



Research on Teacher Job Satisfaction in the Private Higher Education Sector in Zhuhai, Guangdong, China

Liu Ruiqi*, Chen Fei

Ulaanbaatar Erdem University, Mongolia

Abstract: Teachers' job satisfaction is a crucial determinant of academic performance and institutional success, particularly in higher education. In private colleges, where operations often align more closely with corporate models than traditional educational frameworks, understanding the factors influencing job satisfaction is critical. This study examines the job satisfaction of teachers in Zhuhai, Guangdong, a rapidly growing hub for private higher education in China. Job satisfaction, a complex and multidimensional concept in management, is shaped by diverse factors that vary across sectors and regions. As a first-tier city and one of China's Special Economic Zones, Zhuhai has emerged as a strategic center for educational expansion, attracting private higher education institutions through substantial investments in land and resources. The city's unique economic and policy environment provides a compelling context for analyzing teacher job satisfaction in this sector. Adopting a mixed methods approach, this research combines quantitative surveys with qualitative thematic analysis to evaluate the levels and determinants of job satisfaction among teachers in private colleges. The findings, including key factors influencing job satisfaction in the Guangdong higher education sector and a thematic analysis of sentiment-based feedback, offer critical insights into how job satisfaction shapes teacher performance and contributes to institutional success within this distinctive educational ecosystem. The study's outcomes are intended to guide strategies for improving teacher satisfaction and enhancing the competitiveness of private higher education in Zhuhai and beyond.

Keywords: teachers' job satisfaction, employee engagement, private higher education sector, Zhuhai Guangdong, China

1. Introduction:

Teachers' job satisfaction is a pivotal factor in shaping their performance, academic achievements, and overall contributions to the educational environment. In private higher education institutions, understanding the factors influencing job satisfaction is particularly significant due to the distinct nature of these institutions, which often operate more like businesses than traditional public universities. Private colleges serve as both centers of education and enterprises driven by organizational goals, market demands, and competitive pressures. As such, examining job satisfaction within these institutions provides valuable insights into enhancing educational quality and teacher performance.

Herzberg's TwoFactor Theory (1959), a cornerstone in management theory, offers a fundamental framework for understanding job satisfaction. Herzberg identifies two categories of factors: motivational factors, which drive satisfaction and motivation (e.g., achievement, recognition, and opportunities for growth), and hygiene factors, which prevent dissatisfaction but do not inherently motivate employees (e.g., salary, work conditions, and company policies). In the context of private colleges, compensation structures – encompassing salary and benefits – serve as critical hygiene factors that significantly impact teachers' satisfaction and motivation.

Expanding on Herzberg's framework, Vroom's Expectancy Theory emphasizes the relationship between job satisfaction and employees' expectations, as well as their perceived likelihood of achieving desired outcomes. Vroom argues that satisfaction arises not only from intrinsic values but also from the alignment between

[Received] 02 Oct 2024; Accepted 14 Dec 2024; Published (online) 17 Dec 2024]

Finesse Publishing stays neutral about jurisdictional claims published maps



Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)

Corresponding email: liuruiqr@tcd.ie (Liu Ruiqi)

DOI: 10.61363/dge4xa92

employees' goals, expectations, and anticipated rewards. In private colleges, this theory highlights the role of teachers' perceptions regarding rewards and recognition in shaping their overall job satisfaction.

In private higher education institutions, understanding the factors influencing job satisfaction is particularly significant due to the distinct nature of these institutions, which often operate more like businesses than traditional public universities. Private colleges serve as both centers of education and enterprises driven by organizational goals, market demands, and competitive pressures. As such, examining job satisfaction within these institutions provides valuable insights into enhancing educational quality and teacher performance.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), a cornerstone of management theory, offers a fundamental framework for understanding job satisfaction. Herzberg identifies two categories of factors: motivational factors, which drive satisfaction and motivation (e.g., achievement, recognition, and opportunities for growth), and hygiene factors, which prevent dissatisfaction but do not inherently motivate employees (e.g., salary, work conditions, and company policies). In the context of private colleges, compensation structures – encompassing salary and benefits – serve as critical hygiene factors that significantly impact teachers' satisfaction and motivation.

Expanding on Herzberg's framework, Vroom's Expectancy Theory emphasizes the relationship between job satisfaction and employees' expectations, as well as their perceived likelihood of achieving desired outcomes. Vroom argues that satisfaction arises not only from intrinsic values but also from the alignment between employees' goals, expectations, and anticipated rewards. In private colleges, this theory highlights the role of teachers' perceptions of rewards and recognition in shaping their overall job satisfaction.

