

# Influence of Perceived Teacher Identity on Job Satisfaction among Elementary School Teachers: Focusing on the Mediating Effect of Teacher Commitment

Suk Yeol Lee<sup>1</sup> & Ho Seub Lee<sup>2,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>College of General Education, Namseoul University, Cheonan, South Korea

<sup>2</sup>College of General Education, Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul, South Korea

\*Correspondence: College of General Education, Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul, Cheongpa-ro 47-gil 100, Yongsan-gu, South Korea. Tel: 82-02-2077-7407. E-mail: smlhs@sookmyung.ac.kr

Received: August 25, 2022

Accepted: October 31, 2022

Online Published: November 15, 2022

doi:10.5430/jct.v11n8p432

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/jct.v11n8p432>

*Funding for this paper was provided by Namseoul University*

## Abstract

This study is to analyze the relationship between elementary school teacher identity perception, job satisfaction, and teacher commitment. To this end, the influence of elementary school teacher identity perception on job satisfaction and the mediating effect model of teacher commitment were established, and the variables of teacher identity perception, job satisfaction, and teacher commitment were measured for 203 elementary school teachers in 5 regions of Korea. The analysis verified the influence and mediating effect among variables by applying structure equation modeling. The analysis results are as follows. First, the elementary school teacher identity perception has a positive impact on job satisfaction and teacher commitment. Second, teacher commitment has a positive impact on job satisfaction. Third, teacher commitment has a partial mediating effect between the elementary school teacher identity perception and job satisfaction. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the variable of teacher identity perception in the decision-making situation for policies and systems to increase the job satisfaction and teacher commitment of elementary school teachers. In a situation where educational innovation and reform are being promoted worldwide along with the 4th industrial revolution, teacher identity perception will act as an important factor in the success of these changes and innovation.

**Keywords:** elementary school teacher, teacher identity, teacher commitment, job satisfaction, teacher education research

## 1. Introduction

Teacher job satisfaction is important, and it plays a key role in education. Research on job satisfaction have been conducted in various ways depending on the research subject or research method. In teacher education research, studies on teacher job satisfaction is continuously conducted because this is depicted in the teacher's output or performance. Teacher job satisfaction is the degree to which a teacher is satisfied with his or her occupation or job, and the teacher's positive evaluation of the job plays an important role. If teachers are dissatisfied with their job, it is difficult to induce meaningful changes and growth among students, and it negatively affects students' learning activities and school life.

In the study of Cho-hee Park (2017), when teacher job satisfaction is low, the student's satisfaction with school life decreased, whereas high teacher job satisfaction shows positive attitude in the teaching and learning processes resulting to strong passion and attachment to educational activities (Park, 2017). Teacher job satisfaction is a direct factor that increases the educational effectiveness and educational performance of school organizations. Teachers with high job satisfaction are attached to the school and feel responsible for the achievement of school educational goals, which ultimately enhances school education performance. Through these studies, Teacher job satisfaction is emphasized as an important factor that determines the quality of school education and in the effects of education.

In light of these findings, research on teacher job satisfaction needs to continue in order to improve the quality of education. Currently, the emphasis on teacher job satisfaction and the actual job satisfaction of teachers in South Korea is not high. According to the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) conducted by the OECD, the job satisfaction of South Korean teachers is not higher than the OECD average. And the results of the TALIS 2013 and 2018 surveys show that the job satisfaction of South Korean teachers is lower than the OECD average job satisfaction.

Looking at previous studies related to job satisfaction, the factors affecting job satisfaction vary among researchers, and delving into its relationship with teacher identity is a meaningful approach. Teacher job satisfaction is affected by the teacher's thoughts and values about the teaching profession. With new demands arising from changes in the school organization and from the demands of the times, the identity that teachers have for their profession and how they perform their duties act as variables that determine their organizational satisfaction.

Thus, it is necessary to focus on teacher identity in the research on job satisfaction. Vocational fulfillment consciousness pertains to recognizing one's vocation and living according to the vocation; and this significantly affects life satisfaction through various mediating factors such as job satisfaction. The results suggest that teacher identity is similar to the sense of calling and affects job satisfaction (Duffy, Allan, Austin & Bott, 2013).

At present, various studies conducted range from exploring the concept and characteristics of teacher job satisfaction to studies on related variables of job satisfaction. In the studies on teacher job satisfaction, teacher commitment is one of the important factors based on the related studies conducted (Lee, Kim & Kim, 2012). Delving into the mediating effect of teacher commitment and the relationship between teacher identity and job satisfaction is noteworthy for the purpose of further broadening the understanding of this topic. Previous studies have showed that teacher job satisfaction is affected by teacher commitment. Teacher commitment is the behavior of a teacher who, as a member of the school organization, wants to devote herself to her job while oriented towards school goals and values.

Relatedly, this study is interested in teacher identity while considering teacher commitment as a variable to increase teacher job satisfaction. In particular, this study will probe into where teacher identity functions as a major tool and interpretative framework for teachers' educational practice or change (Choi, 2021). Teacher identity involves the process of forming self-understanding and behavioral practice through continuous reflection in the personal experience as a teacher, the school context to which one belongs, and the organizational atmosphere. In addition, this study expects to expand the scope of teacher job satisfaction studies by examining the mediating effect of teacher commitment in the relationship between teacher identity and job satisfaction.

