

JOB SATISFACTION OF EXPATRIATE EFL TEACHERS IN TURKISH
PRIVATE K-12 SCHOOLS:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY

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PRIVATE K-12 SCHOOLS:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY**

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ABSTRACT

JOB SATISFACTION OF EXPATRIATE EFL TEACHERS IN TURKISH PRIVATE K-12 SCHOOLS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY

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With the increase in global mobility in the teaching profession and the rising number of expatriate EFL teachers, it is important to study this group's experiences in the host country. This thesis study aimed to investigate the job satisfaction of expatriate EFL teachers in the Turkish private K-12 system. The study was carried out with 4 participants coming from the United States, Canada, and Albania and living and working in Ankara during the 2021-2022 academic year. To reach the objectives, outlined in this study, the researcher collected the data from the expatriate EFL teachers through a survey and a series of three semi-structured interviews. The participants were also asked to journal over the course of one week and write down any specific incidents that affect their job satisfaction one way or another.

The data were analyzed separately for each participant after each case was reported, the researcher looked for ways in which the participants converge or diverge, and three themes emerged. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis, the study revealed that the teachers have varying definitions of job satisfaction that converged in their prioritizing *relationships, community, achievement, and recognition of achievement*; they experienced *low levels of job satisfaction*, even though at times there were

upswings in these levels; and *love for the job and community overshadowed by contextual aspects*. Following these themes, it became clear that steps should be taken by Turkish private K-12 schools to ensure higher levels of satisfaction for expatriate EFL teachers.

Keywords: Teacher job satisfaction, expatriate EFL teachers, Turkish private K-12 schools, interpretative phenomenological analysis

ÖZ

TÜRK K12 ÖZEL OKULLARINDA YABANCI UYUKLU ÖĞRETMENLERİN İŞ TATMINİ: FENOMENOLOJİK ARAŞTIRMA

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Öğretmenlik mesleğinde küresel hareketliliğin ve yabancı uyruklu İngilizce öğretmenlerinin sayısının artması, bu grubun ev sahibi ülkedeki deneyimlerinin incelemesini önemli kılmıştır. Bu tez çalışması, Türkiye özel okul K-12 sisteminde yabancı uyruklu İngilizce öğretmenlerinin iş tatminini araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Araştırma 2021-2022 eğitim öğretim yılında Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Kanada ve Arnavutluk vatandaşı olup Ankara'da yaşayan ve çalışan 4 katılımcı ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada ortaya konan hedeflere ulaşmak için araştırmacı, bir anket ve üç ayrı yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme yoluyla İngilizce öğretmenlerinden veri toplamıştır.

Katılımcılardan ayrıca bir hafta boyunca günlük tutmaları ve iş tatminlerini herhangi bir şekilde etkileyen belirli olayları yazmaları istenmiştir. Veriler işlendikten sonra her bir vaka için ayrı ayrı analiz edilmiş, katılımcıların benzeştiği veya ayrıştığı bulguları araştırılmış ve üç tema ortaya çıkmıştır. Yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analizin kullanılması yoluyla yapılan çalışma, öğretmenlerin, işyerindeki ilişkiler, toplulukta başarı ve başarının takdir edilmesinde benzeşen çeşitli iş tatminlerine sahip

olduklarını ortaya koymuřtur. Zaman zaman bu seviyelerde yükselmeler olsa da düşük iş tatmini deneyimlemeleri ve çalışma ortamı maruziyeti sebebiyle işlerine ve birlikte çalışılan topluluğa olan sevgilerinin gölgede kaldığı gözlemlenmiştir. Bu temalar, yabancı uyruklu İngilizce öğretmenlerinin daha yüksek düzeyde iş tatminine ulaşması için Türk özel K-12 okulları tarafından iyileştirici adımlar atılması gerektiğini ortaya koymuřtur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öğretmen iş tatmini, ve yabancı uyruklu İngilizce öğretmenler, K-12 sistemi Türkiye özel Okulları, yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz

DEDICATION

To my parents, who instilled the love of learning in me!
To my husband, whose support made this thesis happen!
To my children, may you find your passion in life just as I found mine!

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This study is rooted in my own experiences as an expatriate English teacher in Turkey, so I would like to thank all the amazing expatriate teachers that I have had the pleasure to work with and learn from over the past 6 years. So, thank you Darin CROWELL, Lorraine AYAZ and Sheyla SCHWABE, Barbora HOLKOVA M. HASSAN, and Kirsten KURT for making my work experiences better through your friendship and for supporting my academic journey as well. I will forever cherish you!

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELL	English Language Learning
ELT	English Language Teaching
ETA	English Teaching Assistant
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
LET	Local English Teacher
LOC	Locus of Control
K-12	Kindergarten to 12 th grade
NCM	National Cultures Model
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Presentation

This chapter provides an introduction to the current study. To begin with, it starts by presenting the background to the study, stating the problem and objectives as well as the research questions guiding it. Additionally, it outlines the potential significance of the study and the definitions of the key terms and concepts. The latter is important to prevent any potential misunderstandings that may arise as the study is read.

1.1 Background to the Study

The rapid increase in global interactions, occurring both in business and education, has led to the need for a common language and English has risen to the occasion as the world's unofficial *lingua franca*. Because of this, international schools or national ones that aim to give an advantageous edge to their students, have mushroomed across the globe (Halicioglu, 2015). As a direct result, teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are one of the most sought-after groups of professionals worldwide, and Turkey is no exception. Thus, it is common to find them teaching in international or private schools around the globe. Despite their ubiquitous presence, very little research has been devoted solely to these teachers (Caravatti, Lederer, Lupico & Van Meter, 2014; Richardson, Kirchenheim & Richardson, 2006) and thus, little is known about their experiences. Therefore, expatriate teachers remain one of the most under-researched and under-theorized groups in literature (Bunnell, 2017).

According to Nergis (2011) English language teaching in Turkey has its beginning in 1944 with the establishment of the first English language department at Gazi

Institute. Since then, the demand for English has exponentially increased as seen from the 1950s to the 1980s when the number of students taking English courses increased 30 times. To improve and maintain a high quality of English language instruction, especially at universities, in 2010, the Higher education council of Turkey began employing Fulbright scholars from the United States as English Teaching Assistants (ETAs) (Yılmaz, 2014). What is more, to keep up with the demand and to maintain international standards at the primary and secondary levels, back in 2011, the government initiated a nationwide program seeking to recruit 40,000 native-English speaking teachers (NESTs) to work all over Turkey (Coşkun, 2013). Since then, private K-12 schools, especially in bigger cities, have increased their efforts to hire foreign teachers, especially from countries like the United Kingdom and the US.

Over the past few years, Turkey became a top destination for expatriate EFL teachers for a couple of reasons. Aydın et. al. (2019) detail some initiatives by the Turkish government aiming to increase the number of expatriate educators such as offering appealing terms and conditions of employment, salaries, and the observance of religious holidays, providing plane tickets to and from Turkey for them and their dependent children upon the termination of their employment, etc. These efforts seemed to have had the desired effect as the number of expatriates in the field of education significantly increased between 2013 and 2017 (Aydın et. al., 2019). Despite this, only a handful of studies (e.g., Erman, 2016; Göker, 2012; Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Hoyland, 2021) have been conducted with this population in the Turkish context and the available literature leaves a lot to desire. The studies that have been conducted almost unanimously report low levels of job satisfaction in this group of educators in Turkey whether they work in local private K-12 schools, international schools, or universities (Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Kasimi & Hangişi, 2021).

Teacher satisfaction has been a topic of interest for Turkish researchers for quite some time. The topic of job satisfaction has been studied in different contexts, grade levels, etc., and despite occasional conflicting evidence, most studies have concluded

that Turkish teachers are overall satisfied with their jobs (Aslan, 2015; Büyükgöze & Gün, 2017; Çoğaltay, Yalcın & Karadağ, 2016; Demirtaş, 2015; Türkoglu, Cansoy & Parlar, 2017). On the other hand, the situation of EFL teachers may be slightly different, especially that of expatriate EFL teachers. Even though EFL teachers are satisfied with aspects of their jobs related directly to their teaching and relationship with their students (Erkaya, 2013), lack of communication with administration and colleagues and lack of recognition seemed to be the top aspects leading to low levels of dissatisfaction (Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Han & Mahzoun, 2018; Kasimi & Hangişi, 2021; Subaşı, 2021).

The idea of the present study came about as the researcher being in this situation herself and working closely with other expatriate EFL teachers in Turkey realized that something was amiss regarding this group's levels of job satisfaction in general. Expatriate EFL teachers in Turkey seem to experience low levels of satisfaction and investigating the causes of this phenomenon might shed some light on the issue.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There is a wide research gap when it comes to the job satisfaction of expatriate EFL teachers in private Turkish K-12 schools which provides an excellent reason for such research to be carried out. There are only a handful of studies that have addressed the topic of expatriate EFL teachers in Turkey, and most of these have looked at university instructors thus providing an incomplete view of the reality. This study aims to remedy this issue by focusing on the concept of job satisfaction of primary and secondary school teachers.

