

Model with T-Values

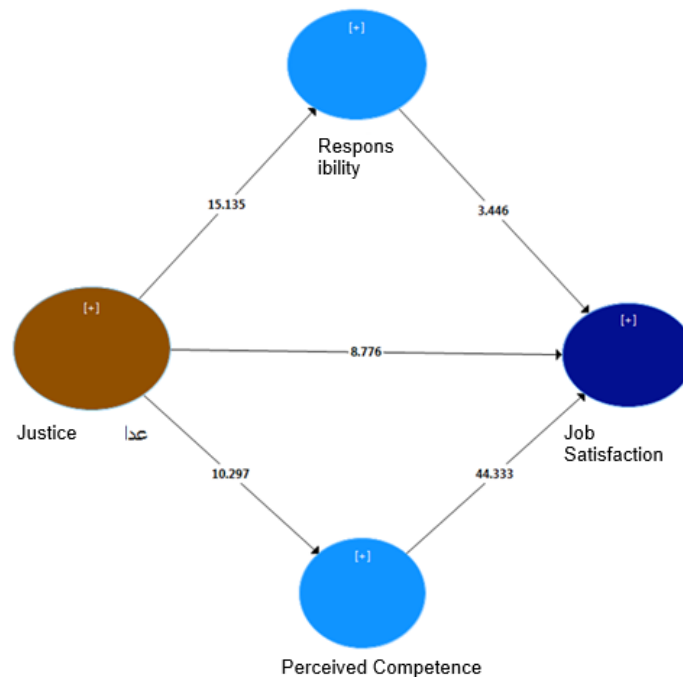


Table 8

Effect Sizes, Collinearity Statistics, and Overall Model Fit

Structural relationship or index	f ²	Effect interpretation	VIF	Collinearity interpretation
Perceived competence → Job satisfaction	3.869	Large	1.594	Acceptable
Organizational justice → Perceived competence	0.244	Medium	1.000	Acceptable
Organizational justice → Job satisfaction	0.253	Medium	1.455	Acceptable
Organizational justice → Responsibility	0.406	Large	1.000	Acceptable
Responsibility → Job satisfaction	0.028	Small	1.801	Acceptable
Average communality	0.41875	—	—	—
Average R ²	0.4607	—	—	—
GOF	0.4392	Strong overall fit	—	—

Collectively, the R², Q², f², VIF, and GOF results supported the adequacy of the structural model. Organizational justice positively predicted perceived competence and responsibility, and all three variables contributed positively to teachers' job satisfaction. The model accounted for a substantial proportion of the variance in job satisfaction, and perceived competence demonstrated the greatest effect on the outcome.

The bootstrapped structural results further supported the proposed mediational structure. Organizational justice had positive effects on both perceived competence and responsibility, while perceived competence and responsibility had positive effects on job satisfaction. The direct path from organizational justice to job satisfaction also

remained positive. Thus, the pattern of direct and indirect relationships was consistent with the proposition that perceived competence and responsibility transmit part of the effect of organizational justice to teachers' job satisfaction. Among the two mediating mechanisms, perceived competence showed the stronger contribution to job satisfaction, whereas responsibility demonstrated a smaller but positive contribution.

Overall, the findings supported a model in which teachers who perceived greater distributive, procedural, and interactional justice were more likely to report stronger competence perceptions and greater responsibility, which were in turn associated with higher personal, professional, organizational, and social job satisfaction. The strongest job-

satisfaction dimension was the social dimension, followed by the personal, professional, and organizational dimensions. The measurement and structural findings jointly supported the validity and suitability of the proposed model among teachers.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study examined the effect of organizational justice on teachers' job satisfaction through the mediating roles of perceived competence and responsibility. The findings supported the proposed structural model and showed that organizational justice, perceived competence, and responsibility collectively explained a substantial proportion of the variance in teachers' job satisfaction. Organizational justice had positive effects on both perceived competence and responsibility and also exerted a direct positive effect on job satisfaction. Perceived competence and responsibility, in turn, positively predicted job satisfaction, indicating that both variables transmitted part of the effect of organizational justice to the outcome. Among the two mediators, perceived competence had the strongest effect on job satisfaction, whereas responsibility had a smaller but still positive contribution. The measurement results also confirmed that teachers' job satisfaction was composed of personal, social, professional, and organizational dimensions, with the social dimension having the greatest relative contribution, followed by the personal, professional, and organizational dimensions.

