Canadian Teachers and their Profession: Why are some Satisfied and Others Dissatisfied?

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Abstract

This study aims to examine factors related to professional satisfaction of Canadian teachers. Based on the classical theories of the sociology of work and empirical research, we have distinguished extrinsic and intrinsic factors in the profession. The results from a national survey (N = 4,210) show that the majority of respondents are satisfied with their job, but that the level of this satisfaction is variable. Multivariate analyses reveal that job satisfaction is influenced both by intrinsic and extrinsic factors to the trade, but the former to have a relatively more important influence than the latter. Specifically, satisfaction is higher among teachers with the feeling of having rewarding relationships with students. Analyses separated by provinces indicate similarities and some differences between provinces education systems.

Keywords: Teacher; Professional satisfaction; Intrinsic factors; Extrinsic factors

Introduction

Teacher retention became a problem that many school systems around the world must face. For example, in France nearly 30% of teachers say they intend to leave their profession, this sentiment being more pervasive among those under 30 [1]. Studies conducted in Canada in the early 2010s reveal a similar situation. As such, a study conducted by Letourneau [2] in the province of Quebec showed that, although it fluctuated between cohorts, from 1992 to 2011 the average job abandonment rate ranged from 25% to 30% after the first year, and from 40% to 50% after five years. The situation was more or less similar in Alberta, where the rate is about 40% among young teachers in the first five years of their [3]. According to the results of a cross-Canada survey conducted over a decade ago, an increasing number of teachers seem reluctant to pursue their careers: 24% of teachers surveyed said they often or very often thought of abandoning their profession [4]. However, this proportion varies from province to province: 30% in British Columbia, 26% in Quebec and the Prairies (Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan), 22% in Ontario and 15% in the Maritimes (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador and Prince Edward Island).

The factors behind this phenomenon are many, and vary from one socio-educational context to another. However, a large body of documentation highlights, in particular, the increase in professional dissatisfaction experienced by teachers with regard to their work [5-7]. The desire to quit is the product of a sum of negative frustrations and perceptions about the various aspects of the profession, that over time, generate a negative relationship to work. Dissatisfaction is also associated with professional burnout [8]. In recent decades, this has become more pronounced as a result of more intense accountability systems to which teachers in various education systems are increasingly subjected [1,10]. This rise in dissatisfaction among teachers deserves further study and reflection in order to identify its causes, especially since teachers who are dissatisfied with their profession are generally inclined to provide lower-quality teaching [11] or to even abandon their profession (Kamanzi, Tardif, & Lessard, 2015).

Several authors have previously addressed the issue of teacher satisfaction in Canada. However, apart from King, Peart [12], most studies are regional and address the issue from a provincial perspective. That is the case for Toupin, Lessard, Cormier, Valois [13] and Mukamurera, Balleux [14] for Quebec; Collie, Shapka, Perry [15] for British Columbia and Ontario; and Schaefer et al. [3] for Alberta. This paper seeks to address the issue from a pan-Canadian perspective to provide a broader picture, but also to compare the situation across provincial school systems.

To achieve this, the analysis targets two main objectives:

i. To identify intersecting factors influencing the satisfaction of Canadian teachers and assess their relative weight;

ii.   To compare their influence in different regions of Canada.

The study is divided into four sections. The first deals with the definition of the concept of job satisfaction and proposes an analysis framework based on two concepts: factors that are either *intrinsic or extrinsic* to the teaching profession. In the second section on methodology, we describe the data used and the measurement of the variables studied. The third section presents the results of the analyses performed and their interpretation. We wrap up with a brief conclusion that identifies the key findings of the analysis.

Conceptual Framework

The concept of job satisfaction refers to a person's enjoyment, great or small, in performing tasks related to their trade or profession [16]. The factors involved are numerous and typologies vary among authors, depending on the classification criteria used. In the educational world, most authors favour a typology based on the person practicing the profession, i.e. the teacher, and distinguish two main categories of factors: intrinsic and extrinsic [17]. The distinction, however, only makes sense analytically because, in practice, these factors act both independently and interactively [18-21].