Additionally, the research carried out on teacher satisfaction has been primarily carried out through quantitative measures hoping to generalize their findings, however, being that job satisfaction is an experience perceived differently by different people, the best way to approach it is through quantitative methods. This study, using phenomenology as its research method, aims to address this shortage.

1.3 Aims of the Study and the Research Questions

This study aims to explore how expatriate EFL teachers working in private K-12 schools in Turkey define job satisfaction and establish the level of job satisfaction of expatriate EFL teachers. In addition, the study strives to identify what aspects of their job increase or decrease expatriate EFL teachers' levels of job satisfaction.

It is hoped that this will be achieved through the following questions:

- How do expatriate EFL teachers in Turkey define job satisfaction?
- How satisfied with their jobs are expatriate EFL teachers working in private K-12 schools in Turkey?
 - What aspects of their job increase their satisfaction?
 - What aspects of their job decrease their satisfaction?

1.4 Significance of the Study

The present study might offer important insights into the status of expatriate EFL teachers in Turkey and their overall levels of job satisfaction. First of all, it will contribute to the literature and hopefully aid education policymakers in creating better laws and regulations that will facilitate the hiring of expatriate teachers and ensure their well-being in the Turkish K-12 system. Additionally, it will assist school leaders in making better-informed decisions while hiring and managing expatriate EFL teachers. It might provide human resources professionals, school administrators, and heads of departments with the tools to establish a work environment that fosters job satisfaction and engenders productivity, creativity, and above all, student success. Moreover, schools that employ expatriate teachers might save both time and money in the long term if measures are taken in advance to address challenges known to these professionals. On a more personal note, it may encourage the individual teachers to reflect on their own experiences and reach a deeper understanding of their definitions and levels of job satisfaction. At the same time, the experiences of the teachers captured in this study may help other teachers who are or may consider coming to teach in Turkey make well-informed decisions.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms and Concepts

To clarify any concept that will make an appearance in this study and to avoid any potential ambiguities or misunderstandings that may arise, this section will define and explain all key terms and concepts as they are used in this study.

Expatriate:

An expatriate is an individual who moves to another country while changing the dominant place of residence and executes legal work abroad. As such, the expatriate has migrant status. In the case of [self-initiated expatriates] SIEs, the first key binding activity to move internationally is solely made by the individual who initiates the expatriation. The legal decision of employment is made by a new work contract partner – either a foreign unit of the organization where the SIE is currently employed (Intra-SIEs) or a new organization abroad (Inter-SIEs) (Andresen, Bergdolt & Dickmann, 2014, p. 2308).

Expatriate teacher:

The term expatriate teacher refers to any teacher who is a citizen of one country but working in another. (Johnston, 1999, p. 256). For the purpose of this paper, the definition of expatriate EFL teachers was inspired by Richardson (2002). To be considered an expatriate, these individuals must have chosen to work abroad as expatriates and have been employed in educational institutions outside their home countries for 5 years. They also plan on staying in the host country at least until the end of their contract.

Job Satisfaction:

The degree to which people like their occupations is the simplest definition of job satisfaction. It is described by Spector (2008) as "an attitudinal variable that reflects how people feel about their jobs overall as well as about various aspects of the jobs." (p. 223). According to Locke (1969), emotional responses to one's job evaluation contribute to the accomplishment of one's job values.

Teacher Job Satisfaction:

In her 2001 work, Evans - one of the scholars who has extensively examined job satisfaction in education- defines it as "a state of mind determined by the extent to which the individual perceives his/her job-related needs to be being met" (Evans, 1997, p. 833). This is to be understood as follows: teachers will be more satisfied if their values and ideals, and the job itself and the environment they perform it in, are more in agreement (Evans, 2001).

Culture:

Hofstede defines culture as the collective mental programming of the people in an environment (Hofstede, 1980, p. 16). Hofstede (2010) provides a great analogy for culture. He compares it and its multiple layers to an onion. The top three layers are *symbols* (language, flag) *heroes* (people admired and viewed as role models), and *rituals* (collective activities such as ways of greeting, celebrating, etc.) These outer layers are not only easily observable but also easily changeable. The core of a culture, however, values, are what truly makes cultures unique. These values are hard to change if at all. They are shared by all members, though to different degrees, and as a result, we can safely talk about national cultures. With this in mind, Hofstede (2010) identified six dimensions that make up a national culture.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Model

The reason for varying levels of job satisfaction across countries and cultures may lie in Hofstede's (2001) Cultural Dimensions Model. This model often referred to as the National Cultures Model (NCM), asserts that countries can be distinguished by six dimensions of basic cultural values.

According to the NCM, the six dimensions are *Power Distance* - the extent to which the less powerful members of a society expect and accept that power is distributed unequally (p. 61); *Individualism V. Collectivism* - pertaining to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose v. societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups (p. 92); *Masculinity V. Femininity* - the extent to which gender roles in society are distinct or overlap; *Uncertainty Avoidance* - the extent to which members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown

situations (p. 191); *Long-Term V. Short-Term Orientation* –the fostering of virtues oriented toward future rewards v. the past and present (p. 239); *Indulgence V. Restraint* - the tendency to allow relatively free gratification of basic and human desires v. the conviction that such gratification needs to be curbed and regulated (p. 281). These dimensions can be best understood when looked at together as they are closely interconnected and a score in one of the dimensions often dictates the direction in another.

Because this model has been successfully used in researching and explaining workplace-related phenomena, including job satisfaction, it will be used as an interpretative framework for the current study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Presentation

This chapter presents an extensive literature review on the topic. It is separated into three main sections starting with an overview of the concept of job satisfaction. The second section reviews the theoretical frameworks for the study. In the final section, the issue of teacher job satisfaction will be thoroughly examined and further divided into subsections. First, a definition and background will be provided. Second, the facets that make it up will be discussed. Next, the job satisfaction of teachers in Turkey, followed by that of EFL teachers in general will be addressed. The review will end with the literature on the satisfaction of expatriate teachers and specifically of expatriate EFL teachers in Turkey.

2.1 The Concept of Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a concept widely researched in business management literature. Its scientific beginnings are in the early 20th century when large organizations across the United States started realizing that measuring their employees' job satisfaction would lead to greater organizational financial gains. In addition, it affects other non-financial aspects such as organizational commitment and turnover. With the introduction of *The Principles of Scientific Management* in 1911, it was widely believed that "The principal object of management should be to secure the maximum prosperity for the employer, coupled by the maximum prosperity for each employee" (Taylor, 1911, p. 2). As a result, more studies were conducted and between the 1920s and 1930s, however, it was not until the late 1940s that the foundations of job satisfaction were laid. It was Mayo (1949), who with the Hawthorne Studies,

achieved this. The Hawthorne studies revealed that certain factors may or may not motivate workers and as a result increase or decrease their overall job satisfaction.

Despite the challenge of accurately conceptualizing and defining job satisfaction, many definitions exist of the construct. In its simplest form, it is defined as the extent to which people like their jobs. Spector (2008) defines it as “an attitudinal variable that reflects how people feel about their jobs overall as well as about various aspects of the jobs.” (p. 223). Locke (1969), who dedicated his career to the study of job satisfaction and motivation, sees satisfaction as an emotional reaction to the appraisal of one’s job as leading to the achievement of one’s job values. On the other hand, when one’s job frustrates or blocks the achievement of such values, the resulting emotional reaction will be dissatisfaction. So, all in all, “Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are a function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from one's job and what one perceives it as offering or entailing” (Locke, 1969, p. 316). Following this definition, Locke (1969) gets into a discussion of what he means by values and how they differ from expectations or needs, which in his opinion have been misused in literature. According to Locke (1970), a value is that which individuals actively seek to achieve or maintain, both task and non-task related, because it is deemed beneficial and is also characterized by intensity, a feeling of how much that thing is desired. In simpler terms this can be interpreted to mean that one’s happiness with their job depends highly on what they value, the importance they place on these values and their perceptions of how much the job is helping them get closer to these values. Locke (1970) further explains that the relationship between an individual’s perceptions and values influences that individual's evaluation of a situation.

Multiple definitions notwithstanding, the reason why it has been so extensively researched is that job satisfaction affects many organizational outcomes including employee job performance, turnover, and even health (Spector, 2008). Mishra (2013) corroborates this and adds organizational citizenship and absenteeism as additional work behaviors that can be predicted by employees’ job satisfaction. Tietjen and Myers (1998) further add that satisfaction also has positive outcomes for individual

workers as it increases their confidence and loyalty towards their organizations and leads to better quality output. One more reason why studying job satisfaction is important is that it is positively, reciprocally, and significantly correlated to life satisfaction (Judge & Watanabe, 1993; Mishra, 2013). What this means is that when people are satisfied with their lives they are also satisfied with their jobs and vice versa as these two emotions influence one another.