This study intends to analyze the mediating effect of teacher commitment on the relationship between teacher identity and job satisfaction perceived by teachers only at the organizational level. The purpose of this study is to reveal how teacher job satisfaction changes in relation to perceived teacher identity and teacher commitment. The specific research questions are as follows: What are the overall trends of perceived teacher identity, teacher commitment and job satisfaction among elementary school teachers? What are the effects of perceived teacher identity and teacher commitment of elementary school teachers on job satisfaction?

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### *2.1 Teacher Identity*

The concept of teacher identity is defined in various ways by scholars, and two perspectives show some similarities. The first perspective is the context in which teachers understand themselves in the group; understanding and recognizing what teachers do in the teaching profession and their status in society (Pennington, 2002). This largely depends on how they perceive and understand themselves as teachers. The other perspective is that teachers emphasize professional self-awareness given that teaching is a professional job. Teacher identity is viewed as a continuous interpretation, reconstruction, and integration of personal and professional aspects in the process of becoming a teacher (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004). Moreover, teacher identity refers to how teachers define themselves as professionals, the creation of a professional self that changes over career stages and reconstructed according to school or policy contexts (Lasky, 2005).

In one perspective, teacher identity is a complex and dynamic state of mind built by each individual between his or her personal self-image and the teacher's role (Heo, 2016). While another perspective shows that teachers recognize the intrinsic value and meaning of their profession through the process of self-reflection and the reflection on their teaching role (Song, 2015). By combining these concepts, teacher identity is defined as the degree to which a teacher

pursues professional growth by performing the roles and duties assigned to them based on self-understanding of the values of the teaching profession and of life (Kim & Lee, 2021). From this definition, the factors measuring teacher identity are presented in three ways. First, the understanding of who the person is as a teacher and what the person does indicates teacher's self-understanding. Second, recognizing and evaluating roles and tasks of a teacher i.e., teaching- learning, life guidance, class management, etc. pertains to the recognition of the teacher's role. Third, forming one's own profession along with career development refers to teacher's professional growth while developing and practicing one's own knowledge and experience (Kim & Lee, 2022). In this study, a comprehensive conceptual definition of teacher identity, self-understanding, role recognition, and professional growth definition are applied. Nevertheless, teacher identity can be perceived differently by each teacher, so the results of teacher identity vary according to how teachers perceive the characteristics of the school organization.

### *2.2 Teacher Commitment*

In any organization, the degree to which employees dedicate themselves to a given job is very important to determine the effectiveness of the organization. In schools, just like other organizations, the dedication of teachers plays a very important role in the effectiveness of the school organization. Teacher commitment is seen as the teacher's behavior as a member of the school organization, focusing on the job while oriented toward the school goals and values. Teacher commitment refers to the relative strength of psychological attachments that teachers show to subjects, students, and the teaching profession itself. With teacher's devotion, the object of devotion is also emphasized (Ro, 2004).

The dedication of teachers is categorized into various types. In reference to object of commitment, there are three types of commitment: commitment to students, commitment to teaching, and commitment to schools (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988). In addition, there are 2 kinds of commitment: organizational commitment and commitment to student learning (Kushman, 1992). Organizational commitment is defined as the teacher's loyalty to the school organization and identification with the school's goals and values. Student learning commitment is defined as the teacher's commitment to helping students learn regardless of their academic difficulties or social background (Moom, 2020).

Teacher commitment is defined as the degree of involvement in the recognition of the cognitive value of a teacher to a class, student, or school organization, identification of the affective aspect, and the behavioral involvement of the teacher. In other words, the object of teacher commitment is class, student, and school organization, and the conceptual attributes of teacher commitment are value recognition, identification, and involvement. Value recognition is the degree to which an individual perceives the object of commitment as important, and identification indicates the degree to which an individual feels emotionally united with the object of commitment. Involvement refers to an individual's willingness to actively strive for the realization of the value of the object of commitment. In this context, there is no significant difference in understanding that the object of teacher dedication is the student or student learning, class or teaching activity, and school organization (Hong, 2005). In this study, students and organizations are viewed as objects of teacher dedication, and psychological attachments and value perceptions are applied to them as attitudes and behaviors.

### *2.3 Job Satisfaction*

Teacher job satisfaction is the degree to which a teacher is satisfied with his or her job or job. A teacher's attitude toward the teaching profession may or may not be positive depending on his or her job satisfaction. These emotions are a combination of positive and negative emotions, and the teacher's positive evaluation of the job plays an important role in job satisfaction. Job satisfaction includes not only emotions felt about job conditions, but also evaluative aspects felt about job performance. Job satisfaction is explained not only by emotional factors such as emotions and feelings, but also by cognitive factors such as beliefs, judgments, and comparisons about one's job and organizational environment (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). Teacher job satisfaction is also closely related to motivation. When job dissatisfaction occurs, neglect of work and insincere behavior affects turnover rate, including absenteeism and leaving early from work. Teacher job satisfaction is important is one of the important factors that affect not only teachers but also students and schools. Job satisfaction is also suggested as a measure of school organizational effectiveness along with adaptability and job performance (Shin, 2012; Kim & Yang, 2019).