Extrinsic factors

The working conditions in which teachers exercise their craft respond to their expectations in varying degrees. Also called extrinsic factors, these conditions encompass aspects both material and psychosocial [18,24]. Material aspects, the authors note, may include salary, educational resources, quality of infrastructure (space, including classrooms) and other benefits teaching offers with regards to comparable occupations, such as longer vacations, retirement pensions, job security, and specific working conditions such as access to technology. As for the psychosocial aspects, they refer to the climate of the workplace and the nature of the work: for example, the organization of work and management of activities, administration leadership, supervision, administrative support, shared responsibilities, mutual respect, and team spirit. Teachers' satisfaction is heightened when they feel respected, involved in planning change, supported and autonomous in their work, and when there is a culture of respect for order within the school. Conversely, it tends to diminish when teachers feel tightly controlled and pressured. According to several U.S. studies, insufficient support from management and colleagues fosters a sense of incompetence that, in turn, can lead to a sense of dissatisfaction [25-27].

Extrinsic factors also refer to the characteristics of teaching tasks, for example, workload, quality of support and material resources. In this regard, various studies have highlighted the link between rising professional discontent and stress, as well as teacher burnout [28,29]. In the face of academic change, teachers, especially in high school, must now accept the "death of discipline" and often confine themselves to managing difficult classes where verbal and physical abuse prevails, in short, to play the "impotent observer" and deal with their own "discomfort" [30] and psychological suffering [31].

Whether it is material resources, work organization or social climate, extrinsic factors have a double-faceted influence [23]. First, they provide a framework to support the various tasks. Secondly, for teachers, they represent an indicator of society's appreciation of their profession and, above all, are a recognition of the central role teachers play in the fulfilment of the school's mission: to prepare the society of tomorrow.

Intrinsic factors

Studies examining intrinsic factors have mainly emphasized the emotional value teachers attach to their work. Exercising the teaching profession is in itself a source of satisfaction because of its emotional value [32-34]. Among the factors that provide satisfaction, the authors cite a love of and passion for teaching [34-36] and the pleasure of working with and training young people [18,37]. The act of teaching and the intention of making it a career thus derives, in large part, from the professional vocation, i.e., from the feeling of pleasure and personal fulfilment that educating youth provides [15,38,39].

Thus, although it is the expression of a professional vocation, this intrinsic value is not static; it fluctuates according to the extrinsic factors described above, but also and especially due to factors intrinsic to the teaching profession. First, it varies greatly depending on the teacher's sense of competence in meeting the diverse needs of students [11,27,40-42]. Teachers are all the more satisfied and motivated when they feel equipped to carry out their daily tasks and meet the various challenges of their profession [23].

This sense of competence helps to structure what several authors refer to as *professional identity*, i.e. the value placed on being in the teaching profession and self-perception as professionals [40,43,44]. This identity is all the more positive when teachers feel they are competent and have control over their work [45]. In other words, the more teachers see themselves as leaders in education and this leadership is seen within their social environment as an instrument for improving student achievement, the more satisfied and motivated they are to pursue their careers. However, this identity becomes negative when they feel incompetent and lack self-confidence. According to the theory of self-efficacy developed by Bandura [46], individuals working in organizations are always inclined to develop and continuously adjust their sense of personal effectiveness, i.e. their belief in their ability to perform their assigned tasks and anticipate the results. Whether strong or weak, this sense of effectiveness determines levels of professional engagement or disengagement, and has a significant impact on student achievement [8,47]. This is, in turn, is the result of interactions between individual factors — ambition, skills, experience, etc. — and collective ones — teamwork, coordination style, quality of work, and cordiality

between members (Marcel & Murillo, 2015).

In Canada, a study by Toupin et al. [13] shows that the main factors likely to increase dissatisfaction are a negative perception of the school environment, the deterioration of the social image of the profession, attraction to other professions, lack of promotion, a feeling of powerlessness, school organization and size at the high school level. In the same vein, the work of King, Peart [12] highlights that dissatisfaction among Canadian teachers is growing as it pertains to students' stressful behaviour, poor relationships with school administrators and excessive after-class workloads (student paper grading and course preparation). The findings of recent studies by Collie et al. [15] concur, supporting the hypothesis that satisfaction is highly dependent on the quality of relationships with students and a sense of personal effectiveness. Using data from a survey of a representative sample of teachers in British Columbia and Ontario, the authors show that satisfaction is higher among respondents who have a positive perception of student motivation and behaviour, and who feel they are "good educators."