Mishra (2013) holds that multiple factors affect job satisfaction, and they can be grouped into three different categories: personal factors (e.g., gender, age, level of education, and work experience), job factors (e.g., type of work, skill requirements, status, and level of responsibility), and factors controlled by management (e.g., remuneration and other benefits, working conditions, job security, and opportunities for advancement). However, none of these factors act completely independently of the others. Locke (1969), for instance, explains that the interaction between the individual and their environment is a very important relationship to be taken into consideration when studying job satisfaction. Since people do not exist in a vacuum, it is crucial to take their work environment and others that inhabit it into consideration when measuring satisfaction. What else this means is that because of these personal factors, what may satisfy one person may cause dissatisfaction to another.

Spector (2008) argues that there are two main approaches to studying job satisfaction: the global approach and the facets approach. The former sees job satisfaction as a single feeling towards one's job. However, this approach is erroneous since satisfaction is not a unidimensional variable (Hulin & Smith, 1965). The latter approach suggested by Spector (2008) acknowledges the existence of different aspects of job satisfaction that allow for different levels of satisfaction with each of these components. Some of these components are pay, benefits, supervision, co-workers, job conditions, security, etc. It is important to note that the opposite of job satisfaction is not necessarily dissatisfaction. The difference between the two concepts is best explained by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory first introduced in 1959. The theory will be discussed in detail in the following section.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Since the current study is examining the phenomenon of job satisfaction or lack thereof of expatriate EFL teachers, it relies on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, first published in the 1959 book, *The Motivation to Work*, related to motivation to work and the facets that affect job satisfaction. Herzberg based his model on Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs which claims that human needs are hierarchically ranked as follows: physiological, safety, need for love and belonging, need for self-esteem, and finally self-actualization. According to this theory, once lower-level needs have been successfully met, they no longer motivate individuals. Now they are concerned with the higher-order needs. In a later publication, however, Herzberg (1965) argues that Maslow's (1943) theory has holes that his theory will fill.

The Two-Factor Theory suggests that contrary to common belief, job satisfaction, and job dissatisfaction are not two different sides of the same coin, or they do not exist in a continuum. On the contrary, they are two separate experiences. They should not be seen as opposites of the same feeling. This theory, which will be the guiding framework for this study, proposes that there exist two types of factors that affect job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction respectively based on the needs they fulfill or fail to fulfill. Environmental job aspects that see to the basic, lower-level needs such as supervision, coworkers and organizational policies, administrative practices, and pay - in a complex manner - are called *hygiene factors*. Herzberg (1974) elaborates that the most frequent dissatisfier is policy and administration while the least common one is job security. However, this does not mean that one is more important than the other. These factors, no matter how favorable, do not increase job satisfaction. However, a lack of them may lead to job dissatisfaction. This means that their purpose is primarily preventative. Herzberg (1965) further explains that this is because "hygiene factors are not the proper nutrient for psychological growth." (p. 371) This is where the positive aspects, also known as motivators, come into the picture.

Herzberg (1965) refers to these aspects directly related to the content of work, rather than its context, as *motivator factors*. These motivators address higher-order needs

such as growth, achievement, recognition achievement, and responsibility. In a 1968 article for Harvard Business Review, Herzberg emphasizes that what motivates people are interesting and challenging work and increasing responsibilities. If an organization fails to address these aspects, the result will be a lack of job satisfaction. One way the author recommends making a job more interesting is through job enrichment- increasing the scope of the job without adding more meaningless responsibilities to it. The reason why it is so crucial to concentrate on motivators rather than hygiene factors is that the former have longer-lasting effects on employees' attitudes and feelings towards the job (Herzberg, 1968). Unlike dissatisfiers, motivators are not equally important. According to Herzberg (1974), the most important motivator - growth, because it is the end goal of individuals occurs less frequently than achievement, which is the starting point for any potential growth. See *Figure 1.* for a full list of all hygiene and motivator factors as presented in Herzberg (1974).

Table 2.1

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory: Hygiene and Motivator Factors

Hygiene Job Satisfaction	Motivators Job Satisfaction
Company Policy and Administration	Achievement
Supervision	Recognition for Achievement
Interpersonal Relations	Work Itself
Salary*	Responsibility
Status	Advancement
Security	Growth

One hygiene factor that can spill into the motivators due to its fluid nature is salary*. An interesting way to look at salary is the way Steve Smith (2014), author of *Managing for Success*, puts it. He says that when salary is perceived as low

compared to others doing similar work, feelings of dissatisfaction towards the job increase. However, once that perception of inequity is addressed, the feelings of dissatisfaction dissipate but no increase is noticed in employee motivation or satisfaction. This could perhaps be because employees are rarely 100% satisfied with their salaries and any increase in satisfaction due to higher pay will be short-lived (Smith, 2014). Pardee (1990) makes the same point when he says that improvements in hygiene factors, in general, will lead to short-term effects, while any improvement in motivators tends to have long-term effects. To be precise, Pardee (1990) stresses that “motivation can be achieved only by satisfying a very limited area of complex needs, which are additive in nature and whose satisfaction results in much more long-lasting effect” (p. 18). In fact, solutions that offer long-term effects should be the ones that employers should strive toward.

The Motivator-Hygiene Theory and the study that brought it forth received high praise from scholars and according to Herzberg himself, it was replicated at least 16 times in the first decade (1968) and more than 200 times over the course of 25 years (1974). Despite, or perhaps because of, its prominence in literature, especially in management, Herzberg's (1959) Two-Factor Theory has also received much criticism. One of Herzberg's most notable critics is Edwin Locke. Locke does not agree with Herzberg's idea that certain factors either affect satisfaction or dissatisfaction and not both. Locke (1969) argues that factors related to work can indeed be powerful determinants of both feelings. Additionally, Hulin and Smith (1965) criticize Herzberg for overgeneralizing his findings and for not, in their opinion, having allowed for differences due to gender and other situational variables which according to their study, do indeed exist. Notwithstanding the criticism, the theory still presents the best framework for the current study.

2.3 Teacher Job Satisfaction

Satisfaction plays an essential role in education as evidenced by a wide range of studies looking into the satisfaction of education leaders and teachers (e.g., Evans, 2001; Dinham & Scott, 2016; Mertler, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1967). Evans is one of the researchers who has studied job satisfaction in education thoroughly and in her 2001

paper discusses the difficulties in conceptualizing it. She claims that the ambiguity of the term comes primarily due to the failure of researchers to differentiate between the terms satisfactory and satisfying (Evans, 2001). In 1997, she defined it as “a state of mind determined by the extent to which the individual perceives his/her job-related needs to be being met” (p. 833). Juozaitiene and Simonaitiene (2011) explain it as an emotional ratio that engenders satisfaction if what one expects from one’s job is indeed obtained. These definitions become much clearer when the proximity to a teacher’s conception of an ideal job is taken into consideration. The higher the match between the job itself and the environment one performs it in, and the teachers’ values and ideologies, the more satisfied they will be (Evans, 2001). The idea of values sounds very intriguing and will be referred to as the participants’ experiences are discussed in their respective contexts.

Teacher job satisfaction has been widely studied because research has proven time and again that it affects important educational outcomes. Hongying (2007) argues that examples of such outcomes are the quality of teaching, the effectiveness of school leadership, and the overall quality of the institution in addition to outcomes affecting each teacher such as psychological wellbeing and enthusiasm for one’s work. Conversely, low satisfaction negatively influences these outcomes especially since it affects teacher retention and attrition. What this means is that if teachers are not satisfied with their jobs, they are more likely to leave the institution they work for or the profession in general. Unfortunately, across academic circles teaching as a profession is commonly accompanied by high levels of stress and low levels of professional well-being (Kidger et al., 2016). As a matter of fact, in a study of 130 schoolteachers, Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979) reported that about one-third of the teachers rated teaching as a very stressful or extremely stressful profession. In its latest report on Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reported that in 2018, 18% of teachers reported high levels of stress at work. Of these teachers, 49% cited a heavy administrative workload as the main source. However, Pearson and Moomaw (2005) found that job stress decreases when teacher autonomy or the ability “to have control over their work environment and to have personal on-the-job

decision-making authority” (p. 48), which in turn leads to higher levels of empowerment and professionalism.

Research on the facets of teacher job satisfaction has overlapped with the general literature in that a variety of components make up teacher satisfaction. Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory (1959) was supported since for teachers too, factors that contribute to teacher job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not part of a continuum, on the contrary, they are mutually exclusive (Sergiovanni, 1967; Tran, 2018). Satisfiers are those aspects of the job that lead to satisfied teachers and according to Sergiovanni (1967), they are achievement, recognition from superiors, peers, parents, and students, and responsibility. The author further elaborates that teachers equate achievement with perceptions of student success or perceived positive effects on them. While Sergiovanni’s (1967) study failed to bring advancement to light as a satisfier since “teaching offers little opportunity for concrete advancement” (p. 77), it revealed work itself as a bi-polar factor. What this means is that although it was mostly a source of positive attitudes towards their job, in some instances it was cited as a source of dissatisfaction. Staying on the topic of work itself, Dinham and Scott (1998) and Song (2007) add that satisfiers in the teaching profession are those intrinsic to teaching while dissatisfiers are extrinsic to teaching. In the same vein, Addison and Brundrett (2008) explain that for the purpose of their study, intrinsic motivators also refer to aspects that are inherent to the task itself.