Additionally, Social Comparison Theory, proposed by Adams (1967), provides another perspective by suggesting that employees evaluate their job satisfaction through comparisons of their efforts and rewards with those of others. In the private higher education sector, teachers may compare their compensation and job conditions with those of colleagues both within and outside their institutions. Perceived inequities can lead to dissatisfaction, negatively affecting teachers' motivation, performance, and long-term retention.

Despite the wealth of studies on job satisfaction across various sectors, limited research has examined the specific factors influencing teacher satisfaction in private higher education institutions in Zhuhai, Guangdong, China. This region is particularly noteworthy due to its rapid economic development and the strategic establishment of private colleges, which have drawn students and educators alike. As a leading city in China's Special Economic Zones, Zhuhai has witnessed significant investments in education, including the development of high-quality private universities. These dynamics make Zhuhai a compelling case for studying teachers' job satisfaction within the private higher education sector.

This research seeks to address this gap by investigating the job satisfaction of teachers working in private colleges in Zhuhai, Guangdong. Employing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, the study evaluates key factors such as compensation, working conditions, and expectations to assess overall levels of job satisfaction. The findings aim to provide valuable insights for private higher education institutions to enhance teacher satisfaction, boost institutional performance, and foster a more productive academic environment. Additionally, the study offers actionable recommendations for policy and management practices to align teachers' needs with institutional objectives better.

2. Research Methodology

This study employs a mixed methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative research methods to collect comprehensive data on teacher job satisfaction. A questionnaire based on Lester's (1987) established survey, which includes 43 meticulously designed questions, serves as the primary tool for quantitative data collection. This survey was chosen for its extensive coverage of nine key dimensions of job satisfaction, offering a robust and reliable framework backed by significant psychological testing.

The study's sample comprises 209 teachers from six private colleges and universities in Zhuhai, Guangdong, including Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai; Beijing Institute of Technology, Zhuhai; Beijing Normal University Hong Kong Baptist University United International College; Zhuhai Art and Technical College; and others. This diverse selection ensures broad and representative coverage of the private higher education sector in Zhuhai, enhancing the validity of the findings.



Figure 1. Map showing the location and outline of the study area (China Discovery Official Web)

Ethical considerations were meticulously upheld throughout the research process. The privacy of all participants was safeguarded, and their responses were treated with the utmost respect and confidentiality in compliance with ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. These measures reinforce the integrity and credibility of the study.

3. Data Analysis

3.1 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire, which is a widely recognized method for evaluating internal consistency in empirical data. A Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.7 indicates good internal consistency, suggesting that the variables measured by the questionnaire are closely related. A value exceeding 0.9 is considered excellent, demonstrating high reliability. Conversely, a Cronbach's alpha value below 0.7 suggests poor internal consistency, necessitating revisions to the questionnaire.

Additionally, the study employed the corrected item-total correlation (CITC) to evaluate the reliability of individual questionnaire items. Items with a CITC value below 0.4 were considered for removal. An item was deleted if its CITC was below 0.4 and if removing it resulted in a higher Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale than the one achieved with the item included. This process ensures that only the most reliable and relevant items contribute to the overall assessment of job satisfaction.

4. Results

This research presents the results of the data analysis from both the questionnaire and the qualitative findings, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The influencing factors identified through the job satisfaction questionnaire, along with the thematic analysis of comments from teachers' forums, provide a comprehensive view of job satisfaction in the higher education sector of Zhuhai, Guangdong.

The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and corrected item-total correlations (CITC). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each variable are as follows: Supervision (0.901), Colleagues (0.918), Working Conditions (0.817), Salary (0.827), Responsibility (0.852), Work Itself (0.884), Advancement (0.807), Security (0.778), and Recognition (0.822). All Cronbach's alpha values exceed the 0.7 threshold, indicating good internal consistency for the variables.

In addition to Cronbach's alpha, CITC values were calculated for each item to assess their contribution to the reliability of their respective variables. All items demonstrated acceptable CITC values above 0.4, confirming their relevance. For items with CITC values below 0.4, a review was conducted, and in cases where their removal improved Cronbach's alpha coefficient, those items were deleted. This process ensured that only reliable and relevant items contributed to the overall measurement of job satisfaction. Consequently, the questionnaire demonstrates high reliability and internal consistency, validating its suitability for assessing the constructs of job satisfaction.