In summary, teacher job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon in which the effects of extrinsic and intrinsic factors are interwoven [48,49]. Different works highlight how these factors and their influence vary depending on the societal context [17]. Moreover, even within the same context, they fluctuate over time according to the evolution of the school system and the environment. As mentioned in the introduction, this study focuses on the situation in Canada. Building on these various writings and considering the data available, this article seeks to examine the relative weight of intrinsic and extrinsic factors in overall teacher satisfaction. Among extrinsic factors, we have retained working conditions and a sense of competence regarding preliminary training in our analysis.

In terms of intrinsic factors, we will focus student relationship perception, professional autonomy, and changes in educational policies.

From this perspective, our study aims to answer the following questions:

i. What are the extrinsic and intrinsic factors that influence job satisfaction among Canadian teachers?

ii. To what extent is this influence comparable between school systems in different provinces or regions?

The following section describes the methodology used to answer these questions: the data used, the variables studied, and the measurement model.

Methodology

The source of the data

The data used in this article are attenuated in that the situation of teachers may have changed in some respects in the interval between when the data were collected and when the analyses were carried out. Although, to our knowledge, no provincial school system has undergone any major reform, the teaching profession and working conditions always evolve over time, and teachers' perceptions change over generations. These data are taken from a self-reporting survey questionnaire administered in 2006 to teachers, non-teaching professionals, and other primary and secondary school staff in all provinces and territories in Canada. The distribution of the questionnaire was preceded by a pre-test with about 100 respondents in order to validate its quality. Conducted by a team of multidisciplinary researchers working at different universities across Canada, this survey used a stratified sampling method. The questionnaire was sent to 17,650 teachers representing 5.7% of the total estimated teacher population of approximately 310,000 in 2005 (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2005). The response rate was 26% (N = 4,569).

The aim of the survey was to collect data to provide an overall portrait of teaching staff with a focus on the following general aspects: professional experience in general, satisfaction with working conditions, relationships with colleagues and students, perception of the effects of social changes and educational policies on the practice of the profession, etc. The questionnaire was divided into six sections: 1) socio-demographic information, 2) perception of change and its impact, 3) workload and working conditions, 4) social relations in the school, 5) professional integration and development, and 6) values and educational ends (Kamanzi, Riopel, & Lessard). The specific parameters to be studied, taking into account the characteristics of the data used, will be detailed later in this paper.

Description of the subsample

Given the paper's objective, the analysis presented focuses solely on data collected from teachers. The sub-sample used consists of 4,210 teacher respondents divided as follows between provinces: Ontario (n = 1295), Quebec (n = 1215), British Columbia (n = 385), Maritime provinces ([New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador] n = 687) and the Prairie Region ([Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba] n = 628). Since few respondents from the Territories ([Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon] n = 61) completed the survey questionnaire, the sub-sample was excluded from the analysis, since the number of respondents was insufficient to conduct the planned multiple regression analysis. It is possible to advance three hypotheses here. The first is cognitive: the majority of respondents may feel that several aspects of the questionnaire do concern them or concern them very little. The second is emotional and relates to the perception of the requested information: the questionnaire may have touched on overly sensitive issues, notably the gap in the development of education systems compared to other regions and created a feeling of frustration and rejection. The third, which complements the second, is rational: it is possible that few respondents expect the research associated with the questionnaire to provide real solutions to their professional concerns and, therefore, are of little interest to them. It should be

noted, however, that these three assumptions are intuitive, as the data do not provide any information on this subject.

Variables and the measurement model

The model proposed in this study includes a total of eight latent variables that were created using exploratory factor analyses to select the questionnaire items associated to the dimensions of the variables studied. This method consists of determining the items scores that are strongly correlated with each other and with the latent factor or variable. To simplify factors by maximizing the variance of saturation coefficients within and between factors [50], we applied the factor analysis method with the varimax rotation. Only items with an internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) $\alpha \geq .70$, an eigenvalue $\lambda \geq 1$, a KMO index $\geq .50$ and a saturation coefficients (factor loading) $\gamma \geq .30$ were retained.