Some of the main intrinsic motivators for teachers are first and foremost interacting with students (Karavas, 2010), achievement, (Sergiovanni, 1967), advancement, job security and personal growth (Tran, 2018), occupational prestige, self-esteem, and autonomy (Bogler, 2001). In the second phase of a two-year study of 449 Cypriot elementary and secondary school teachers carried out between 2002 and 2004, Zembylas and Papanastasiou (2006) found enough evidence supporting findings in the literature regarding teachers’ main sources of satisfaction, namely their satisfaction with working with children and witnessing their growth and learning, contributing to society, experiencing professional growth and development. Interestingly, positive interactions in the workplace (Juozaitiene & Simonaitiene,

2011; Pepe, Addimando & Veronese, 2017, Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2006) and perceived support from principals (Bogler, 2001), despite being what Herzberg (1965) would consider hygiene factors, came up as motivators in several studies investigating teacher satisfaction. According to Zembylas and Papanastasiou (2006), working collaboratively with colleagues was also a source of satisfaction for these teachers because they “are seen as a source of friendship and a source of social and emotional support” (p. 237). Toropova, Myrberg and Johansson (2021) in their study in the Swedish context also found that working conditions of a social manner were given great importance by their participants. Cooperation between teachers was one of the most important factors leading to higher levels of satisfaction. Nir and Bogler (2008) also found that perceived support from school leadership alongside job involvement were strong predictors of job satisfaction. This means that teachers are looking for collaboration not only between one another but also across levels of the hierarchy.

Another point of interest is that of remuneration. According to Herzberg (1965), this hygienic factor, once handled properly, simply leads to a lack of dissatisfaction, but for teachers, it can be a major source of satisfaction. It was in fact, the most important motivator in Juozaitiene and Simonaitiene’s (2011) study of 3710 teachers across Lithuania. Moreover, Zembylas and Papanastasiou (2003) assert that for Cypriot teachers, salaries and other extrinsic benefits like summer holidays were the reason why these teachers chose to enter the profession in the first place. Similarly, Iwu, Ezeuduji, Iwu, and Tenge (2018) reported that Nigerian teachers also put pay or salary at the top of the variables that contribute to their motivation to work. This was closely followed by opportunities for growth and responsibilities. Of course, when salary is perceived as inadequate it can be a source of great complaint (Tran, 2018).

When it comes to other aspects that contribute to teacher dissatisfaction, or hygiene factors, Sergiovanni (1967) states that these tend to be conditions that are expected to be sustained at acceptable levels such as fair and adequate supervision along with supportive policies, positive interpersonal relationships, and pleasant working conditions. These aspects refer to dissatisfiers originating from the outside. The

greatest dissatisfaction factor identified in the study was interpersonal relationships with students. “It appears that a happy relationship with students is not in itself potent enough to be a source of job satisfaction. A poor relationship with students, however, can be a source of considerable teacher dissatisfaction” (p. 78). Other researchers including Hawes and Nelson (2021), Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015), and Tran (2018) have reported students to be a source of dissatisfaction for teachers. The main reasons provided were disruptive student behavior and student quality.

School leadership and administration are also at top the list of dissatisfiers for teachers. In a study of 436 teachers in Hanoi, Vietnam’s capital city, Tran (2018) concluded that unfair procedures regarding promotion, a negative attitude from the schools’ leaders, and pressure to meet targets coupled with ever-increasing expectations caused great dissatisfaction for the participants. Similarly, Hawes and Nelson's (2021) phenomenological study of job dissatisfaction of teachers in rural Tennessee echoed these findings. The teacher respondents talked about a great disconnect between teachers and administrators, who having forgotten what it is like to be in the classroom, implement policies that displease the former. Comparable results were reported by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) in their study of 30 elementary and middle school teachers in Norway. They found that workload and time pressure were the top stressors for their teachers. Finally, Iwu et. al. (2019) reported that in Nigeria, the top obstacles for teachers in reaching the teaching and learning goals of the school were lack of resources and lack of recognition for a job well done.

In addition to the job facets approach, the study of teacher job satisfaction has taken other paths as well. In a four-stage study, carried out between 1988 and 1992, Evans (1997) came to the important conclusion regarding what influences teacher job satisfaction namely contextual factors, the diversity of responses, and the individuality of job satisfaction. By contextual factors, Evans (2010) refers to the school environment or work context which she defines as “the situation and circumstances, arising out of a combination and interrelationship of institutionally- and externally- imposed conditions, that constitute the environment and culture

within which an individual carries out her/his job” (p. 300), and believes it to play a much more influential role than previously mentioned external factors such as salary, policies, etc. This belief was supported by Juozaitiene and Simonaitiene (2011) who found that an institution’s overall psychological climate was the statistically most significant link to job satisfaction. Addison and Brundrett (2008) and Dinham and Scott (1988) also found it imperative to add a third category or domain to the study of motivators for teachers seeing that intrinsic and extrinsic motivators did not accommodate some of the responses given by their participants. This reclassification was done to emphasize the important role of school-based factors such as the nature of the institution, class sizes, and the expectations of the school principals.

Teacher satisfaction has also been studied hand in hand with concepts such as efficacy and burnout. Self-efficacy is defined as a teacher’s perceived ability to achieve professionally, both in and outside the classroom (Friedman & Kass, 2001). Canrinus, Helms-Lorenz, Beijaard, Buitink and Hofman’s (2012) studies concluded that a teacher’s self-efficacy in the classroom is closely related to relationship satisfaction, commitment, and levels of motivation. Similarly, in a meta-analysis including studies from over 50 countries, Kasalak and Dağyar (2020) found that a positive correlation does indeed exist between self-efficacy and job satisfaction. The authors maintain that “as teachers’ perceptions of self-efficacy increase, their job satisfaction will increase” (p. 27). Burnout was defined by Maslach and Jackson (1981) as a “syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do ‘people work’ of some kind” (p. 99). It is further broken down burnout into emotional exhaustion - depletion of emotional resources, depersonalization - the development of negative attitudes towards people one works with, and personal accomplishment - a negative evaluation of what one achieves (Maslach & Jackson, 1985). Burnout, especially exhaustion, is very important because it is closely tied to absenteeism, and the intention to quit. This has been attributed to increasing working hours and other demands outside the classroom (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

One final way teacher satisfaction has been studied is through the lens of personal characteristics and differences such as gender, age, marital status, dependent children, education level, years of experience, and personality characteristics including locus of control. Some research has claimed that these differences play a more crucial role in levels of satisfaction for teachers than school characteristics (Gil-Flores, 2017) while other research still has claimed quite the opposite (Saiti & Papadopoulos, 2015). The findings on the effects of gender on job satisfaction have been conflicting with some research claiming no significant effect (Mertler, 2002;) and other studies claiming that female teachers are generally more satisfied than their male counterparts (Koustelios, 2001; Gil-Flores, 2017; Toropova, 2021). The effects of age, marital and parental status are also far from consistent. Locus of control (LOC) is seen in literature as the attribution of responsibility for events that happen (Akkaya & Akyol, 2016). People who take responsibility for events are said to have an internal LOC, while those who place the responsibility on forces outside themselves have an external LOC. The external source would include “luck, chance, fate, the action of powerful others” (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979). In teacher job satisfaction literature, teachers with an internal locus of control experience higher levels of satisfaction (Akkaya & Akyol, 2016). In contrast, teachers with an external locus of control experience higher levels of burnout while simultaneously experiencing fewer feelings of accomplishment (McIntyre, 1984). Because LOC also ties to autonomy as well as national cultures, particularly in respect to individualism v. collectivism, it will be used as a lens during data analysis.

2.3.1 Job Satisfaction of EFL Teachers

When it comes to the experiences of English language teachers, it seems that there exists a myriad of additional domain-specific stressors such as high intercultural demands, inadequate linguistic self-efficacy, high emotional labor, and energy-intensive methodologies which exacerbate the levels of occupation stress (Mercer, 2020). Thus, it is no surprise that Mercer (2020) in her study of EFL teachers working in the language school system in Malta found that teachers struggle with the consumerist approach to English education in the ELT industry. Her participants

explain that it makes them less satisfied when the schools they work for refer to students as customers or clients and courses offered as products. Mercer (2020) sees this resulting from the “tension between a business model and teachers’ values as invested educators” (p. 9). This ties back to Evan’s (2001) theory of mismatched values between the employer and the teacher. Another way the ELT industry manages to compound additional stress on teachers is through a lack of standards needed to enter the profession. There is a common misconception that one can become an EFL teacher without any training or experience (Carson, 2013). This belief is evidenced in Mullock’s (2009) study of the motivations of EFL teachers in South-East Asia to enter the profession. The participants admitted that their careers were accidental, or in the author’s words “they fell into TESOL” (p. 9). An important issue that arises from this misconception is low respect for the ELT field and the educators that work in it as echoed in many studies (Carson, 2013; Mercer, 2020). Perhaps these reasons add to EFL teachers’ experiences of low levels of satisfaction, emotional draininess, stress, and burnout. Teachers in Iran reported such feelings in Sadeghi and Sa’adatpourvahid’s (2016) study. More than one-third of the participants, working in a variety of settings across Urmia, expressed feelings of dissatisfaction with their jobs, especially with salary and job security.