Teacher job satisfaction is an emotional psychological state formed according to the degree of job satisfaction of the job needs perceived in the course of the teacher's job performance. In order to increase job satisfaction, one has to feel a sense of accomplishment or have a good emotional state when evaluating the performance or experience gained from their job performance. Various studies disclose what factors affect teacher job satisfaction. In relation to the job content itself, there may be technical diversity, physical diversity, job identification, and goal structure. Also,

teacher job satisfaction is related to the working environment or working conditions of teachers, and these are factors that affect the ease of work and maintenance of life, e.g. salary, supervision, and working conditions. In addition, a sense of trust and solidarity is felt in the interpersonal relationships within the organization. The relationships with colleagues and the school principal, relationships with parents, and relationships with students affect teacher job satisfaction.

Factors that affect teacher job satisfaction include job aspects i.e., the job itself, job stability, job characteristics; organizational aspects such as remuneration, promotion, school policy; and environmental aspects including the principal's leadership, human relationships with colleagues, working conditions; and individual aspects e.g., feeling of achievement, teaching recognition, professional interest (Lee & Hur, 2008). This study considers interpersonal relationships in the workplace as the components of job satisfaction in terms of productive realization of educational goals and school organizational effectiveness.

#### *2.4 Relationship between Research Variables*

Most studies on the relationship between teacher commitment and teacher job satisfaction show that there is a positive correlation between the two variables. Research shows that the higher the job commitment, the higher the job satisfaction. Teacher commitment to the teaching profession is closely related to teacher job satisfaction, and the higher the teaching commitment score, the higher the job satisfaction (Kreugeret, Lauerman, Graham & Dowell, 1986).

In terms of individual job satisfaction, the individual psychological characteristics can be closely related to job satisfaction. Positive psychological capital motivates individuals for work performance, and is based on the concepts and theories of positive psychology, self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, etc. (Luthans, 2004). Teacher's positive psychological capital shows a positive effect on job satisfaction (Jang & Kim, 2019). In addition, positive psychological capital and presence affect burnout and job satisfaction (Jeon & Kang, 2022). Presence is related to individual organizational adaptation. A person who feels presence is resilient and psychologically healthy, whereas a person who does not feel presence is prone to various forms of psychosocial distress, along with a feeling of being insignificant and meaningless (Flett & Nepon, 2020). Teacher identity and presence are considered similar in previous studies. Teacher identity is related to organizational satisfaction, which can be a factor that affects teacher commitment and job satisfaction.

Studies on job satisfaction revealed a relationship between organizational structure and the behavior of members. Future research on job satisfaction continue to expand the scope of job satisfaction by exploring the relational variables and comparing the results with previous studies. Relatedly, this study aims to deal with job satisfaction by setting teacher commitment as a mediating variable in connection with teacher identity. This study aims to empirically verify the influence of teacher identity on job satisfaction and teacher commitment and expand the relational variables linking job satisfaction to teacher identity.

### **3. Research Method**

#### *3.1 Research Model*

Studies on job satisfaction revealed in previous studies have shown that there is a relationship between organizational structure and the behavior of members. In the future, research on job satisfaction will continue to expand the scope of job satisfaction by continuously exploring relational variables and comparing the results with previous studies. In that sense, this study intends to deal with job satisfaction by setting teacher commitment as a relational variable in connection with teacher identity.

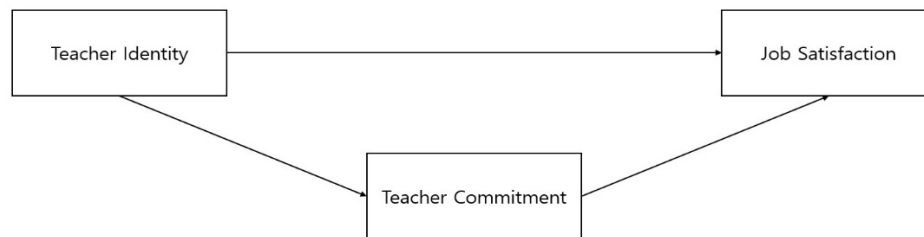
The purpose of this study is to empirically verify which one has a greater effect including not only the effect of teacher identity but also the teacher commitment on job satisfaction. This study expands the relational variables related to employees to increase job satisfaction to teacher commitment, it can be seen that there is a connection with previous studies and the study is meaningful.

Teacher identity is a variable that reinforces the value and commitment of teachers to the teaching profession through understanding and reflection. Therefore, this study intends to examine the direct effect of teacher identity on teachers' job satisfaction. Along with this, it was said that teacher commitment means the relative strength of the psychological attachment that teachers show to subjects, students, and the teaching profession itself.

Teacher dedication promotes teacher identity and is expected to have a positive effect on teacher job satisfaction by acting as a force to successfully perform in their teaching profession. In other words, it is expected that when teacher

commitment, the belief that teachers can successfully perform tasks or roles to be implemented by students or classes, is mediated, teacher identity reinforces job satisfaction.

The structural equation model analyzes the mediating effect of teacher commitment between perceived teacher identity and job satisfaction as shown in Figure 1, and the exogenous variable is set as teacher identity, the endogenous variable is job satisfaction, and the mediating variable is teacher commitment.



**Figure 1.** Research Model

### 3.2 Research Hypothesis

The research hypotheses are as follows. First, the perceived teacher identity has a positive effect on the job satisfaction. Second, the perceived teacher identity has a positive effect on the teacher commitment. Third, teacher commitment has a positive effect on job satisfaction. Fourth, teacher commitment has a mediating effect between perceived teacher identity and teacher job satisfaction.