The dependent variable

The dependent variable *general job satisfaction* was measured by the following question: "To what extent do the following statements correspond to how you feel about teaching?" The question included seven items such as perception of the teaching profession, intention of staying in or leaving the profession, etc. The answer scale of the question included choices ranging from 1 (very rarely) to 6 (very often). After the factor analysis, five highly correlated items were selected as one factor, with the other two rejected due to their low correlation with the factor. As indicated by the factor matrix (Table 1), the internal consistency coefficient or Cronbach alpha (α = .87), saturation coefficients ($\gamma \geq$ .68), eigenvalue (Λ = 3.28) and KMO index (.81) are relatively high.

Table 1: Overall Career Satisfaction - Factor Matrix (α = .87; λ = 3.28; KMO = .81).

Items	Saturation coefficient γ
I feel frustrated by teaching*.	0.74
I feel that "I have had it" with teaching and working with students*.	0.85
I think about quitting teaching*.	0.80
I feel teaching brings me great satisfaction.	0.68
I would choose to go into teaching once again if I had to start my life over again.	0.70

Note: *: The scores associated with these items have been reversed.

The independent variables

Recalling our independent variables, we studied the influence of intrinsic and extrinsic factors on the profession. To measure these, we also used factor analysis (Table 2), taking into account the data available in the survey used. For each of the constructed factors, the selection of items was based on the same criteria as the dependent variable: internal consistency coefficient or Cronbach alpha (α), saturation coefficients (γ), eigenvalue (Λ) and KMO index.

i. Extrinsic factors

Four factors related to the extrinsic dimensions of the teaching profession were constructed: 1) satisfaction with working conditions, 2) autonomy, 3) involvement in decisions and 4) the feeling of professional competence at the end of initial training.

a) *Satisfaction with working conditions*. Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with various working conditions (for example, salary, benefits, physical condition of classrooms, or technical support). Each item included six response options ranging from 1 (unsatisfied) to 6 (satisfied). The factor analysis made it possible to select all eight items included in the question (α = .78, Λ = 3.15, γ ≥ .45 and KMO = .81).

b) *Professional autonomy*. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt they were influencing a number of decisions related to their tasks, such as defining teaching content or assessing students. The response scale for each item ranged from 1 (weak influence) to 6 (strong influence). Four factor items were selected from this question to constitute a factor index (α = .72, Λ = 2.26, γ ≥ 0.57 and KMO = .75).

c) *Involvement in decisions*. This variable was measured by the degree of influence on the various decisions of school management: for example, the school code of conduct and the school's educational mission. Four items were selected (α = .78, Λ = 2.41, γ ≥ 0.52 and KMO = .64).

d) *The sense of competence*. Respondents were asked how prepared they felt for various aspects of their trade (for example: mastery of subject content, course planning and the use new technologies). Each item included a response scale ranging from 1 (poorly prepared) to 6 (well prepared). Eight items consisting of a single factor were retained (α = .86, Λ = 4.13, γ ≥ .51 and KMO = .88).

Table 2: Extrinsic and Intrinsic Factors of General Job Satisfaction - Factorial Matrices.

Factors and items	Saturation coefficient γ
Extrinsic factors	
1) Working conditions (α = .78, λ = 3.15, KMO = .83)	
Salary and benefits	0.45
Physical condition of classroom(s)	0.59
Number of students in class(es)	0.53
Availability of materials and other resources for class purposes	0.65
Technical support within the school	0.59
Professional autonomy	0.57
Workload	0.62
Opportunity for promotion	0.45
2) Professional autonomy (α = .720, λ = 2.26, KMO = .75)	
Content taught in the classroom	0.66
Classroom teaching approaches	0.71
Choice of texts and related materials	0.57
Classroom assessment	0.65
3) Involvement in decisions (α = .78, λ = 2.41, KMO = .64)	
How workload is defined	0.52
Organization of work schedule	0.59
Code of Conduct in the school	0.84
Educational mission of the school	0.80
4) Sense of competence (α = .86, λ = 4.13, KMO = .88)	
Mastering the content of subjects taught	0.61
Maintaining student discipline	0.72
Assessment of learning	0.77
Communication with students (inside and outside classroom)	0.77
Collaborating with parents	0.72
Using new technologies in the classroom	0.51
Working in teaching teams	0.58
Planning courses	0.66
Intrinsic factors	
1) Rewarding relationships with students (α = .83, λ = 3.33, KMO = .87)	
Motivating my students is easy	0.59
When I'm with my students, I feel like I'm playing a fulfilling role	0.78
My students respect my authority	0.65
At the end of a work day, I usually feel that my students have learned something	0.77
My relationship with my students is fundamentally affective: I love teaching these young people	0.66
I perceive myself as an individual who has an important impact on the future of my students	0.64
2) Difficult relationships with students (α = .66, λ = 1.19, KMO = .65)	
Maintaining order among my students demands too much energy	0.60
Some students have problems that are so serious that I cannot help them	0.51
My students' needs are so different from one other that I have a hard time meeting them all	0.60
When my students are rowdy, I feel overwhelmed	0.58