On a more positive note, EFL teachers report being satisfied with their jobs (Dincer, 2019). They draw satisfaction from a variety of sources, and it seems that positive relationships with their students and witnessing their progress as part of helping them achieve their goals is one of the main ones (Mercer, 2020). Similarly, Kaski (2009) found that the 10 English teachers who participated in her study were either satisfied or highly satisfied with the teaching part of their jobs, interaction with students being the most satisfying aspect of the job. These teachers, who worked in upper secondary schools particularly, enjoyed knowing that their students could count on them in more than just language or course-related matters. Encouraging results were also reported by Karavas (2010) in a study of Greek EFL teachers who revealed that they were generally satisfied with several aspects of their work, for instance, recognition from students and parents, benefits and working hours, and their status as EFL professionals. Unsurprisingly, they stated that one of the most satisfying aspects of

their job is their relationship and interaction with the students. At the university levels, too, EFL teachers cherish rapport with students and seek out ways to form and maintain close relationships. Cowie (2011) found that university EFL instructors do this through humor and sharing of personal stories both inside and outside the classroom.

For EFL teachers in Turkey, the situation is not much different. Erkaya (2013) studied the factors that motivate EFL teachers in preparatory schools through a qualitative study. She found that Turkish EFL teachers are first and foremost motivated by their passion for the profession. These teachers reported that working with students is what gives them the most satisfaction. Things like students' desire to learn, positive reactions to learning etc. were among the examples provided. The most important extrinsic factor for these teachers were colleagues and their support, feedback, and level of motivation. In a study of Turkish Cypriot university instructors, Göker (2012) studied EFL instructors' job satisfaction through the lens of teacher collective efficacy (TCE) - a collective belief in one's and one's group abilities. The results were overwhelmingly consistent in that TCE is positively correlated to job satisfaction. Göker (2012) adds that "schools in which teachers have high collective efficacy beliefs may also be those in which administrators, students, and parents are generally more supportive." (p. 1549).

Aydın (2012) in his in-depth study of one EFL teacher reported that when the school environment is not conducive to collaboration between teachers and trust in the administration, the result is demotivation. Other factors leading to demotivation were related to workload, such as duty and extracurricular activities within the school, and the students' low levels of English proficiency and lack of motivation. Dincer's (2019) study of 102 EFL teachers in state schools also cited "disinterested students and students who misbehave" (p. 18) as one of the factors that demotivate them. Comparably, Han and Mahzoun (2018) reported that the students were the third most common demotivator for their participants due to their disrespectful, disruptive, and unmotivated behaviors. Behavioral problems seem to be an even bigger concern for novice EFL teachers as reported by Sali and Kecik (2018) since they felt

inadequately prepared to maintain discipline in the classroom. It will be interesting to investigate expatriate teachers' levels of adequacy when it comes to classroom management in the Turkish private K-12.

2.3.2 Job Satisfaction of Expatriate Teachers

Keeping in mind the importance of a teacher's job and the society-wide implications it has; one can reasonably conclude that schools' primary objective should be to keep their teachers satisfied and motivated. This noble goal is hard to achieve under normal circumstances, but it is even more difficult for teachers who teach as expatriates. The term expatriate has undergone many dissections and has been defined numerous times over the years (Andresen et. al., 2014). In very simple terms, an expatriate teacher is "a citizen of one country, but working in another" (Johnston, 1999, p. 256). However, it is important to briefly discuss the term in more detail to understand its use in the current paper. Expatriation can happen as a result of many reasons, international placement or self-initiation being two of the most common ones. In the former, an employee is placed in an international posting by his/her organization. In the latter, the individual decides to move to another country to work there. This is the type of expatriate that this study is concerned with. Piggybacking on Richardson's (2002) definition, to be considered an expatriate, these individuals must have been employed in educational institutions outside their home countries for 5 years and plan on staying in the host country at least until the end of their contract. Some scholars like to add a maximum number of years spent in the host country to distinguish between temporary expatriates and permanent migrants, but this is beyond the scope of this study.

Much research has been dedicated to the reasons why expatriates self-select to live and work in a different country. In a report of a global survey of 1358 expatriate teachers, Caravatti et. al. (2014) ascertain that the primary reason for their decision to teach abroad is professional development and an improvement of their instructional practices and language competencies. Another primary reason that has come up in research, again and again, is a desire to travel and experience and learn new things in a different culture. Researchers have used the term explorer to talk about this

phenomenon (Alpaslan-Danisman, 2017; Caravatti et. al., 2014; Mullock, 2009; Richardson, 2002). When exploration is the main reason for expatriation, these educators are more likely to overcome challenges faced in the name of this learning and growing (Richardson, 2002). They are likely to explore the culture including food, day-to-day activities such as shopping, learning the language, and the characteristics of the people (Alpaslan-Danisman, 2017). A closely related concept is that of escaping one's life in search of something better. Oftentimes this is achieved through better pay or better socio-economic conditions in general. Mullock (2009) contributes that for expatriate teachers deciding to teach in South-East Asia in addition to a desire to travel and see the world, prior positive teaching experiences and necessity were common motivators. The researcher explains that necessity was given as a reason primarily by participants who were “joining a spouse or partner who was working or living in the [host] country” (p. 10). For these individuals, an additional motivator was the lack of other legal work available to expatriates in the region. Despite all this, still little is known about expatriate teachers’ motivations to teach abroad and thus leaving a lot of room for potential research on the topic (Bunnell, 2017).

The very existence of expatriate EFL teachers provides invaluable benefits to the schools that employ them. In their 2019 study, Aydın, Toptaş, Demir, and Erdemli summarize some of the benefits gained from the hiring of expatriate teachers listed in the literature. First of all, their presence in schools is an excellent way to attract more students. This view is shared by Tatar (2019) who says that the very presence of expatriate teachers could be a promotional tool for schools in the eyes of the parents. At the same time, Aydın et. al. (2019) add that expatriate EFL teachers have a positive effect on the school culture, the interactions that happen within, and most importantly on the students’ learning outcomes. In line with student learning, some strengths of expatriate teachers that also positively affect institutions included in Tatar’s (2019) research are fluency in spoken English and motivating the students to learn English. As far as school culture and interactions that happen within due to the presence of expatriate teachers, Skliar (2014) found that expatriate teachers and LETs “are generally involved in positive workplace relationships and ongoing cross-

cultural and professional exchange.” (p. 439). This exchange of information and experiences between the expatriates and the locals was also reported by Yılmaz (2014). These relationships are beneficial to both parties as LETs provide support when it comes to the local language and culture while in turn learning about language use and other cultures. Another benefit is that expatriate teachers play an important role in the establishment and maintenance of international programs such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) (Aydın et. al., 2019).

Despite these numerous benefits, studies conducted on the topic of satisfaction of expat teachers have reported that overall, their job satisfaction levels are often low (Carson, 2013; Khan, 2016; Mullock, 2009). This has been evidenced by a large body of online material on how to breach a contract (Halicioglu, 2015) and by the more serious problem of attrition (Bhola, 2019). As further evidence, Mullock (2009) mentions in her paper the results of a study conducted in 1989 by the Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) which speculated that more than half of CELTA graduates leave the field within three to four years. A few terms that come up regularly in expatriate teacher research especially as they relate to levels of satisfaction are *cultural shock* and *adjustment* to the host culture. These terms are especially important when there is a high degree of cultural distance. The more different the host and the home culture are, the higher the experience of cultural shock. The experience of cultural shock is natural if we are to accept Oberg’s (1960) definition of the phenomenon which can be summarized as anxiety derived from the loss of familiar symbols, signs, and other social cues. Halicioglu (2015) claims that it is the day-to-day, constant stressors that are more wearing for the expatriates, as opposed to intense, shocking experiences. One-way cultural difficulties may manifest themselves in the classroom is in the interactions between teachers and students. Thanh (2018) looked at the challenges that may arise in the EFL classrooms of expatriate teachers in Vietnam due to the cultural differences between the East and the West. Using Hofstede’s (2001) Cultural Dimensions Model, often referred to as the National Cultures Model (NCM), the author found that most of the challenges lay in Uncertainty Avoidance- particularly in getting the students to participate in and engage with the lesson. Additionally, a strong positive correlation between

Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance, and Individualism V. Collectivism was determined which means that expatriate teachers that experienced challenges in one dimension, were likely to experience challenges in the other two as well. Looking specifically at the relationship between the Individualism - Collectivism dimension and job satisfaction through three studies involving 14 countries, Hui, Yee, and Eastman (1995) found that individuals from collectivistic countries tend to be more satisfied with their jobs. The authors reached the conclusion that “collectivist values foster higher job satisfaction” (p. 280).