5. Validity and Factor Analysis

Before conducting factor analysis, it is essential to evaluate whether the research data is suitable for this method. As shown in the table, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value is 0.871, which exceeds the threshold of 0.6, indicating that the data is appropriate for factor analysis. Additionally, the data passed Bartlett's test of sphericity ($p < 0.05$), confirming that the correlation matrix is significantly (0.001) different from an identity matrix and, therefore, suitable for factor analysis.

Table 1: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Value for Measuring Sampling Adequacy

KMO value		0.871
Bartlett Sphericity test	Approximate ChiSquare	6058.127
	df	903.000
	P value	0.001

The validity of the questionnaire was assessed using the KMO measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The KMO value of 0.871 demonstrates that the sample size is adequate for factor analysis and that the variables are sufficiently correlated to produce meaningful results. Bartlett's test further validated the suitability of the data, as it yielded a significant result, affirming that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix.

Table 2: Factor Loading Values for Variable Analysis in Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Factor number	Characteristic root			Rotational front variance explained			Variance explained after rotation		
	Characteristic root	Variance	Accumulation%	Characteristic root	Variance	Accumulation%	Characteristic root	Variance	Accumulation%
1	12.071	28.073	28.073	12.071	28.073	28.073	7.353	17.101	17.101
2	4.330	10.070	38.143	4.330	10.070	38.143	5.027	11.690	28.791
3	3.431	7.979	46.123	3.431	7.979	46.123	3.580	8.325	37.116
4	2.462	5.726	51.849	2.462	5.726	51.849	2.201	5.118	42.235
5	1.893	4.402	56.251	1.893	4.402	56.251	2.871	6.677	48.912
6	1.727	4.016	60.267	1.727	4.016	60.267	2.339	5.440	54.352
7	1.410	3.278	63.545	1.410	3.278	63.545	2.151	5.002	59.354
8	1.203	2.798	66.344	1.203	2.798	66.344	2.107	4.899	64.253
9	1.113	2.588	68.932	1.113	2.588	68.932	2.012	4.678	68.931
10	0.985	2.291	71.223	1.225	2.462	67.254	2.187	5.036	69.243

The factor analysis conducted on the data resulted in extracting nine meaningful factors, each with an eigenvalue greater than 1. This criterion indicates that the factors contribute significantly to explaining the variance in the dataset. Eigenvalues more significant than 1 are commonly used in exploratory factor analysis to determine the number of factors to retain, ensuring that only the most significant factors are considered for further analysis. The variance explained by each factor after rotation varied, with the first factor accounting for 17.101% of the total variance, the second factor explaining 11.690%, and the third factor contributing 8.325%. The remaining factors continued to explain progressively smaller portions of the variance, with the ninth factor accounting for 4.678%.

Cumulatively, the nine factors explained 68.931% of the total variance, indicating that the factors collectively provide a comprehensive representation of the underlying structure of the data. This cumulative variance is



considered satisfactory for factor analysis, as it demonstrates that a significant portion of the variation in the data is captured by the model. These findings underscore the robustness of the factor structure, showing that the extracted factors account for a substantial proportion of the data's variance, thereby reinforcing the validity of the factor analysis.

Additionally, the process of rotation enhances the interpretability of the factors by redistributing the variance in a manner that allows for a clearer understanding of the underlying dimensions of the constructs being measured. Overall, the findings from the factor extraction process confirm the adequacy of the factor model and provide a solid foundation for interpreting the key drivers of teacher job satisfaction in this study.

These results confirm that the data structure is valid for further analysis, supporting the robustness of the questionnaire in measuring the constructs of job satisfaction.

Table 3: Factor Loading Coefficients After Rotation for Improved Variable Clustering in Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Item	Factor loading coefficient									Commonality
	Factor 1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor 4	Factor5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Factor8	Factor 9	
My immediate supervisor provides assistance when I need it	0.115	0.771	0.077	0.005	0.048	0.121	0.027	0.064	0.112	0.648
My immediate supervisor praises the quality of my instruction	0.025	0.715	0.012	0.078	0.004	0.189	0.008	0.024	0.056	0.558
My immediate supervisor provides assistance to improve instruction	0.092	0.777	0.030	0.070	0.021	0.055	0.019	0.094	0.057	0.634
I often receive recognition from my immediate supervisor	0.166	0.708	0.035	0.072	0.071	0.105	0.067	0.030	0.053	0.559
My immediate supervisor does not support me	0.025	0.696	0.005	0.245	0.102	0.054	0.144	0.003	0.074	0.584