3) Perception of the effects of educational policies (α = .85, λ = 4.54, KMO = .81)	
Student learning	0.81
Student socialization	0.62
The professionalization of teachers	0.82
The nature of teachers' work	0.79
4) Increase in peripheral roles (α = .75, λ = 2.55, KMO = .75)	
Psychologist	0.56
Parent	0.57
Social worker	0.86
Police officer	0.61
Supervisor	0.51

ii. Intrinsic factors

Four factors relating to the intrinsic dimensions of the teaching profession were constructed: rewarding relationships with pupils, difficult relationships with pupils, perception of changes in educational policies and increase in peripheral tasks (e.g. psychology or social work).

a) *Rewarding relationships.* Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with eleven statements related to student relationships and class management. The response scale consisted of six levels ranging from 1 (disagree) to 6 (agree). The factor analysis made it possible to select six items consisting of a single factor (α = .83, Λ = 3.33, $\gamma \geq$ .59 and KMO = .87), for example: "motivating my students is easy" or "my relationship with my students is fundamentally affective: I love teaching these young people."

b) *Difficult relationships* were measured by the same question as the previous variable. Four items dealing with difficult relationships with students (α = .66, Λ = 1.19, $\gamma \geq$ .51 and KMO = .65) were selected (for example, difficulty in maintaining discipline in class or in assisting students with significant problems). The internal consistency coefficient is relatively low, but deemed acceptable

c) *Perception of changes in educational policies.*

Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they believed that recent policy changes in their education system would contribute to the improvement of various aspects of the education system (for example: student learning and socialization). The question consisted of seven items, each with six response levels ranging from 1 (few positive effects) to 6 (many positive effects). The factor analysis shows that four items constitute a single factor (α = .85, Λ = 4.54, $\gamma \geq$ .62 and KMO = .81).

d) *Increased peripheral roles.* Respondents were asked how closely they identify with the different roles they had to play, such as psychologist, police officer or supervisor. The question consisted of twelve items, each with six response levels ranging from 1 (a little) to 6 (a lot). Five items were selected to constitute a single factor (α = .75, Λ = 2.55, $\gamma \geq$ .51 and KMO = .75).

Results

Most Canadian teachers surveyed said they were satisfied with their profession. On a scale ranging from one (very rarely) to six (very often) indicating how frequently they feel a positive perception of the different aspects of their job, the majority scored between three and six and can therefore be considered quite satisfied. However, the satisfaction is relative and uneven among respondents. To help assemble the overall portrait, respondents were grouped into three categories (Table 3): 1) dissatisfied, 2) moderately satisfied and 3) very satisfied.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Level of Satisfaction.

	Rarely or very rarely	Sometimes or quite often	Often or very often	N
1. I feel teaching brings me great satisfaction	8%	28%	64%	4187
2. I would choose to go into teaching once again if I had to start my life over again	22%	26%	52%	4173
3. I feel frustrated by teaching	44%	34%	22%	4187
4. I feel that "I have had it with teaching" and working with students	64%	23%	13%	4190
5. I think about quitting teaching	67%	18%	15%	4186

The dissatisfied are respondents who report having *very rarely* or *rarely* a positive perception of their profession (8%). This is the case for those who say they *often* or *very often* feel frustrated (22%), are tired of working with students (13%), or

think often of leaving the profession (15%). This category also includes respondents who regret having chosen education as a career and who *rarely* or *very rarely* think that they would choose this occupation if they had to start over (22%).