### 3.3 Subject of Investigation

The research subjects are elementary school teachers located in the five regions of Daegu, Gyeongbuk, Gyeongnam, Ulsan, and Daejeon. Stratified random sampling was used to determine the sample according to school size, gender, and status. To ensure validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by two professors who major in education administration, one professor who majors in education evaluation, and five teachers. Prior to the start of data gathering, informed consent was obtained from the subjects, and they were guaranteed absolute anonymity and confidentiality under Article 33 (Protection of Confidentiality) and Article 34 (Duty of Statistical Investigators) of the Republic of Korea Statistical Act.

Printed questionnaires were used for the research. The distribution and collection of the questionnaires were sent by mail. This was conducted for one month in September 2021, and a total of 230 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to 3 elementary schools in each in Daegu, Gyeongbuk, Gyeongnam, Ulsan, and Daejeon, and 210 copies were collected back. Only 203 copies were used for statistical analysis, 7 copies were excluded as these were assessed to be responded insincerely, and thus considered unacceptable. The survey response rate was 88.3%. And in comparison with the current state of elementary school teachers in the Korea Basic Education Statistics in 2021, the ratio was similar in the size of the school they belonged to and the respondent teacher status. The response rate of female teachers was higher than that of male teachers.

Table 1 shows the respondents according to their major characteristics. There were 55 males (27.1%) and 148 females (72.9%), 28 people (13.8%) with teaching experience of '1-5 years', 70 people (34.5%) with '6-10 years', 65 people (32.0%) with '11 -20 years' and 40 people (19.7%) with '21 years or more' teaching experience. In terms of position, there were 151 general teachers (74.4%) and 52 head teachers (25.6%). Also, there were 97 people (47.8%) in the 'metropolitan' and 106 people in 'medium-small cities' (52.2%). Lastly, there were 161 teachers (79.3%) in charge of the classroom and 42 (20.7%) non-homeroom teachers.

### 3.4 Definition of Measuring Tools and Variables

#### 3.4.1 Teacher Identity Measurement Tool

A tool developed by Gyu-Tae Kim and Seok-Yeol Lee (2021) was used to measure teacher identity (Kim & Lee, 2021). The teacher identity scale was validated with 26 items including 10 items for self-understanding as a teacher, 9 items for role recognition as a teacher, and 7 items for professional growth as a teacher. This survey tool utilized a 6-point Likert scale consisting of 1 point as the lowest and 6 points as the highest.

### 3.4.2 Teacher Commitment Measurement Tool

For measuring teacher commitment, a tool developed by Chang-nam Hong and modified by Man-deok Choi (2021) was used (Choi, 2021). Hong Chang-nam’s teacher commitment measurement tool was divided into three aspects: value recognition, identification, and involvement in class, student, and school organization. Each aspect has 8 items with a total 24 items. Man-deok Choi revised the teacher commitment measurement tool to a total 12 items by factor analysis, consisting of 2 domains: 7 items for class student commitment and 5 items for organizational commitment. This survey tool utilized a 5-point Likert scale consisting of 1 point as the lowest and 5 points as the highest.

**Table 1.** Respondents According to Teacher Characteristics

Classification		Number of respondents	(%)
Gender	Male	55	27.1
	Female	148	72.9
Teaching experience	1-5years	28	13.8
	6-10years	70	34.5
	11-20years	65	32.0
	more than 21years	40	19.7
Rank	General teacher	151	74.4
	Head teacher	52	25.6
School location	Metropolitan city	97	47.8
	Medium-small city	106	52.2
Homeroom teacher	Homeroom teacher	161	79.3
	Non-homeroom teacher	42	20.7
Total		203	100

### 3.4.3 Teacher Commitment Measurement Tool

As a tool for measuring job satisfaction, the Teacher Job Satisfaction Scale (TJSS-9) of Pepe et al. was translated and used (Pepe et al., 2019). The job satisfaction questionnaire consisted of a total of 9 items, including 3 items for satisfaction with colleagues, 3 items for satisfaction with parents, and 3 items for student behavior satisfaction. A 5-point Likert scale was utilized with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest. Higher score means higher level of job satisfaction, which is determined by adding up the measured scores.

### 3.4.4 Verification of Reliability and Validity of Measurement Tools

Table 2 shows the reliability analysis and exploratory factor analysis results of the measurement tools. The overall reliability of the measurement tool is  $\alpha=.95$ , teacher identity  $\alpha=.95$ , teacher commitment  $\alpha=.87$ , and job satisfaction  $\alpha=.92$ . As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, it was classified according to the variables of teacher identity, teacher commitment, and job satisfaction,  $KMO =.9$ , Bartlett's Test  $p<.001$ .