The positive direct effect of organizational justice on job satisfaction indicates that teachers who perceived the allocation of duties and resources, managerial procedures, and interpersonal treatment as fair reported greater satisfaction with their work. This result is consistent with the view that teachers evaluate their jobs not only on the basis of objective rewards but also according to whether organizational decisions are made transparently and implemented respectfully. When teachers perceive fairness in teaching assignments, workload distribution, promotion opportunities, evaluation procedures, and communication with administrators, they are more likely to develop positive affective evaluations of their employment. This interpretation is compatible with findings showing that organizational justice contributes to teacher performance through job loyalty and strengthens constructive attitudes toward the school (Meilando, 2023). It also aligns with evidence that teachers' perceptions of organizational justice are related to burnout and organizational citizenship

behavior, suggesting that fair treatment can reduce psychological depletion while encouraging positive involvement in the organization (Pan et al., 2022).

The relationship between organizational justice and job satisfaction can also be explained through organizational trust and social exchange. Fair treatment signals that the school values teachers' contributions and acknowledges their professional dignity. Teachers may reciprocate such treatment through stronger attachment, cooperation, and willingness to remain involved in organizational activities. Prior research has demonstrated that organizational trust and job satisfaction predict teachers' organizational citizenship behavior, indicating that positive organizational evaluations can extend beyond formal task performance (Hidayat & Patras, 2022). Similarly, organizational trust reduces turnover intentions partly through teaching efficacy and job satisfaction, which supports the proposition that fair and trustworthy organizational environments strengthen teachers' desire to remain in their occupations (Zhao et al., 2022). The present findings therefore suggest that organizational justice functions as a fundamental contextual resource through which schools can improve teachers' emotional and evaluative relationship with their work.

The results further showed that organizational justice positively predicted perceived competence. Teachers who experienced their schools as fair were more likely to perceive themselves as cognitively, socially, physically, and academically competent. This relationship may reflect the role of justice in providing teachers with access to resources, professional development, clear feedback, autonomy, and opportunities for participation. When procedures are transparent and interactions with administrators are respectful, teachers receive clearer information about expectations and are more likely to interpret organizational feedback as legitimate. These conditions may strengthen confidence in classroom management, instructional decision-making, professional communication, and the ability to respond effectively to occupational challenges.

This finding is consistent with studies showing that perceived organizational support and teacher self-efficacy are important predictors of job satisfaction. Organizational support may strengthen efficacy because it reassures teachers that assistance and resources will be available when difficulties arise (Li, 2023). More recent evidence has indicated that perceived organizational support affects teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction, with work engagement serving as an additional mechanism in this relationship (Mei, 2025). The interaction among perceived

organizational support, self-efficacy, personality characteristics, and job satisfaction has also been shown to influence teacher job performance (Li et al., 2025). Consequently, the present finding expands this literature by suggesting that organizational justice is one of the organizational conditions through which competence perceptions may be strengthened.

Perceived competence exerted the largest effect on job satisfaction in the structural model. This result suggests that teachers' satisfaction depends strongly on whether they believe that they can manage their responsibilities successfully and influence students' educational development. Competent teachers are likely to experience greater control over classroom demands, interpret instructional challenges as manageable, and derive greater meaning from successful performance. They may also experience less uncertainty and frustration when confronting difficult students, complex curricula, administrative expectations, or changing educational policies. This interpretation accords with research showing a positive relationship between teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction and emphasizing the contribution of organizational components to this association (Fardzadeh et al., 2022). Self-efficacy has similarly been linked to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, motivation, and performance among teachers (Rossiandy & Indradewa, 2023).

The strong contribution of perceived competence can also be understood in relation to empowerment and professional identity. Teachers who believe that they possess the required skills are more likely to exercise autonomy, participate in decision-making, and perceive their work as purposeful. Empowerment has been associated with increased teacher job satisfaction, suggesting that teachers are more satisfied when they feel capable of influencing their occupational environment (Mo'tamed & Dibachi, 2023). Psychological empowerment also improves job performance through professional identity and psychological well-being, further illustrating how competence-related perceptions can connect organizational conditions with occupational outcomes (Taqavi Deilami Pour & Pali, 2025). In this regard, the mediating role of perceived competence found in the present study suggests that organizational justice may increase satisfaction partly by enabling teachers to view themselves as effective and professionally valuable.

The findings also indicated that professional competence is closely linked to teachers' broader organizational attitudes. Previous studies have associated teachers'

professional competence with job engagement and lower organizational silence, implying that competent teachers are more inclined to become psychologically involved when the organizational context permits participation and expression (H. Gholami, 2021; Halimeh Gholami, 2021). Job self-efficacy has also been shown to influence the relationship between job adjustment and career plateau, indicating that competence perceptions may protect teachers from some negative occupational experiences (Farjam et al., 2023). Moreover, job satisfaction and organizational commitment contribute to teachers' desire to participate in professional development, which suggests a reciprocal relationship: competence increases satisfaction, while satisfaction encourages further competence development (Qi & Derakhshan, 2023). The present results support this reciprocal conceptualization but position perceived competence specifically as a mechanism through which organizational justice affects job satisfaction.