Nonetheless, for expatriate teachers, it is the school environment that makes the biggest difference in these teachers’ feelings towards their job and their perceptions of satisfaction. Roskell (2013) suggests that the ability to adjust to the work environment is more likely to determine how teachers feel about their job and whether to continue working there. Halicioglu (2015) supports this statement by listing the areas that may prove challenging within the new workplace including unfamiliarity with curriculum, the way it is delivered and overall school philosophy, the new and unknown student body, unfamiliar cultural norms of behavior of peers, and inadequate leadership style that does not appreciate the cultural diversity brought by these teachers. Richardson (2002) reports that her sample of 30 British expatriate academics faced similar workplace challenges such as last-minute schedule changes or assignments and a lack of support structures. An additional finding that came from this study was the fact that some of these expatriates faced a lack of job security and lived with the fear of losing their jobs without much cause, echoing Sadeghi and Sa’adatpourvahid’s (2016) previously mentioned results.

Despite the difficulties and challenges, expatriate teachers still derive satisfaction from their jobs. Carson (2013), who studied the motivators of expatriate EFL teachers in the United Arab Emirates, found that two of the main motivators include a desire to contribute to society, and a sense of duty in the education of others. On the other hand, Richardson et. al. (2006) looked at the relationship between adjustment, pay, both life and job satisfaction, and turnover intention. They found that for their sample of 184 expatriate teachers working in a Caribbean Island state,

pay satisfaction was linked to better adjustment which was in turn linked to increased life and job satisfaction and decreased turnover intention. This positive relationship between expatriate teachers' overall adjustment in the host country and job satisfaction was also reported by Mehtap (2001). For the 162 expatriate instructors in the Northern Cypriot university where the study was carried out, the author reports that a feeling of being well-adjusted in the new country, "spills over into his/her work environment" (p. 112).

Finally, pay satisfaction is also important in expatriate job satisfaction. Mullock's (2009) participants listed low salaries and more lucrative employment opportunities as the number one reason for leaving their jobs. This can only mean that while some expatriate teachers get satisfaction from intrinsic or altruistic aspects of their jobs, it is imperative for educational institutions to provide financial security and satisfaction with salary first and foremost. Brown and Schulze (2007) in a mixed-method study of 110 expatriates in Botswana researched their motivations through the economic push/pull model. They found that for teachers:

economic push/pull factors were related to teachers' economic security, income/salary, and working conditions. There is an indication that low salary and unsatisfactory working conditions and benefits in a previous job were important economic push factors for more than 60% of the migrant teachers" (p. 10).

Pay seems to be the driving force also for some Filipino expatriate teachers working in international schools across Asia (Sumalinog, 2021) and a great perk for British expatriate academics (Richardson, 2002). Similarly, Mehtap (2001) and Sharif, Upadhyay, and Ahmed (2016) also found that salary and other benefits given to expatriate teachers were indeed the primary reason for choosing to teach as an expatriate. Not only is salary a driving force, but it was also a source of motivation to continue teaching (Brown & Schulze, 2007; Mulridge, 2009; Sharma, 2013). Sharma (2013) found that almost all expatriate respondents in Saudi Arabia were "motivated by tax-free salary and perquisites and getting higher salary as compared to their native country" (p. 17).

2.3.3 Teacher Job Satisfaction in Turkey

The findings elaborated upon above, have been conducted and supported worldwide. Now we narrow down our focus to look at teacher job satisfaction in Turkey specifically. Teacher satisfaction has been a topic of interest for Turkish researchers for quite some time. Studies have generally concluded that Turkish teachers have moderate to high levels of job satisfaction (Aslan, 2015; Büyükgöze & Gün, 2017; Çoğaltay, Yalcın & Karadağ, 2016; Demirtaş, 2015; Türkoglu, Cansoy & Parlar, 2017) except for salary and wages (Çoğaltay et. al., 2016; Demirtaş, 2015; Dincer, 2019). Researchers have reached the conclusion that when teachers perform their job fondly and willingly, they tend to be more successful (Demirel & Erdamar, 2009). Most importantly, high job satisfaction leads to welcome outcomes for educational institutions such as low teacher burnout and higher organizational commitment. The latter in turn leads to greater effort put forth to ensure the students' success (Demirtaş, 2015). Yucel and Bektas (2012) also looked at organizational commitment and stated that for Turkish teachers it is a consequence of job satisfaction. Younger teachers show higher levels of organizational commitment at high or low levels of job satisfaction while teachers older than 40 years old are more committed to their organization when they experience moderate levels of satisfaction. While looking at the relationship between age and job satisfaction, Gursel, Sunbul and Sari, (2002) maintain that more experienced teachers experience lower levels of satisfaction with their professional roles than their more inexperienced counterparts. In contrast, Büyükgöze and Gün (2017) found that for their sample of 337 high school teachers, there were no significant differences in job satisfaction levels based on gender or years of experience.

Burnout seems to, unfortunately, be a reality for Turkish teachers working both in Turkey and abroad (Aydoğan, Dogan, & Bayram, 2009; Gursel et. al., 2002; Yorulmaz and Altinkurt, 2018). In a study looking at burnout levels of Turkish teachers both in Turkey and abroad, Aydoğan et. al (2009) found that “nearly half of the Turkish teachers are suffering from burnout regardless of their working places” (p. 1262). According to a meta-analysis conducted by Yorulmaz and Altinkurt (2018), it appears that teachers who are female, single, work in public schools, have

a graduate degree in education, and have more than 11 years of work experience have higher levels of emotional exhaustion than their counterparts. On the other hand, male teachers tend to experience depersonalization at higher rates than females. These findings were supported by Sünbül (2003), who through a study of 297 high school teachers, reported that female teachers do indeed report more emotional exhaustion than male teachers while the latter feel more depersonalized in their jobs. Sari (2004) echoes that this is also true for teachers who work in special education institutions. Sünbül's study contradicts Yorulmaz and Altinkurt's (2018) results on age, stating that younger workers experience higher levels of burnout than their older counterparts. Another interesting contribution of the study, supporting international findings reported by McIntyre (1984), is that teachers with an internal LOC reported lower levels of emotional exhaustion than teachers who believe that outside forces control the outcomes of their lives.

Özcan (2021) studied teacher job satisfaction in Turkey in terms of relationships, as one of the pillars of Turkish culture. The author examined how individual-level culture might affect job satisfaction. He found that family relationships strongly influence teachers' satisfaction since "Turkish culture assigns special importance to family relationships" (p. 231) due to its collectivistic nature. Similarly, Demirel and Erdamar (2009) add that stronger family ties result in higher job satisfaction which also explains the higher levels of burnout of single teachers. Interestingly, when the number of children married teachers had increased, satisfaction decreased. Another important relationship for teachers is with their colleagues. Looking at job satisfaction from this angle, Özcan (2021) reported that teachers' positive relationships with colleagues in the school setting were the strongest predictor of satisfaction. Again, due to a collectivistic approach, it is crucial for teachers to "establish harmonious relationships" (p. 232) in their work environments.

Job satisfaction has also been studied about leadership as it has been empirically proven that the latter significantly and positively impacts the former (Çoğaltay et. al., 2016). In a meta-analysis of 41 research articles, the authors concluded that when school leaders value and support their teachers, offer solutions to problems, and

contribute to their success they inevitably contribute to greater job satisfaction. Ilgan, Parylo and Sungu (2015) also studied the effects of principals on teacher job satisfaction from the angle of instructional supervision. They found that principals' instructional supervision behaviors are a statistically significant predictor of teacher satisfaction and that teachers assessed these behaviors favorably. An important part of what school principals do that also affects teachers' satisfaction is communication within the school network. Doğan, Çetin, and Koçak (2016) looked at teachers' perceptions and opinions of their principals' communication skills and found that "teachers perceive the communication skills of school administrators highly "satisfying" in total." (p. 59). However, these results were not replicated by Han and Mahzoun's (2018) study in which 9 participants expressed their administrators had ineffective communication with their teachers.

As previously mentioned, public school teachers experience lower levels of satisfaction and higher levels of burnout despite having greater job security (Yorulmaz & Altinkurt, 2018). In their study, Buyukgoze-Kavas, Duffy, Güneri, and Austin (2013) summarize the major problems faced by public school teachers in Turkey according to the literature where among other things crowded classes, insufficient equipment, and physical facilities, and low salaries were listed. However, the results indicated that teachers who "had a positive outlook on life, were making progress on important work goals, and felt supported by their school were more likely to be happy with their jobs" (p. 8). It may be important to point out that working towards goals was more important for middle and high school teachers while elementary teachers expressed a higher need for organizational support. In this study, primary school teachers expressed higher satisfaction levels overall compared to middle or high school teachers (Buyukgoze-Kavas et. al., 2013). Lüleci and Çoruk (2018), who studied teacher morale as it relates to job satisfaction, corroborated these findings when reporting that primary school teachers experienced higher levels of both morale and satisfaction than middle and high school teachers. The authors concluded that these two concepts are positively correlated and as one increases so does the other.