**Table 2.** Reliability and Validity Analysis Results of Measurement Tools

Classification		Component		
		1	2	3
Teacher identity	Self-awareness	1.00		
	Role recognition	.85		
	Professional growth	.82		
Teacher commitment	Organizational commitment		.97	
	Class student dedication		.75	
Job satisfaction	Co-worker satisfaction			.74
	Parent satisfaction			.93
	Student Behavior Satisfaction			.96
KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy: .9, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: $p<.001$				

	Classification	Cronbach's $\alpha$	
Teacher identity	Self-awareness	.95	.95
	Role recognition		
	Professional growth		
Teacher commitment	Organizational commitment	.87	
	Class student dedication		
Job satisfaction	Co-worker satisfaction	.92	
	Parent satisfaction		
	Student Behavior Satisfaction		

### 3.5 Analysis Method

For the analyses of this study, the following methods were used for the research questions and hypothesis verification. Descriptive statistical and correlation analyses were used to examine the demographic characteristics of elementary school teachers and the characteristics of major variables. In addition, an exploratory factor analysis was performed to verify the validity of the overall measurement model, and the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value was obtained to verify the reliability. And to verify the model predicted in this study, the structural equation model was applied to confirm the fit and significant path of the model, and to verify the mediating effect. The bootstrapping method was applied to verify the mediating effect. Descriptive statistics and correlation analyses, reliability and validity verification were performed using Jamovi 1.6.21, structural equation model verification, influence between variables, and mediating effect were verified using IBM SPSS Amos 23.

## 4. Research Results

### 4.1 Results of Descriptive Statistical Analysis and Correlation of Measured Variables

Table 3 shows the results of descriptive statistical analysis of teachers' identity perception, teacher commitment, and job satisfaction. In the descriptive statistics of major variables, the absolute value of skewness was less than 2 and the absolute value of kurtosis was less than 4 for all variables.

Table 4 shows the results of correlation analysis of perceived teacher identity, teacher commitment, and job satisfaction. The latent variables showed significant positive correlation. The correlation coefficient between teacher identity and teacher commitment was .72, between teacher identity and job satisfaction was .73, and between teacher commitment and job satisfaction was .76.

**Table 3.** Descriptive Statistical Analysis Result

Variable		Minimum	Average	Maximum	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Teacher identity	Self-awareness	2.40	4.63	6	.78	-.30	-.24
	Role recognition	2.78	4.84	6	.71	-.15	-.68
	Professional growth	2.86	4.60	6	.78	.02	-.50
Teacher commitment	Class student dedication	1.57	3.91	5	.65	-.50	.54
	Organizational commitment	1.20	3.65	5	.70	-.27	.16
Job satisfaction	Co-worker satisfaction	2.00	3.80	5	.63	-.08	.07
	Parent satisfaction	2.00	3.67	5	.64	-.18	.04
	Student behavior satisfaction	2.00	3.52	5	.66	-.09	.11

**Table 4.** Correlation Analysis Results

	Teacher identity	Teacher commitment	Job satisfaction
Teacher identity	1		
Teacher commitment	.72**	1	
Job satisfaction	.73**	.76**	1

4.2 Study Model Fit Verification Result

Table 5 and Figure 2 shows the results of verification of the fit of the structural equation research model. The TLI, NFI, CFI, and AGFI fitness indices were all above .9, and the RMSEA fitness indices were found to be .05 to .08. Overall, the research model was found to be suitable, with CMIN/DF values of 4 or less. The mean variance extraction value was .5 or more, and the concept reliability value was .7 or more.

**Table 5.** Study Model Fit Verification Result

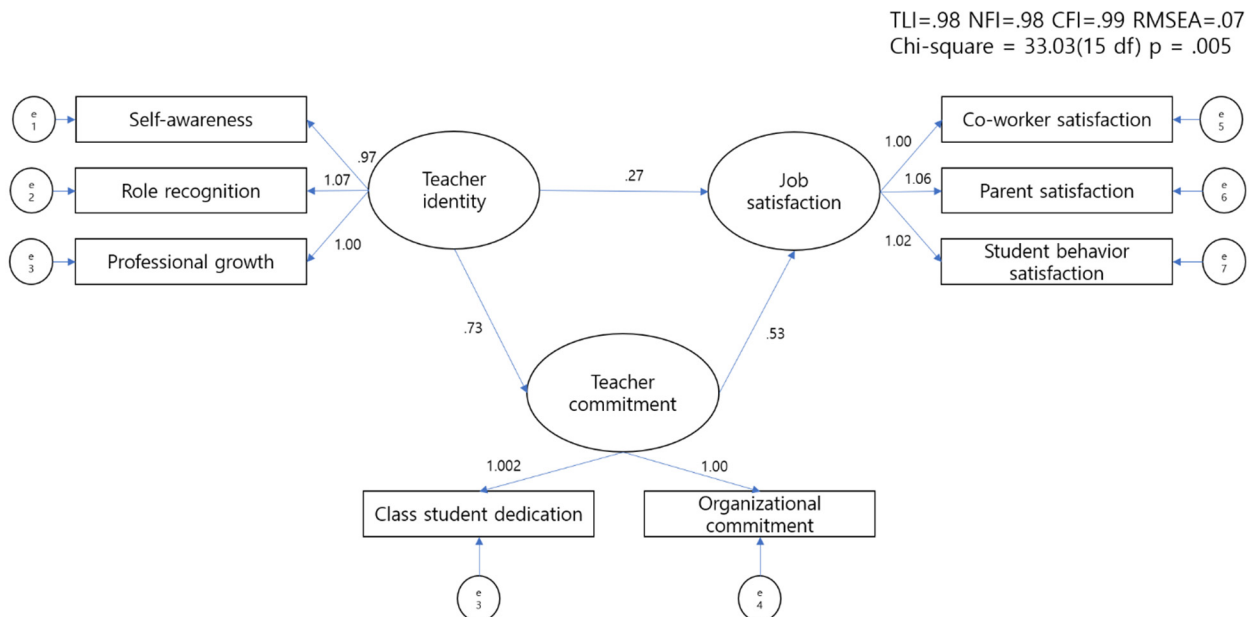
Chi-square	CMIN/DF	TLI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA	AGFI
33.03	2.20	.98	.98	.99	.077	.91