I explain the expectations of me to my immediate supervisor	0.129	0.788	0.001	0.108	0.100	0.019	0.063	0.102	0.051	0.677
My immediate boss is unwilling to listen to suggestions	0.059	0.718	0.067	0.154	0.077	0.031	0.197	0.145	0.139	0.633
My direct supervisor treats everyone fairly	0.027	0.816	0.087	0.110	0.027	0.066	0.065	0.033	0.014	0.696
I like the people I work with	0.826	0.158	0.017	0.018	0.102	0.100	0.066	0.060	0.068	0.741
I like the people I work with	0.768	0.021	0.059	0.016	0.097	0.026	0.024	0.163	0.219	0.679

The table above presents the factor loading coefficients for each item after conducting factor rotation, summarizing 10 representative questions. Factor loadings are the correlations between the original variables and the extracted factors, indicating the strength and direction of their relationship. In this analysis, factor rotation was applied to enhance the interpretability of the factor structure by maximizing the loadings of each item on a single factor.

As shown in table 2, the items are distributed across eight factors, with each factor representing a specific underlying construct. The factor loadings reflect the degree to which each item correlates with its respective factor. High loadings (close to 1 or -1) indicate a strong relationship between the item and the factor, while low loadings (near 0) suggest a weak or negligible relationship.

For example, the item "My immediate supervisor provides assistance when I need it" has a high loading on Factor 2 (0.771), indicating that it strongly represents the construct associated with supervision. Similarly, the item "I like the people I work with" exhibits strong loadings across multiple factors, particularly Factor 1 (0.826), suggesting it relates to various aspects of job satisfaction, such as work relationships and the work environment.

The factor loadings provide valuable insights into the interrelationships between different aspects of job satisfaction, including supervisory support, colleague relationships, working conditions, and recognition. This rotation of factors enhances the clarity of how these items align with the underlying constructs of job satisfaction, facilitating a deeper understanding of the key factors that influence teacher satisfaction in the private higher education sector.