2.3.4 Job Satisfaction of Expatriate EFL Teachers in Turkey

As we reach this study's ultimate group of interest, we turn our attention to expatriate EFL teachers in Turkey. One of the earliest studies to mention expatriate EFL teachers in Turkish-speaking Northern Cyprus is that of Göker (2012) briefly mentioned in a previous subsection. In this study, the researcher compares the job satisfaction and job stress of Turkish instructors, who made up 70% of the participants, with that of expatriate EFL instructors. The foreign instructors who participated in this study reported lower levels of job satisfaction and collective efficacy than their Turkish counterparts while also experiencing much lower levels of job stress compared to their local counterparts. Years later, in a similar comparative study, Subaşı (2021) investigated the differences between 15 local and 15 foreign EFL teachers in private Turkish universities from the angle of burnout. The results were similar to Göker's (2012) in that 100% of the LETs reported low burnout while 58% of the expats reported high burnout. Subaşı (2021) reports that her participants, in addition to the heavy workload and limited time to handle everything, listed inadequate interaction between teachers and students and teachers and teachers, lack of collaboration, interaction, and communication among colleagues as the top reasons for their burnout.

Han and Mahzoun (2017) in their pioneering study, looked specifically at the factors that demotivate foreign EFL teachers in Turkey. Through a case study of two expatriate EFL teachers working in a local private school in Eastern Turkey, the researchers found that lack of effective communication with both administration and colleagues was the most important dissatisfier. This lack of communication was due not only to the language barrier, primarily true concerning the school administration but to a general divide between the locals and the foreigners at the school. The subjects felt unsupported and left out as they were unable to effectively socialize. Such results were replicated by Şahan, Şahan, and Razi's (2014) study of 31 American EFL teachers working across Turkey who reported: "feeling isolated or alienated, especially at the workplace, because they were foreign and did not know Turkish." (p. 308). The language barrier is also an obstacle in the carrying out of day-to-day tasks as oftentimes the language preferred in meetings and emails is

Turkish instead of English (Hoyland, 2021). Expatriate instructors, especially those working in English medium institutions, believe that “every effort should be made to ensure that all internal correspondence is written in English.” (p. 99). Şahan et.al. (2014), however, report that even though expatriate teachers offered the language barrier as the biggest challenge to their adaptation, no correlation was found in their study between the participants' Turkish level proficiency and their cultural adaptation.

Han and Mahzoun (2017) also add that a general lack of interest in learning English and lack of respect towards the foreign EFL teachers on the part of the students ranked second in the list of demotivating factors. The participants reported that this was indeed the factor that had the most impact on their motivation levels. These findings were supported by Kasimi and Hangişi (2021) who investigated demotivating factors of 4 expatriate EFL teachers working in private K-12 institutions in central Anatolia. Through face-to-face semi-structured interviews, the researchers learned that for their participants, disrespectful student behavior in the classroom and an open unwillingness to learn English were among the top demotivators. These expatriate teachers felt that because of this lack of interest there is more pressure on them to perform and improve student achievement. Though this was not the case for 4 expatriates teaching in Istanbul as reported by Hoyland (2021). Her participants reported that their students were generally eager to learn English and generally held positive attitudes towards the language. Additionally, lack of communication with colleagues and lack of recognition from the administration were frequent dissatisfiers. Unlike Han and Mahzoun (2017) who reported that their participants were not demotivated by heavy workloads, inadequate pay, and parental expectations, the researchers reported that their participants were indeed affected by inadequate salary, overfilled classrooms, lengthy work hours, and countless other duties among other things (Kasimi & Hangişi, 2021).

In their study, Aydın et. al. (2019) looked at 25 self-initiated expatriate teachers' opinions on education, teaching, and administrative processes in private Turkish primary and secondary schools. What they found is that their participants were

critical of the ways the areas under investigation are typically handled which leads one to believe that they are not satisfied. This was made evident from the participants' answers regarding what they consider outdated curriculum, inadequate teaching methods, and inefficient assessment and evaluation. The participants elaborated that the national curriculum defined by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) does not align with international programs which when taught side by side create an additional workload for the teachers. Additionally, the participants admitted that their teaching philosophy does not match that in Turkey, especially concerning the amount of homework assigned, the need for rote memorization, and reliance on examination. Such feelings of expatriates in Turkey were echoed by some participants in Palfreyman's (2005) study who showed tendencies to disapprove of rote learning and an emphasis on grammatical structures. Similarly, Hoyland (2021) reported that her participants were critical of the Turkish education system, particularly when it comes to the exam-oriented and teacher-centered mentality which, according to them, makes the students dependent on the teacher and lacking in critical and creative thinking.

When it comes to administrative processes, the expatriate teachers interviewed in Aydın et. al.'s (2019) study, expressed dissatisfaction with centralist leadership structures which affect their autonomy, deficiencies in timely communication, and the need for too much paperwork. Hoyland (2021) too reported the overall dissatisfaction of expatriate EFL teachers with management especially as it relates to inconsistency, unpredictability, last-minute planning, and decision-making without consulting the teachers. One participant went as far as saying that she felt foreign teachers in the school "are not listened to and are not valued by management" (p. 41). Similar feelings of disappointment with the school management were shared by the expatriate instructors in Mehtap's (2001) study who shared that shortly upon arriving at the university they felt like they "were pretty much left to their own devices" (p. 98). In a study that looked at the issue of adjustment of two teaching assistants in a Turkish university, Erman (2016) also discovered that the participants had a hard time navigating the challenges in their workplaces because they felt like they had no guidance and help from their administrators. Moreover, 25 ETAs

working in universities across Turkey also expressed holding negative views regarding their administrators, emphasizing a general lack of support (Yılmaz, 2014).

It is important to emphasize that not all experiences of expatriate EFL teachers in Turkey are negative. As a matter of fact, despite the challenges they abundantly spoke about, the participants in Aydın et. al. (2019). admitted to receiving support from school management which in turn led to positive relations with those in leadership positions. Additionally, Aysan-Şahintaş (2018) looked at the pedagogical practices and professional identity of a single expatriate EFL teacher working in a Turkish university. The participant, given the name Alina in the study, reported positive relations with the university's administrators and her colleagues. Alina informed the researcher that she received support, motivation, and appraisal of her success from school leadership and worked in close partnership with her Turkish colleagues when it came to teaching and classroom management. This helps the teacher to better handle and overcome challenges. As far as the K-12 environment goes, Hoyland's (2021) study revealed that overall, expatriate EFL teachers had positive attitudes about working in Turkey and teaching EFL to Turkish students.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Presentation

This section details the qualitative phenomenological research methodology employed in this study to explore the experiences with job satisfaction for expatriate EFL teachers in private K-12 Turkish schools. Through abundant and dense descriptions of these experiences on the part of the teachers, phenomenology allows for the exploration of their understanding and perceptions of these experiences. The section is presented through the utilization of six subheadings listed as follows: research design, research setting, participants, data collection and analysis procedures, ethical issues, and finally trustworthiness of the study.

3.1 Research Design

The most common way of data collection for teacher satisfaction is through surveys and the Teacher Job Satisfaction Survey (TJSS-9) is an example of such an instrument developed specifically for teachers (Pepe et. al., 2017). However, many researchers have opted for mixed methods approaches and a few have relied completely on qualitative methods to conduct such research (Aydın et. al., 2019; Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Lapke & Sarkozi, 2009; Wildman, 2015). Since the aim of this study is to dig deeper into the experiences of foreign teachers about their job satisfaction in the private Turkish K-12 system, the best method to approach these research questions was a qualitative approach that would allow the exploration of such certain phenomena as experienced by different individuals. The best method to allow such exploration was phenomenology. As a scientific approach, phenomenology seeks to unearth how individuals experience a phenomenon and

what it means for them. Titchen and Hobson (2005) define this research method as “the study of lived human phenomena within the everyday social contexts in which the phenomena occur from the perspective of those who experience them. Phenomena comprise anything that human beings live/experience.” (p. 121).

From this definition, we can see that in phenomenology, we must answer two questions: what (as in an objective description of the phenomenon) and how (as in a subjective description of the meaning people attach to this phenomenon). In this regard, phenomenologists contend that reality consists of two crucial aspects: consciousness and intentionality. Creswell (2013) expresses that it is impossible to extricate reality from an individual's perception of it since all reality is perceived within the context of individual experiences. In addition, he supports the distinction made in phenomenology between what and how in saying that individuals' lived experiences are simultaneously subjective experiences of the phenomenon and objective experiences of what they share with other people. In the current study, this distinction is crucial since the aim of the research will be to look for and identify common themes.