4.3 Results of Path Coefficient Analysis between Research Model Variables

The path coefficients of the research model were analyzed to understand the influence of teacher identity on teacher commitment and job satisfaction and the impact of teacher commitment on job satisfaction as indicated in Table 6 and Figure 2. All influences between variables were found to be statistically significant, and the research hypotheses numbers 1, 2 and 3 were adopted. It was found that teacher identity had a positive effect on teacher commitment and job satisfaction, and that teacher commitment had a positive effect on job satisfaction.

**Table 6.** Results of Path Coefficient Analysis

Path between variables	Standardizati on factor	Unnormalized coefficient	S.E.	C.R	Hypothesis test result
Teacher commitment ← Teacher identity	.84	.73	.06	12.43***	Accepted
Job satisfaction ← Teacher identity	.33	.27	.08	3.42***	Accepted
Job satisfaction ← Teacher commitment	.56	.53	.10	5.48***	Accepted



**Figure 2.** Results of Path Coefficient Analysis and Study Model Fit Verification



#### 4.4 Analysis of Mediation Effects

The results of analyzing the mediating effect of teacher commitment on the effect of teacher identity on job satisfaction is shown in Table 7. The Bootstrapping method was used to verify the mediating effect, and as a result of the verification, the significance probability was .004, indicating that the indirect effect was significant. The overall effect was .809, the direct effect was .332, and the indirect effect was .471, proving that teacher commitment mediates perceived teacher identity and job satisfaction. Thus, the hypothesis on the mediating effect of teacher commitment on teacher identity and job satisfaction was adopted. Teacher commitment was also found to have a partial mediating effect.

**Table 7.** Results of Analysis of Mediating Effect of Teacher Commitment

Parameter path	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
Teacher identity → Teacher commitment → Job satisfaction	.332	.471	.809

### 5. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate how teachers' job satisfaction changes according to perceived teacher identity and teacher commitment. In particular, this study focused on recognizing teacher identity as one of the various factors that affect job satisfaction of elementary school teachers, as well as considering new situational demands. In previous studies on job satisfaction of elementary school teachers, teacher commitment is suggested as an important influencing factor on job satisfaction. Relatedly, this study empirically analyzed how teacher identity affects job satisfaction and the mediating effect of teacher commitment. This study confirmed the importance of teacher identity, and an approach direction that increases job satisfaction through teacher identity was established. To this end, the structural equation model was applied and analyzed to confirm the mediating role of teacher commitment in the process of perceived teacher identity on job satisfaction.

Based on the results of the research analysis, the implications are discussed as follows. First, research hypothesis 1 is accepted, wherein teacher identity has a positive effect on job satisfaction. These results provided basic data to promote related domestic research that verifies the effect of teacher identity in to increase job satisfaction. In addition, results suggest that teachers must promote self-understanding, clarification of roles, and continued professional growth when devising ways to increase teacher job satisfaction. These results show that aside from existing factors such as working conditions, salary, personnel system, and professionalism, job satisfaction is enhanced when there is understanding of the job and perceived value and social meaning of the job performed.

With the advent of the 4th industrial revolution and the emergence of new learners, questions are raised about the roles and functions of existing teachers, especially the possibilities and effects of teaching and learning. In a situation where the positive perception of the traditional education system and teachers is decreasing, considering about perceived teacher identity means thinking about new educational innovation in itself. And contemplating on teacher identity at this point is meaningful in itself as a process of expanding and reconstructing teachers' awareness of educational innovation. It provides meaningful implications in terms of process and methodology in improving and innovating the education system in the future. And the importance of teacher identity in this Korean context can be recognized globally in an era that requires new educational innovation.

Second, research hypothesis 2 is accepted, that is, teacher identity has a positive effect on teacher commitment. The results of the study show the magnitude of the influence of teacher commitment on teacher identity as highest when compared to the influence of teacher identity on job satisfaction and the influence of teacher commitment on job satisfaction. Previous studies have shown that the relationship between teacher commitment and job satisfaction continues to exist. Although organizational and institutional aspects and leadership have been studied on as important factors to increase job satisfaction, the relevant variables related to teachers themselves need to be continuously reviewed. Teacher job satisfaction is an important factor in the quality and performance of education, and teacher commitment is significant in job satisfaction. Moreover, teacher identity works as a key factor to improve job satisfaction and teacher commitment. For teachers to devote themselves to educational activities, it is imperative that they first recognize the meaning and value of their work and job. It is difficult to expect commitment to the job without having a clear identity to one's job, job role, professionalism, etc. It can be surmised that in order to maintain and expand teacher dedication in a new environment and context, it is necessary to be continuously aware and reassess teacher identity, and active support measures must be in place for this.