The moderately satisfied take the middle ground. They can be assumed to have both negative and positive perceptions of various aspects of their career. In other words, they are ambivalent and can be split between dissatisfaction and satisfaction. These respondents *very often* or *quite often* have a positive perception of their occupation. Their relative proportion varies greatly according to the occupational aspect considered. As (Table 3) also shows, just over one third of teachers report feeling *often* or *quite often* frustrated (34%). As well, those who say that they are *often* or *quite often* tired of teaching (22%) or who feel the urge to leave the profession (18%) fall into this category.

Finally, these respondents make up the majority of the sampling, but their relative proportion varies between 44% and 65% depending on the occupational factor considered. For example, between 44% and 65% say they *rarely* or *very rarely* feel frustrated (44%) or tired of working with students (64%). Similarly, a high proportion rarely think about quitting the profession (67%). On the contrary, most of these teachers *often* or *very often* think that teaching gives them great satisfaction (64%) and say that they would still choose the profession if they were to start over (52%).

The following analysis examines the extent to which overall satisfaction is influenced by extrinsic and intrinsic factors in the teaching profession. For this purpose, a three-model linear regression analysis was carried out (Table 4), taking into account the influence of the usual individual and socio-professional characteristics (gender, work experience, educational background, years of experience, and the socioeconomic environment of the institution). The first model includes four variables related to the factors extrinsic to the trade that we defined in the methodology section: (1) satisfaction with working conditions, (2) professional autonomy, (3) involvement in decisions, 4) a sense of professional competence. The results show that the proportion of the variance explained by the variables of this model is 19%. All the variables considered have a significant and positive influence on overall teacher satisfaction. In other words, it is all the higher because teachers are satisfied with working conditions, feel autonomous in their work and feel included by administration in the decision-making process, while also having received sufficient initial training in relation to the requirements of various professional tasks. Of the four variables examined, satisfaction with working conditions was the most influential ($\beta = .30$; $p < .001$).

Table 4: Multiple Regression Coefficients.

Independent variables	Model 1 β	Model 2 β	Model 3 β	Partial R^2
Extrinsic factors				
Satisfaction with working conditions	.30***	-	.20***	.073
Professional autonomy	.14***	-	ns	-
Involvement in decisions	.13***	-	.06***	.002
Feeling of professional competence	.03*	-	ns	-
Intrinsic factors				
Rewarding relationships with students	-	.39***	.37***	.266
Difficult relationships with students	-	-.23***	-.19***	.033
Increase in peripheral tasks	-	-.05***	-.05***	.002
Perception of educational policies	-	.17***	.09***	.010
Control variables				
Gender (female)	-	-	.03**	.001
Experience				
1-5 years	-	-	.05**	.004
6-10 years	-	-	ns	-
11-15 years	-	-	Reference	-
16-20 years	-	-	ns	-
21-30 years	-	-	-.11***	.010
31 years and over	-	-	ns	-
Level of education (secondary)	-	-	ns	-
Socioeconomic environment (disadvantaged)	-	-	ns	-
R^2	0.19	0.35	0.40	

* $p < .05$; ** $p < 01$; *** $p < .001$; ns: not significant at the .05.

The second model considers four variables associated with the intrinsic factors of the trade: 1) a sense of having a rewarding relationship with students, 2) the feeling of having difficult relationships with students, 3) the sense of often having to play roles peripheral to the teaching profession (parent, psychologist, social worker, etc.), and 4) the perception of the effects of changes in educational policies. The results show that the variance associated with this model (35%) is relatively higher than that associated with the first model. All the variables examined were found to be associated significantly with teacher satisfaction. This is even higher when they have a positive perception of relationships with students (rewarding relationships) and of the effects of changes in educational policies on improving the quality of education in general and their teaching function. On the other hand, and as might be expected, difficult relationships with students and the feeling of having to play more peripheral roles contribute to decreased job satisfaction. Of the four variables, rewarding relationships with students has the greatest influence ($\beta = .39$; $p < .001$).