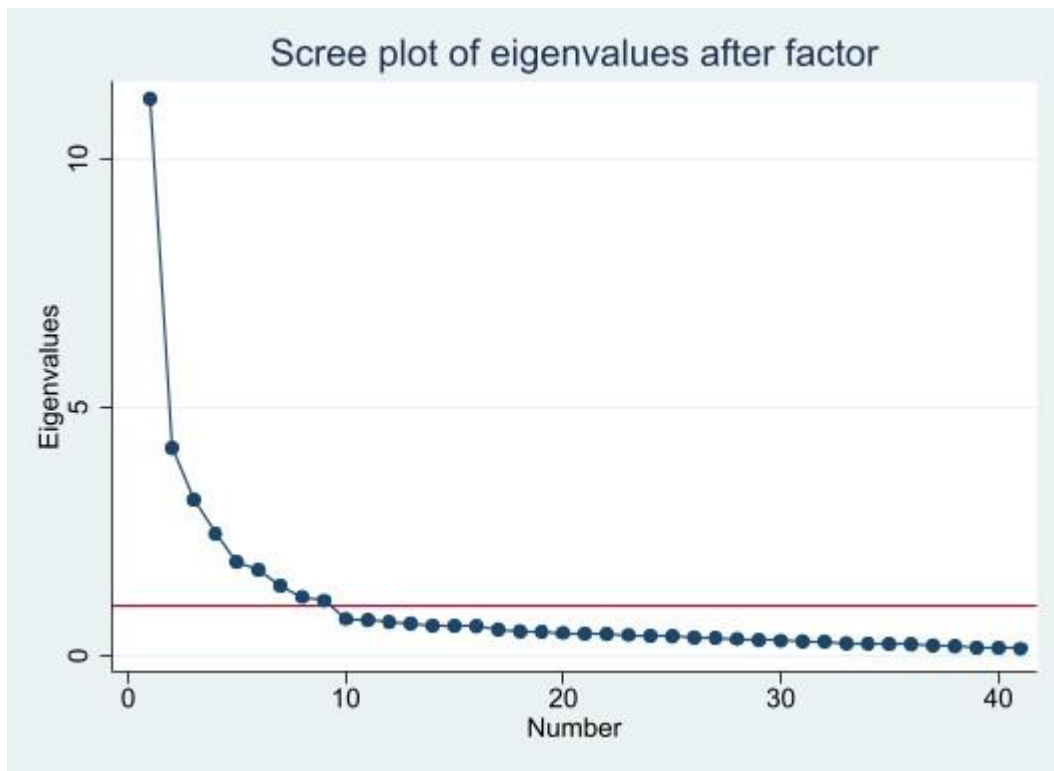


Figure 2: Scree Plot of Eigenvalues After Factor Extraction in Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Additionally, items with relatively low or scattered loadings across factors, such as "No one tells me I am a good teacher," suggest that these variables may be weakly aligned with specific factors. Such items could potentially represent distinct dimensions of job satisfaction that are not fully captured by the current factor structure. These factor loading coefficients, after rotation, are essential for refining the factor model. They ensure that the items are meaningfully aligned with their respective factors, thereby strengthening the validity and reliability of the measurement tool.

6. Thematic Analysis

In addition to quantitative methods, this study incorporates thematic analysis, an innovative approach to understanding the nuanced factors influencing teacher satisfaction in the private higher education sector. Thematic analysis is particularly valuable in this context as it facilitates the identification, analysis, and interpretation of patterns or themes within qualitative data. By analyzing textual data from diverse online sources, this method offers rich, in-depth insights into teachers' experiences, perceptions, and concerns that structured surveys might not capture.

For discourse analysis, a wide range of data was collected from publicly available online forums discussing teachers' work in the higher education sector in Guangdong province. The data examined includes Rating Stars, Job Positions, Positive Comments, Negative Comments, and Management Recommendations. These elements provide key indicators of teacher sentiment and satisfaction, offering a glimpse into how teachers perceive various aspects of their work environment, such as management practices, work-life balance, and career development opportunities.

To ensure the breadth and relevance of the data, approximately 500 comments and articles were reviewed, and sourced from the WeChat platform. This platform hosts official accounts of private colleges and universities included in the study. As a widely used social media platform in China, particularly for professional networking and institutional communication, WeChat provides valuable insights into how teachers engage with and perceive the policies and initiatives implemented by their institutions.

Through thematic analysis of these diverse sources, this study aims to uncover recurrent themes and patterns in teachers' feedback, offering a comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting job satisfaction. Central emerging themes include management practices, institutional culture, working conditions, professional development, and compensation. This qualitative approach complements the quantitative findings, enabling triangulation of results and providing a richer, more holistic perspective on the factors influencing teacher satisfaction in Guangdong's private higher education sector.

Table 4: Identified Themes and High-Frequency Words Found in Positive Sentiment Text Analysis

No.	Theme	High Frequency Words
1	Team support	(team)、(project)、(free)、(build)、(orient)、(level)、(meet)
2	Advanced techniques	(technology)、(tech)、(strong)、(network)、(telecom)、(latest)、(edge)
3	Good working conditions	(positive)、(atmosphere)、(culture)、(interest)、(amaze)、(enjoy)、(condition) It is the most frequently used word.
4	Complete training system	(skill)、(train)、(professional)、(experience)、(knowledge)、(support)、(develop)、(improve)、(gain)、(resource)、(field)
5	Performance, growth	(drive)、(grow)、(business)、(give)、(provide)、(reward)、(result)、(area)、(domain)
6	High salary	(high)、(salary)、(payment)、(money)、(bonus)、(benefit)、(long)、(incentive)、(average)、(pay)、(annual)
7	Graduate students	(graduate)、(fresh)、(hand)、(learn)、(lot)、(place)、(start)、(responsibility)、(short)、(curve)、(stuff)、(thing)、(limit)、(guy)
8	opportunities	(chance)、(opportunity)、(career)、(path)、(onsite)、(future)、(grow)、(platform)、(fair)
9	Good welfare	(good)、(pay)、(money)、(hike)、(facility)、(onsite)、(show)、(campus)、(awesome)、(contact)
10	Work and life balance	(good)、(nice)、(life)、(work)、(balance)、(work life)、(compensation)、(dynamic)、(location)、(friend)、(colleague)、(home)

The table above presents the results of a thematic analysis conducted on positive feedback from teachers in the private higher education sector in Guangdong province. The analysis identifies ten key themes that contribute to teacher satisfaction and positive perceptions of their work environment.

Team support emerged as a significant theme, with frequent references to terms like "team," "project," and "build," indicating that teachers highly value collaborative work and support from colleagues. Advanced techniques and modern technologies were also highlighted, with terms such as "technology," "network," and "latest," reflecting teachers' appreciation for access to cutting-edge tools that enhance their teaching practices.