Third, research hypothesis 3 is accepted, wherein teacher commitment has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

Previous studies have shown that the relationship between teacher commitment and job satisfaction continues to exist. Organizational and institutional aspects and leadership have been studied on as important ways to increase job satisfaction, the importance of variables related to teachers themselves needs to be continuously reviewed. Teacher commitment is influenced by personal factors such as sense of duty, confidence, personality characteristics, teaching career, and family life. It is also affected by environmental factors namely, fellow teachers, managers, compensation, autonomy, opportunities for professional development, personnel system, policies, and social awareness. In order to increase teacher commitment, methods such as manager leadership, expansion of support for the teacher community, and mentoring support have been suggested. In the future, it is necessary to consider expanding support such as mentoring considering factors such as sense of mission and confidence among personal factors. To prevent teacher commitment from declining at some point of the teaching career, teacher identity must be looked into with more depth. Teacher identity is changing, and a longitudinal analysis can illustrate how changes in teacher identity affect teacher commitment. Hence, providing opportunities to rebuild teacher identity at the appropriate time of the teaching life cycle is necessary.

Fourth, research hypothesis 4 is accepted, wherein teacher commitment is positively mediating the effect of teacher identity on job satisfaction. The mediating effect of teacher commitment is greater than the direct effect of teacher identity on job satisfaction. The study proved that perceived teacher identity has a direct effect on job satisfaction, and teacher commitment has a partial mediating effect on the influence of perceived teacher identity on job satisfaction. It also confirmed that job satisfaction is further enhanced when teacher commitment mediates the relationship between teacher identity and job satisfaction. And in order to improve teacher job satisfaction in the future, an increased support on the personal factors of teacher commitment and teacher identity is essential.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

From the results of the study, the following conclusion is presented. First, teacher identity is an important factor in the teaching profession. Teachers need to positively perceive their profession, and developing and maintaining teacher identity is vital. Moreover, teacher identity has a positive effect on teacher commitment and job satisfaction. Forming teacher identity is recognized as an important factor to increase teacher job satisfaction; and programs to expand teacher identity are required. This study indicated the need to re-examine the relationship between perceived teacher identity, teacher commitment, and job satisfaction. Additionally, giving meaning to work rather than accepting the task is essential as this increases productivity and provides an opportunity to work happily.

Second, teacher identity and teacher commitment increase job satisfaction and improve school effectiveness. Teacher identity enables teachers to perform assigned roles and duties based on self-understanding of the value of the teaching profession, and to pursue professional growth as well. When teacher identity increases, teacher commitment becomes more active, and when these factors are combined, job satisfaction increases.

Third, research on increasing job satisfaction of elementary school teachers needs to be continued from various aspects. South Korea is known to have achieved rapid economic growth in a short period of time, and education in South Korea has been recognized as the driving force for its rapid economic growth. However, the job satisfaction of Korean teachers is lower than average among OECD countries. With the onset of new educational innovation after the 4th industrial revolution, it is vital to reorganize the curricula, innovate teaching and learning methods, and actively review the educational system, as well as improve teacher job satisfaction as the main pillar of the reform. This study revealed that teacher commitment and teacher identity are important factors relating to job satisfaction of elementary school teachers. To increase teacher job satisfaction in the future, it is necessary to consider other variables such as teacher identity on decision-making situations pertaining to policy, education, and personnel system.

Lastly, this study bears some limitations that should be considered in subsequent studies. This study was conducted among elementary school teachers in specific areas. Hence, generalization of the research results is limited. Also, various analyses of personal background factors are required to prepare a differentiated support plan that can adapt appropriately to the teaching profession and to the teachers' personal background. This study contributed academically on examining the relationship between teacher identity, teacher commitment, and job satisfaction. Nevertheless, future national surveys and research according to various school levels namely elementary, secondary, and high school, and on teachers' personal background need to be enlarged. This study analyzed the relationship between teacher identity, job satisfaction, and teaching commitment. Future research needs to expand the institutional and methodological aspects of the concept of teacher identity and how to develop and maintain teacher identity.