In the third model, we introduced all the variables included in the preceding models, while taking into account the individual and socio-professional characteristics of the respondents (gender, educational background, years of teaching experience and the socioeconomic milieu in which the institution is located). The results show that the variance increases to 40%. The significant influence associated with professional autonomy and the sense of competence at the end of initial training with colleagues disappears. Of all variables considered, rewarding relationships with students is the one that consistently exerts the most influence on teacher satisfaction: this alone explains 26.6% of the variance, or 67% of the total variance explained by the entire model. With

respect to the other variables, the influences are rather weak.

Finally, when the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of the profession are taken into account, the influence of individual characteristics and of the establishment disappear, apart from gender, work experience, and age. This could be explained by the fact that these variables, in particular the level of education and the socioeconomic background of the institution, are themselves associated with intrinsic and extrinsic factors of the teaching profession, and their influence on satisfaction is achieved through the mediation of these same variables. On the other hand, studies in all contexts have shown differences in the relationship men and women have to teaching [51]. All other things being equal, women are more engaged in the profession and find more personal satisfaction and accomplishment in it than men [52,53]. With regard to experience, the assumption that teacher job satisfaction improves over time is supported. As teachers learn to solve everyday problems and overcome challenges, they gain a greater sense of confidence and efficiency [15].

Separate analyses were conducted to examine the extent to which the influence of the variables studied is comparable across five regions of Canada: British Columbia, the Maritimes, the Prairies, Ontario, and Québec[1]. The results (Table 5) reveal both similarities and disparities between school systems in the five regions. Whatever the school system, four variables have a significant influence on teacher satisfaction: 1) satisfaction with working conditions, 2) rewarding relationships with pupils, 3) difficult relationships with the latter and 4) perception of educational policies. Again, of all variables considered, rewarding relationships with students is the most influential in the five regions.

Table 5: Linear Regression Coefficients – Comparison between Provinces / Regions.

	Quebec	Ontario	British Columbia	Maritimes	Prairies
Extrinsic factors					
Satisfaction with working conditions	.17***	.18***	.28***	.20***	.29***
Involvement in decisions	ns	.06*	ns	ns	ns
Intrinsic factors					
Rewarding relationships with students	.40***	.36***	.30***	.37***	.33***
Difficult relationships with students	-.23***	-.16***	-.15**	-.20***	-.24***
Increase in peripheral roles	ns	-.05*	-.13**	ns	ns
Perception of educational policies	.11***	.08**	.13**	.10**	.05**
R^2	.43	.35	.32	.38	.43
N	1,175	1,264	375	684	620

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ ns: not significant at the .05.

Beyond these similarities, however, two important differences need to be highlighted. First, although the influence of these variables on teacher job satisfaction is significant in the five regions, the results show that it varies in scope depending on the

school context. For example, the influence of satisfaction with working conditions is relatively higher in the Prairies ($\beta = .29$; $p < .001$) and British Columbia ($\beta = .28$; $p < .001$) than elsewhere. This could be explained by the fact that, in the early 2000s, British

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[1]In order to present a pared-down model, variables that do not exert a statistically significant influence (sense of competence and professional autonomy) were excluded from the analysis.

Columbia implemented a major reform focusing on results-based management and teacher accountability [54]. Compared to the other provinces (Ontario, Alberta, and Québec) that implemented a similar policy a few years before, some of the teachers in British Columbia may have not yet absorbed the policy change and were sceptical or even resistant. Similarly, the influence of rewarding relationships with students is significantly higher in Quebec (β = .40, p < .001), in the Maritimes (β = .37; p < .001), in Ontario (β = .36; p < .001), and relatively lower in British Columbia (β = .30; p < .001).

This gap could be attributed to differences in strategies adopted by provinces in the promulgation and implementation of management and accountability policies. As noted by Lessard [55], some provinces — especially Alberta, Ontario and British Columbia — have adopted adversarial change strategies, particularly with internal stakeholders in the education system. Others, such as Quebec and Saskatchewan, continue to favour collaboration and building broad consensus, however fragile. Any change in education is always destabilizing to the work and experience of teachers [56]. They are, in one way or another, forced to break with their individual or collective routines, habits, values and practices [57,58]. This pressure frequently results in a sense of frustration and incompetence [59]. Although it dissipates over time and varies between contexts, depending on how the change was negotiated between public authorities and local stakeholders prior to its implementation, the sentiment affects not only teachers' daily work but also their relationships with students.