Good working conditions and a positive institutional culture were similarly emphasized, with words like "positive," "atmosphere," and "culture," underlining the importance of a supportive and engaging work environment. Additionally, the presence of a comprehensive training system was noted as crucial, with frequent references to "skill," "train," and "knowledge," showcasing the value teachers place on opportunities for continuous professional development. Among these themes, good working conditions emerged as the most frequently mentioned factor.

Other important themes include performance and growth, high salary, and good welfare, all reflecting teachers' desire for career advancement, competitive compensation, and attractive benefits. Graduate students and opportunities were also recognized as significant aspects of professional life, with teachers expressing satisfaction in mentoring new professionals and accessing career development opportunities.

Finally, work-life balance emerged as a central theme, highlighting teachers' appreciation for a harmonious balance between professional responsibilities and personal life. Together, these themes offer valuable insights into the factors that enhance job satisfaction, emphasizing the importance of supportive environments, opportunities for professional growth, and fair compensation in fostering positive teacher experiences in the private higher education sector.

Table 5: Identified Themes and High-Frequency Words Found in Negative Sentiment Text Analysis



No.	Theme	High Frequency Words
1	Team support	(company)、(culture)、(bad)、(leader)、(treat)、(respect)、(treatment)、(horrible)、(care)、(adapt)、(huge)、(easy)、(promotion)、(friendly)、(overwork)
2	Advanced techniques	(salary)、(low)、(pay)、(benefit)、(travel)、(bonus)、(compensation)、(increase)、(performance)、(outsource)、(competitive)、(proper)
3	Good working conditions	(Chinese)、(local)、(meet)、(language)、(understand)、(english)、(barrier)、(culture)、(country)、(mandarin)、(boss)、(promotion)、(position)
4	Complete training system	(growth)、(opportunity)、(follow)、(process)、(clear)、(limit)、(career)、(development)、(learn)、(train)、(lot)、(big)、(difficult)、(task)、(path)
5	Performance, growth	(work)、(life)、(balance)、(work life)、(maintain)、(personal)、(hectic)、(social)、(urgent)、(push)、(stable)、(intense)、(pressure)
6	High salary	(year)、(hire)、(rate)、(manager)、(leave)、(people) It is the most frequently used word.
7	Graduate students	(work)、(pressure)、(high)、(hard)、(environment)、(stress)、(heavy)、(deadline)、(strict)、(fast)、(tight)、(push)、(expectation)
8	opportunities	(work)、(pressure)、(high)、(hard)、(environment)、(stress)、(heavy)、(deadline)、(strict)、(fast)、(tight)、(push)、(expectation)
9	Work and life balance	(work)、(time)、(hour)、(long)、(day)、(weekend)、(night)、(home)、(call)、(extra)、(flexible)、(schedule)、(shift)、(spend)、(tire)

7. Thematic Analysis of Negative Feedback

The table above presents the results of a thematic analysis of negative feedback from teachers in the private higher education sector in Guangdong province. The analysis reveals several key themes related to teacher dissatisfaction and challenges within their work environment.

The theme of team support highlights significant issues with company culture and leadership, as indicated by frequent references to terms like "bad," "leader," "respect," and "treatment." These findings suggest that teachers feel unsupported and disrespected by management. Frustration with advanced techniques and compensation is also evident, with terms like "low," "pay," and "benefit" pointing to dissatisfaction with salaries and benefits. This is further compounded by concerns over outsourcing and performance-based pressures.

The theme of working conditions reflects frustrations with cultural and language barriers, as terms like "Chinese," "local," and "language" indicate communication difficulties that hinder teachers' ability to adapt to their work environment. Regarding training systems, teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of clear growth opportunities, as highlighted by terms like "growth," "limit," and "career." These findings suggest that inadequate or unclear training stunts teachers' professional development.

The theme of performance and growth underscores the stress of balancing work and personal life, with terms like "work," "life," "balance," "intense," and "pressure" indicating a heavy workload and high expectations. Similarly, the theme of salary highlights issues with compensation, with terms such as "year," "hire," and "rate" suggesting misalignment between salaries and job demands. Teachers working with graduate students reported feeling overwhelmed by the pressure and stress of managing high expectations, with words like "pressure," "environment," and "stress" emphasizing the challenges they face.

Opportunities for career advancement were also a point of contention, with frequent mentions of "work," "pressure," and "deadline" reflecting the intense demands of the job. Lastly, the theme of work-life balance highlights the difficulty teachers face in maintaining personal time, with terms like "long," "weekend," "night," and "extra" pointing to excessive working hours that leave little room for family or leisure.