Organizational justice also had a positive effect on responsibility. Teachers who perceived greater fairness reported stronger commitment, conscientiousness, hard work, trustworthiness, orderliness, rule-governed behavior, logical conduct, and acceptance of responsibility. Fair organizational practices may encourage responsible behavior because they strengthen the belief that the institution fulfills its obligations toward employees. Under such conditions, teachers may feel morally and professionally obliged to reciprocate through greater effort, reliability, and compliance with legitimate organizational expectations. In contrast, perceived injustice may weaken this reciprocal relationship and produce minimal compliance, silence, withdrawal, or reduced discretionary effort.

This interpretation is consistent with evidence that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between pedagogical leadership and teacher job performance (Berhanu, 2023). Leadership practices that are perceived as supportive and legitimate may encourage teachers to internalize organizational goals and accept greater responsibility for performance. Organizational commitment has also been found to mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and teacher performance, demonstrating that responsible occupational behavior is closely connected to both personal and organizational experiences (Ngatimun, 2022). Workplace spirituality, organizational commitment, self-compassion, and job resilience have likewise been identified as important resources in teachers' professional functioning

(Abdollahzadeh Qavaglu et al., 2023). The present results extend these findings by showing that responsibility itself can function as a pathway connecting organizational justice to job satisfaction.

Responsibility positively predicted job satisfaction, although its effect was smaller than that of perceived competence. Responsible teachers may obtain satisfaction from fulfilling duties, maintaining professional standards, acting reliably, and observing the positive consequences of sustained effort. Completing teaching obligations successfully can generate pride, self-respect, recognition, and a sense of professional integrity. Nevertheless, responsibility may not always lead to substantial satisfaction if it is accompanied by excessive workload, inadequate resources, or limited recognition. This may explain why its direct effect was positive but smaller than the effect of perceived competence. Responsibility contributes to satisfaction when teachers can fulfill their duties effectively, but competence may be more immediately relevant because it determines whether teachers experience those responsibilities as manageable and successful.

The findings regarding responsibility are compatible with studies emphasizing productive behavior and organizational citizenship among teachers. School organizational ambidexterity has been associated with organizational entrepreneurship through productive teacher behaviors, illustrating how responsible and proactive employees support institutional development (Ghaderi Sheykhi Abadi et al., 2023). Moral intelligence and perceived organizational support have also been found to predict teacher job performance, suggesting that responsible performance is encouraged by both ethical characteristics and supportive organizational conditions (Ahmadi et al., 2022). Furthermore, perceived organizational support and citizenship behavior have been linked to lower teacher burnout, reinforcing the idea that reciprocal and responsible behavior is more sustainable when teachers believe the organization supports them (Hosseini et al., 2023).

The multidimensional analysis showed that the social dimension was the strongest component of job satisfaction. Human relationships, social support, recognition, feedback, belonging, and respectful interactions therefore appeared especially important to the teachers in this study. This result is understandable because teaching is intrinsically relational. Teachers interact continuously with students, colleagues, administrators, and families, and the quality of these interactions affects their emotional experience of work. Supportive collegial relations can reduce isolation, facilitate

problem solving, and provide emotional reassurance. Recognition from administrators, parents, and students can also confirm the social value of teaching and reinforce teachers' sense that their efforts are visible and meaningful.

The importance of the social dimension is consistent with studies emphasizing organizational climate, instructional leadership, and collegial relationships as determinants of teacher satisfaction and commitment (Ariansyah et al., 2022). It also corresponds with broader evidence that psychosocial and organizational conditions influence teachers' mental well-being through job satisfaction (Capone et al., 2022). When relationships are supportive and teachers feel respected, satisfaction may increase even in the presence of demanding work. Conversely, negative interpersonal environments can undermine satisfaction despite adequate salaries or resources. The strong contribution of social satisfaction therefore suggests that interventions limited to material rewards may be insufficient unless they are accompanied by improved communication, support, and recognition.

The personal dimension was the second strongest component of job satisfaction. This dimension reflected perceived capability, personal progress, emotional balance, manageable stress, and compatibility between work and personal life. Its substantial contribution indicates that teachers evaluate their employment partly according to how it affects their psychological functioning and personal development. Research has similarly linked job satisfaction to mental health and organizational performance (Farjam & Malekpour, 2024). Personal well-being may be especially important in teaching because sustained emotional regulation and interpersonal engagement are required throughout the working day. Teachers who experience growth, balance, and psychological security are therefore more likely to maintain favorable attitudes toward their occupation.