**References**

- and middle schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 28(1), 5-42. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X92028001002>
- Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20(2), 107-128. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2003.07.001>
- Choi, Man-Duk. (2021). The Effects of the Elementary School Principal's Emotional Leadership on Teacher Commitment through LMX, Donga University, Doctoral Dissertation, pp.1-172. Retrieved from <http://dl.nanet.go.kr/law/SearchDetailView.do?cn=KDMT1201250800>
- Duffy, R. D., Allan, B. A., Autin, K. L., & Bott, E. M. (2013). Calling and life satisfaction: it's not about having it, it's about living it. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 60(1), 42-52. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030635>
- Firestone, W. A., & Rosenblum, S. (1988). Building commitment in urban high schools. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 10(4), 285-299. <https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737010004285>
- Flett, G. L., & Nepon, T. (2020). Mattering versus self-esteem in university students: Associations with regulatory focus, social feedback, and psychological distress. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 38(6), 663-674. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734282919890786>
- Heo, Nan-Seol. (2016). The relationship between job stress and burnout of Korean elementary school teachers with the moderating effect of professional identity. *The Journal of Yeolin Education*, 24(1), 253-274. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18230/tjye.2016.24.1.253>
- Hong, Chang-Nam. (2006). The Structural Relationship between School Characteristics and Teacher Commitment. *The Korean Educational Administration Society*, 24(2), 31-53.
- Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2013). *Educational administration: Theory, research & practice* (9th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Co.
- Jang, Jong-Geun & Kim, Hee-Kyu. (2019). The Structural Relationship among Principals' Emotional Leadership, Teachers' Positive Psychological Capital and Effectiveness of School Organization. *Journal of Holistic Education*, 23(3), 99-116. <https://doi.org/10.35184/kshce.2019.23.3.99>
- Jeon, Seong-Eun & Kang, Young-Shin. (2022). The Effect of Role Stress on Burnout and Job Satisfaction in Middle and High School Teachers: Three-way Interaction Effects of Positive Psychological Capital and Mattering. *The Journal of Korean Teacher Education*, 39(1), 83-105. Retrieved from <https://www.earticle.net/Article/A410119>
- Kim, Kyu-Tae & Lee, Suk-Yeol. (2021). Diagnosis of the Level of Teacher Identity and the Mediating Effect of Teacher Efficacy on the Relationship between Teacher Identity and Teacher Burnout. *Teacher Education Research*, 60(4), 699-713. Retrieved from <https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART002803001>
- Kim, Kyu-Tae & Lee, Suk-Yeol. (2022). Development and Validation of Teacher Identity. *The Journal of Educational Administration*, 39(5), 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.225533/keas.2022.40.1429>
- Kim, Ok-Ja & Yang, Sung-Kwan. (2019). The Relationship between Elementary School Teachers' Conflict Management Types and Conflict Factors and School Organization Effectiveness. *The Journal of Educational Administration*, 37(2), 271-301. <https://doi.org/10.22553/keas.2019.37.2.271>
- Kreuger, M. A., Lauerman, R. H., Graham, M., & Dowell, M. W. (1986). Characteristics and Organizational Commitment of Child and Youth Care Workers. *Child Care Quarterly*, 15, 45-83. Retrieved from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/BF01118995>
- Kushman, J. W. (1992). The organizational dynamics of teacher workplace commitment: A study of urban elementary
- Lasky, S. (2005). A sociocultural approach to understanding teacher identity, agency and professional vulnerability in a context of secondary school reform. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(8), 899-916. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.06.003>
- Lee, Jae Doc & Hur, Eun Jung. (2008). Multilevel Analysis of Factors Influencing Teachers' Job Satisfaction. *The Journal of Korean Teacher Education*, 25(3), 51-71. <https://doi.org/10.24211/tjkte.2008.25.3.51>
- Lee, Yong-Ho, Kim, Sang-Don & Kim, Hyun-Jin. (2012). A Study on the Structural Effects of the Elementary

- School Principals' Servant Leadership on the Teachers' Job Satisfaction Through the Teachers' Commitment to Teaching. *The Journal of Educational Administration*, 30(4), 477-503. Retrieved from <https://www.kci.go.kr/kciportal/ci/sereArticleSearch/ciSereArtiView.kci?sereArticleSearchBean.artiId=ART001736216>
- Luthans, F. (2004). Positive psychological capital: Going beyond human and social capital. *Business Horizons*, 47(1), 45-50. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2003.11.007>
- Moon, Young-Jin. (2020). Effects of Teacher Commitment on School Vitality. *The Journal of Local Education Management*, 23(2), 63-91. Retrieved from <https://kiss.kstudy.com/thesis/thesis-view.asp?key=3818195>
- Park, Cho-Hee. (2017). Influences of the Elementary Teachers' Resilience and Job Satisfaction on their Job Involvement. Seoul National University of Education, Master Thesis, pp.1-80. Retrieved from <https://scienceon.kisti.re.kr/srch/selectPORSrchArticle.do?cn=DIKO0014609016&dbt=DIKO>
- Pennington, M. C. (2002). Teacher identity in TESOL. In Annual Seminar of the Association for the Promotion of Quality in TESOL Education, London. Retrieved from <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315775135-5/teacher-identity-tesol-martha-pennington>
- Pepe, A., Addimando, L., & Veronese, G. (2019). Measuring Teacher Job Satisfaction: Assessing Invariance in the Teacher Job Satisfaction Scale (TJSS) Across Six Countries. *Europe's journal of psychology*, 13(3), 396-416. <https://doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v13i3.1389>
- Ro, Jong-Hee. (2004). Conceptualizing and Measuring Commitment to Teaching of Teachers. *The Korean Educational Administration Society*, 22(2), 215-232. Retrieved from <https://www.dbpia.co.kr/Journal/articleDetail?nodeId=NODE10615218>
- Shin, jae-heub. (2012). An Analysis on the Effects of Servant Leadership and School Organizational Culture on School Organizational Effectiveness. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 10(1), 19-41. Retrieved from <https://www.dbpia.co.kr/Journal/articleDetail?nodeId=NODE10875146>
- Song, Kyoung-oh. (2015). Teachers' Professional Identity for School Reform: Cases from Innovation Schools and Free Semesters. *Korean Journal of Educational Administration*, 33(4), 147-174. Retrieved from [http://www.riss.or.kr/search/detail/DetailView.do?p\\_mat\\_type=1a0202e37d52c72d&control\\_no=293310aafb5f5c946aae8a972f9116fb&keyword=Teachers%27%20Professional%20Identity%20for%20School%20Reform](http://www.riss.or.kr/search/detail/DetailView.do?p_mat_type=1a0202e37d52c72d&control_no=293310aafb5f5c946aae8a972f9116fb&keyword=Teachers%27%20Professional%20Identity%20for%20School%20Reform)

## Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).