The most frequently discussed issue was salary, suggesting that compensation contributes significantly to dissatisfaction. Overall, these themes provide valuable insights into the areas where teachers in private higher education institutions experience significant dissatisfaction, including poor support, high workload, unclear

career paths, and inadequate compensation. Addressing these concerns is critical for improving teacher satisfaction and creating a more supportive work environment.

8. Discussion

The findings from this study align with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of workplace support, competitive compensation, and professional development in fostering job satisfaction among educators. Teachers in the private higher education sector in Guangdong report feeling unsupported by management, with many expressing frustration over poor treatment and lack of respect from leadership. This reflects broader issues across educational settings, where leadership styles and management practices play a pivotal role in shaping teacher morale and job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1959; Vroom, 1964). Enhancing team support and fostering a culture of respect and collaboration are essential for improving teacher satisfaction.

Concerns related to advanced techniques and salary are notable. Teachers expressed dissatisfaction with both the technological resources available and the compensation they receive, which is often perceived as inadequate given their workload. Institutions should prioritize investments in technological infrastructure, provide access to advanced teaching tools, and ensure competitive compensation structures that reflect teachers' contributions. These findings are consistent with prior research emphasizing fair pay as a fundamental driver of motivation and satisfaction (Herzberg, 1959).

The study also highlights challenges with working conditions, particularly cultural and language barriers, especially in international or bilingual settings. Private colleges should consider implementing orientation programs, cross-cultural training, and language support to help teachers integrate more effectively into their work environment. These measures would improve communication, collaboration, and overall satisfaction.

Training systems and professional growth opportunities emerged as another key area for improvement. Teachers expressed frustration with unclear career advancement pathways and limited training opportunities. Institutions should address these concerns by offering structured mentorship programs, professional development workshops, and clear promotion guidelines. These efforts can help reduce frustration and build confidence in long-term career prospects.

Finally, issues related to work life balance indicate that many teachers struggle to manage their professional and personal lives due to long hours and weekend shifts, which contribute to burnout. Addressing this issue could involve creating flexible work schedules, providing additional support for heavy workloads, and ensuring reasonable working hours.

In conclusion, while private higher education institutions in Guangdong province offer opportunities for career growth and professional development, significant barriers to teacher satisfaction remain. By addressing management support, compensation, cultural integration, and work life balance, institutions can create a more supportive and fulfilling work environment for teachers, benefiting both educators and students. These efforts are crucial for improving teacher retention, enhancing performance, and fostering a positive academic culture.

9. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the factors influencing teacher satisfaction in the private higher education sector in Guangdong Province, China, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings from the thematic analysis of negative feedback provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by teachers. Key themes identified include dissatisfaction with team support, advanced techniques, working conditions, and training systems. Additional issues related to performance and growth, salary, graduate student supervision, and work life balance were also significant sources of frustration for teachers.

These challenges highlight that while teachers value professional growth opportunities, competitive compensation, and a supportive work environment, substantial barriers hinder their overall satisfaction. The results underscore the need for institutions to address these factors, particularly those related to management practices, support systems, career advancement, and compensation. By doing so, private higher education institutions can enhance teacher satisfaction, reduce turnover, and foster a more positive and productive academic environment.

10. References

Anbarasan, V., & Mehta, N. (2009). An exploratory study on perceived quality of working life among sales professionals employed in pharmaceutical, banking, finance, and insurance companies in Mumbai. *Abhigyan*, 27(1), 70-81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0970238520090107>