Secondly, the following three variables have a weak and isolated influence: professional autonomy, a sense of involvement in decisions, and a sense of competence at the end of initial training. The analysis shows that the significant influence of these three variables is limited to teachers in the following three regions: British Columbia, Ontario, and the Prairies provinces.

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to examine factors related to job satisfaction of Canadian teachers. Based on the classical theories of the sociology of work and empirical research, we have distinguished extrinsic and intrinsic factors in the profession. An initial analysis has shown that Canadian teachers are generally satisfied with their profession. However, a careful review of the results reveals that overall satisfaction is highly variable. While slightly more than 80% report a sense of satisfaction with their job, about 20% have a strong sense of dissatisfaction. For example, 22% of respondents *often* or *very often* feel frustrated with teaching, and 15.2% *often* think they will leave the trade. Moreover, even among those who say they are satisfied, a relatively large proportion is ambivalent, wavering between dissatisfaction and satisfaction. There is reason to believe that this cohort of respondents could become dissatisfied if corrective measures are not taken.

Multiple linear regression analyses revealed that teacher satisfaction is influenced by both extrinsic and intrinsic factors, but the influence of the latter is more pronounced. Among the extrinsic factors examined, the analysis revealed a significant influence of the following: satisfaction with working conditions, professional autonomy and the involvement of teachers in the decision-making processes. In terms of intrinsic factors, the analysis showed that teacher satisfaction is significantly affected by rewarding or difficult relationships with students, their perception of the effects of changes in educational policies on their job, and the sense they are adding more and more peripheral roles to their tasks.

In short, as Dinham, Scott [60] recognized, teachers find satisfaction mainly in factors specific to, or intrinsic to teaching. These factors are two-fold. The first relates to the task of educating and teaching: supporting students to succeed and meeting their needs, and positive relationships with students and co-workers. The second relates to aspects on which public and institutional policies may have influence: collegiality among school staff, professional development, and the maintenance of a collegial environment conducive to personal development. On the other hand, some aspects generally fall within institutional policies or are extrinsic to the profession and which teachers have little or no control over. These are wages and benefits, job security and working conditions (for example, educational resources, infrastructure, and the number of students per class). However, although they don't necessarily contribute to increased satisfaction, these aspects are often likely to trigger dissatisfaction when they do not meet the expectations of teachers [42].

In conclusion, the results of this study are interesting both theoretically and politically. On the theoretical level, they allow us to develop a portrait of teacher satisfaction and the main factors that influence it. They corroborate the results of previous studies on the job satisfaction of Canadian teachers [12,15] and elsewhere in the world. From a public-policy perspective, the study highlights some important aspects of the teaching profession on which public and institutional policies in education should place more emphasis to increase the recruitment and retention of teachers. A teacher's job satisfaction is conditional on the feeling of competence and effectiveness in meeting the needs of students (as highlighted in the section dedicated to a review of the literature:) [11,27,40,42,61], but also and especially on a challenging work environment [24]. Measures should therefore be put in place to regularly renew professional development programs as well as develop strategies to strengthen collaborative work and collegiality in order to provide teachers with the tools required to address everyday challenges [62].

Such measures would help increase teacher engagement in student achievement [63] and, more broadly, passion for their profession as educators [36,64,65]. Teacher satisfaction is a prerequisite for any education system that seeks to improve its efficiency [17] and that is why "motivating teachers should be

an essential part of any educational system, so that students can perform better and so that we, as the larger society, may achieve a better future" [23].

Regarding student, similar measures should also be considered to continuously strengthen discipline in the classroom and within the institution with a view of improving the quality of relationships with teaching staff. It is important to note that the more students feel that they have good relationships with teachers, the more motivated they are to invest in success and vice versa. Ultimately, any improvement in teacher-student relations, whether it concerns students or teachers, merits to be part of the school justice agenda, especially since students at risk of dropping out are more greatly affected by feelings of *good* or *bad* relationships with teachers [66].

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