The professional dimension ranked third and incorporated the meaning and mission of teaching, instructional autonomy, participation in educational decisions, and professional identity. Its positive contribution supports the view that job satisfaction is reinforced when teachers regard teaching as socially valuable and have sufficient freedom to exercise professional judgment. Meaningful work has been shown to mediate the relationship between job crafting and organizational citizenship behavior among teachers, indicating that the perceived significance of work promotes constructive organizational involvement (Fu & Huang, 2024). Professional identity and psychological

well-being also mediate the effects of empowerment on teacher performance, further demonstrating that occupational meaning and identity are important in educational settings (Taqavi Deilami Pour & Pali, 2025).

The organizational dimension had the smallest, although still significant, contribution to job satisfaction. This dimension included facilities, resources, workload, task organization, management, justice, security, and professional development opportunities. Its lower relative coefficient should not be interpreted as evidence that organizational conditions are unimportant. Rather, social and personal experiences may constitute more immediate expressions of satisfaction, while organizational conditions influence satisfaction indirectly by shaping competence, responsibility, relationships, stress, and professional meaning. Organizational culture and health remain important because they structure the environment in which these experiences occur (Alaei et al., 2024; Khosravi & Ashtijoo, 2024). Similarly, organizational learning and learning-oriented school practices contribute to teacher performance and professional functioning (Asadizaveh et al., 2022; Kiani & Zarei Talamarani, 2021).

The one-sample findings indicated that job satisfaction, perceived competence, organizational justice, and responsibility were generally above their respective theoretical midpoints. These results suggest that the teachers evaluated their working conditions and personal occupational resources as relatively favorable. Nevertheless, a relatively favorable mean does not imply the absence of organizational problems. Career plateau, organizational silence, job stagnation, and occupational isolation remain significant risks in educational organizations (Abd Yaser et al., 2025; Darabi Amarti & Moradi, 2023; Karimianpour et al., 2022; Zeinabadi et al., 2022). The findings should therefore be interpreted as evidence of generally positive conditions in the sampled population rather than proof that all teachers experienced satisfactory and equitable work environments.

Overall, the structural model demonstrated strong explanatory and predictive performance. The model explained 89.7% of the variance in job satisfaction, while organizational justice explained meaningful proportions of perceived competence and responsibility. The strong goodness-of-fit index and acceptable predictive relevance values supported the suitability of the proposed model. These findings suggest that organizational justice should not be treated merely as one of several independent predictors of satisfaction. Instead, it operates through interconnected

psychological and behavioral processes. Fair treatment strengthens teachers' beliefs that they are capable of performing their roles and encourages them to act responsibly; these experiences subsequently enhance satisfaction with the personal, professional, social, and organizational aspects of teaching.

The study was subject to several limitations. Its cross-sectional design did not permit definitive conclusions about temporal or causal relationships among organizational justice, perceived competence, responsibility, and job satisfaction. All variables were measured through self-report questionnaires, which may have increased common-method variance and exposed the findings to social desirability, acquiescence, and respondents' temporary emotional states. The participants were teachers from one large urban educational system, and the findings may not be directly generalizable to teachers in rural regions, private schools, special education settings, or educational systems with different administrative structures. The use of proportionate stratified sampling improved representativeness within the target population, but unmeasured differences among schools, principals, grade levels, and employment arrangements may still have affected the results. In addition, some dimensions of responsibility were measured with dichotomous items, which may have restricted score variability and reduced the precision with which individual differences were represented.

Future studies should examine the proposed model using longitudinal and multiwave designs to determine whether changes in organizational justice precede changes in competence, responsibility, and job satisfaction. Experimental or intervention studies could assess whether improvements in transparent decision-making, equitable workload allocation, participative leadership, and respectful communication produce measurable changes in the mediators and outcome. Replication is needed among teachers working in different cities, rural areas, school levels, and public and private institutions. Future research should also compare novice and experienced teachers and investigate whether gender, employment status, school climate, leadership style, burnout, organizational trust, or professional identity moderate the proposed relationships. Collecting data from multiple sources, including principals, colleagues, administrative records, and classroom observations, would help reduce common-method bias. Researchers may also test alternative models in which job satisfaction predicts responsibility or professional

development, thereby examining possible reciprocal relationships over time.

In practice, educational authorities should establish transparent and consistently applied procedures for allocating teaching duties, evaluating performance, distributing rewards, approving promotions, and providing professional-development opportunities. School principals should explain decisions, invite teachers to participate in matters affecting instruction, and ensure that communication remains respectful even when unfavorable decisions must be implemented. Competence can be strengthened through targeted training, mentoring, constructive feedback, instructional autonomy, and access to adequate teaching resources. Responsibility should be supported through clear role expectations, realistic workloads, recognition of conscientious behavior, and opportunities for teachers to assume meaningful leadership roles. Because social satisfaction emerged as the strongest dimension, schools should also invest in collegial support systems, collaborative planning, recognition programs, constructive parent-teacher communication, and practices that strengthen teachers' sense of belonging and professional respect.

Authors' Contributions

Authors equally contributed to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were under the ethical standards of the institutional and, or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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