- Andrew, K. (2017). *Teacher Job Satisfaction and Student Academic Performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in Secondary Schools in Uganda: A case Study of Kamwenge District* [Doctoral dissertation, Kabale University].
- Azeem, S. M. (2010). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment among employees in the Sultanate of Oman. *Psychology*, 1(4), 295–300. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2010.14038>
- Armstrong, G. S., AtkinPlunk, C. A., & Wells, J. (2015). The relationship between work-family conflict, correctional officer job stress, and job satisfaction. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 42(10), 1066–1082. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854815582221>
- Hoppock, R. (1935). *Job Satisfaction*. Harper & Brothers Publishers.
- Hochschild, A. R. (2019). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling*. University of California Press.
- Locke, E. A. (1976). *The Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. Rand McNally.
- SotoRubio, A., GiménezEspert, M. D. C., & PradoGascó, V. (2020). Effect of Emotional Intelligence and psychosocial risks on burnout, job satisfaction, and nurses' health during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(21), 7998. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17217998>
- Bearman, M., Smith, C. D., Carbone, A., Slade, S., Baik, C., Hughes-Warrington, M., & Neumann, D. L. (2012). Systematic review methodology in higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 31(5), 625–640. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2012.702735>
- Pepe, A., Addimando, L., & Veronese, G. (2017). 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>
- Burnes, B. (2004). Kurt Lewin and the planned approach to change: A re-appraisal. *Journal of Management Studies*, 41(6), 977–1002. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.14676486.2004.00463.x>
- Feng, B. (1996). Research on teacher's job satisfaction and its influencing factors. *Education Studies*, (2), 2–49.
- Spector, P. E. (1997). *Job satisfaction: Application, assessment, causes, and consequences*. Sage Publications.
- Pearson, L. C., & Moomaw, W. (2005). The relationship between teacher autonomy and stress, work satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 29(1), 38–54.
- Motowidlo, S. J., & Kell, H. J. (2003). Job performance. *Handbook of psychology: Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 12(4), 39–53.
- Benevene, P., De Stasio, S., & Fiorilli, C. (2020). Well-being of school teachers in their work environment. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 1239. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01239>
- Borah, A. (2019). Impact of teachers' job satisfaction in academic achievement of the students in higher technical institutions: A study in the Kamrup district of Assam. *The Clarion-International Multidisciplinary Journal*, 8(1), 51–55. <https://doi.org/10.5958/2277-937X.2019.00007.8>

Appendix

Table 1: Results of the Reliability Analysis Conducted on the Questionnaire for Internal Consistency

	Item	Corrected item total correlation	Cronbach's a after-deleted items	Cronbach's Alpha
Supervision	My immediate supervisor is there to help me when I need it	0.706	0.886	0.901
	My immediate supervisor praises the quality of my teaching	0.647	0.891	
	My direct supervisor provides help in improving instruction	0.693	0.887	
	I often receive recognition from my direct supervisor	0.650	0.891	
	My direct supervisor does not support me	0.655	0.891	
	I explain the expectations to my direct supervisor	0.704	0.886	

	My immediate supervisor is not willing to listen to suggestions	0.686	0.888	
Colleagues	My direct supervisor treats everyone fairly	0.756	0.882	
	I like the people I work with	0.691	0.910	0.918
	My colleagues seem unreasonable to me	0.742	0.906	
	I get along well with my colleagues	0.761	0.905	
	My colleagues inspire me to do better	0.689	0.910	
	My colleagues criticize each other	0.743	0.906	
	I like to have lasting friendships with my colleagues	0.765	0.904	
	My colleagues provide me with suggestions or feedback on my teaching	0.705	0.909	
Working Conditions	My interests are similar to those of my colleagues	0.727	0.907	
	I like that the working conditions at my school are good	0.690	0.728	0.817
	My school's administration does not clearly define its policies	0.690	0.728	
Pay	I like the people I work with	0.631	0.786	
	Teachers earn just enough to make ends meet	0.664	0.781	0.827
	Teachers receive income is enough to meet normal expenses	0.714	0.731	
Responsibility	Teaching provides me with financial security	0.675	0.770	
	My remuneration is proportional to my ability	0.691	0.812	0.852
	I get along well with my students	0.712	0.803	
Work Itself	I am not interested in school policies	0.688	0.813	
	I am responsible for planning my daily lessons	0.677	0.818	
	Teaching provides me with the opportunity to help students learn	0.741	0.855	0.884
	Teaching is a very interesting job	0.744	0.854	
	Teaching does not provide me with the opportunity to develop new methods	0.710	0.862	
Advancement	Teaching provides the opportunity to use a variety of skills	0.710	0.862	
	I do not have the freedom to make my own decisions	0.698	0.864	
	The job of a teacher is enjoyable	0.667	0.724	0.807
	Teaching provides good opportunities for promotion	0.643	0.749	
	Teaching provides me with opportunities for professional development	0.656	0.736	
Security	I am not making progress in my current teaching position	0.622	0.692	0.778
	I am afraid of losing my teaching job	0.617	0.696	
Recognition	Teaching provides a secure future	0.602	0.713	
	I have never felt secure in my teaching job	0.653	0.779	0.822
	My successful teaching is fully recognized	0.714	0.716	
	No one tells me that I am a good teacher	0.666	0.767	