In a chapter discussing qualitative research methods, Creswell (2007) discusses the two main approaches in phenomenology, hermeneutical and transcendental respectfully. In hermeneutical studies, researchers focus primarily on the interpretation of the participants' experiences. In transcendental studies, the focus is only on the experience itself. This study relies on hermeneutical theory to uncover how participants understand and give meaning to their experiences. To ensure that the focus is on the experience, researchers must remove themselves from the study through a process called bracketing. In Creswell's words, bracketing requires researchers to “suspend all judgments about what is real- the “natural attitude” - until they are founded on a more certain basis. This suspension is called “epoche” by Husserl.” (2007, pp. 58-59) Here, the goal is not to allow past experiences to have an impact while the researcher works on determining the experiences of the participants. This means that whatever assumptions, presuppositions, or ideas the researcher has about the phenomenon, should be put aside so that the essence of the

phenomenon as it is experienced by the participants comes to light. This is indeed a difficult task as researchers are individuals with certain ideas about the world and it is difficult to untangle oneself from these ideas.

This study will follow Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) which means that not only is the focus on the participant's experience, but also it recognizes and allows the researcher to play an active role in the research process (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) advise thinking of IPA as "a joint product of researcher and researched." (p.105). Another interesting and helpful way to look at this would be to think that while the participants are trying to make sense of their world, particularly the phenomenon in question, the researcher is simultaneously making sense of their making sense of the world. Smith and Osborn (2007) further clarify that "a distinctive feature of IPA is its commitment to a detailed interpretative account of the cases included and many researchers are recognizing that this can only realistically be done on a very small sample – thus in simple terms one is sacrificing breadth for depth." (p. 56). Smith et. al. (2009) suggest investigating between three and six participants with three being the default size for undergraduate or Master's students' studies. The researcher wants to fully grasp the experiences of the participants regarding their job satisfaction both by examining their interpretations in-depth and by coming to terms with the fact that the researcher is just as much a part of the equation. The goal is to negotiate the meaning of these experiences, not just take them as objective truths so that the readers may be able to identify with the participants.

3.2 Research Setting

This study was conducted with expatriate EFL teachers working at the middle school level at private K-12 institutions in Turkey's capital city, Ankara. These institutions are two of the most prominent names in the country. They are located in well-off neighborhoods and are attended primarily by middle and upper-middle-class students. The school buildings and amenities are modern and boast some of the latest technologies. It is common to find multiple computer labs, Olympic-size swimming pools, arts and music rooms, and an array of additional luxuries. Two of the

participants currently work in the same institution, henceforth referred to as *School A*, and the other two work in the same institution, *School B* from here onward.

School A is one of the first private foundation K-12 schools in the country and has multiple branches across Turkey. In the middle school, there are nine 35-minute classes a day and they run Monday through Friday between 8:20 am to 3:45 pm. At times, additional tutoring sessions are offered after school or on the weekends. English lessons are offered in abundance varying from 13 hours per week in 5th grade, 12 hours per week in 6th and 7th grade, to 11 hours per week in 8th grade. EFL classes are split into grammar lessons and skills lessons, the former being taught by LETs and the latter by expatriate teachers. The skills lessons, often referred to as English 2, involve teaching all the skills - reading, writing, listening and speaking. Because of the many hours taught by English teachers, the English department is the largest in the whole school with more than forty teachers. Since the fifth-grade students are situated in a separate building, between primary and middle school, some of the teachers only teach in that building. However, most of the teachers, those teaching grades 6 through 8, share the same space.

School B is an international school catering to both international students and Turkish nationals, the latter representing the majority of the student body. The school has an English immersion program that starts in kindergarten and by middle school students are expected to be at the same level as native English speakers. In the middle school, there are 10 periods a day from Monday to Friday. The day begins at 8:00 am and ends at 4:00 pm. Fifth-grade students have 12 hours of English lessons per week, and it is taught by the same teacher. In the higher grades, students have only seven hours of English per week. All the English teachers are expatriates, and they teach a combination of language and literature. In addition, all the major subjects at the school are taught in English. Just like in School A, in school B, fifth-grade students also attend classes in a separate building from the other middle school grades.

3.3 Participants

To ensure depth of data, the study relied on a small number of participants; 4 expatriate EFL teachers. The study was not meant to generalize the experiences of foreign EFL teachers in the country but simply to understand their personal experiences with job satisfaction. As a result, following Smith et. al. 's (2009) advice, a relatively homogenous sample was sought out - self-selecting expatriate teachers with five years of experience teaching in Turkish K-12 schools. The teachers were chosen by purposive sampling based on their ability to grant access to their perspectives on the phenomenon of job satisfaction. The researcher also made use of convenience sampling, reaching out to participants within her circle in hopes that proximity to the researcher would facilitate the collection of more in-depth data.

Table 3.1

Demographic Information of Participants

Baseline characteristic	Nora	Danielle	Frank	Grace
Gender	Female	Female	Male	Female
Age	40	53	50	46
Marital status	Divorced	Engaged	Married	Married
Dependent children	1	0	0	3
Country of origin	Albania	Canada	America	America
Educational level	Bachelor's	Master's	Master's	Master's
Years of experience	11	27	24	18
Years of experience in Turkey	11	7	6	12

3.3.1 Nora

Nora was born and raised in a touristic town in the South of Albania where she lived until completing her secondary education. Nora attended the University of Tirana from which she graduated with a degree in English Language Translation and Interpretation. In 2005, she moved to Turkey to pursue a master's degree in Philosophy at Middle East Technical University. She soon found out that the program no longer matched her expectations and career goals and dropped out of the program and left the country. At this point, she moved to Kosovo where she was

involved in translation work. During her time in Turkey, however, she had met someone and decided to return to Turkey to get married. Her first job upon her return was as an English teacher at a language school where she worked for two years. However, working evenings and weekends made it hard to socialize, especially since her commute time was also long and difficult. This prompted her to look for a full-time job and after a long and strenuous job search process, she found one.

In 2011 Nora started working at *School A* and has been in the same job ever since. During the past 11 years, Nora has been a middle school English teacher and has taught all grades from fifth to eighth. In 2016, her responsibilities increased when she was made a test writer for 6th grade English 2. She continues to be in this position today and is in charge of preparing biweekly homework assignments and exams for the entire grade level. Nora, now a single mother, has one daughter in second grade who just started attending school at the same institution Nora works in.

3.3.2 Danielle

Danielle was born in the Magdalen Islands, Quebec. She studied Translation in French-English at the University of Montreal between the years of 1989-1992 and did another bachelor's in Teaching English as a Second Language at Laval University from 1992 to 1994. In 2014, she completed her Master of Science in Education, Teaching English Language Learners at Walden University.

She worked as an ESL teacher in Quebec and the Magdalen Islands for over 16 years. Between 2011-2013, she worked in China as an English Language Learning (ELL) Coordinator and Teacher. She worked another 2 years with the Intensive Support Programme (ISP) English Teacher in Shanghai and decided to leave China mainly because of the air pollution. She was applying for a teaching position around Europe and got an offer from Turkey which she accepted. She says that she was planning to stay in Turkey for only 2 years, but her engagement with her Turkish boyfriend changed her original plans.

She has worked at three different private K-12 institutions in Turkey so far. From 2015 to 2018, Danielle was a high school teacher juggling the responsibilities of the

Turkish National Curriculum for both English and French and the International Baccalaureate Program in both English Language and Literature. After three years at this institution, she was let go and so found another job as an English teacher for 5th and 8th grades at a renowned foundation school. One year later, in 2019, a better opportunity at *School A* presented itself and Danielle took advantage of it. Currently, she is an English 2 teacher and a test writer in 7th grade.

3.3.3 Frank

Frank was born in Takoma Park, Maryland, in the United States of America to parents of Latin American origins. During his childhood, he moved a few times and considers Battle Creek, Michigan to be his hometown. He studied English Education and Psychology at the University of Michigan. His first teaching experience was during the 1996-1997 school year as a substitute teacher at a parochial school in Michigan, US. The following year he started working as an English, Psychology, and Religion teacher at a parochial school in North Dakota, US.

After 5 years at the school, Frank went to graduate school to pursue a Master's in Literature with a focus on Language from Andrews University, Michigan. During this time, he started teaching at the university level. Once he earned his Master's, Frank started a Ph.D. program in Theoretical Linguistics at Purdue University in Indiana. Frank continued teaching courses like Linguistics, English Composition, etc. until 2014 which is when a big change happened in his life.

In 2014, his wife was offered a teaching position at a renowned Turkish University in Ankara, and they decided to move there. In his first year, Frank worked at a language center as an English teacher. In 2016, he started working at *School A* as a middle school English 2 teacher and was later given the additional responsibilities of a test writer. He worked in the same institution until November 2020 at which time a decision affecting the contract and especially the salary, forced him to resign. One year later, he finds himself teaching 5th graders at *School B*.

3.3.4 Grace

Grace was born in Minnesota, USA, and lived there until she turned 18 at which point, she moved to New Jersey for a nanny job. She worked with the family for 10 years during which time she completed her undergraduate studies in English Writing. As she was looking for a job, a position as a preschool teacher presented itself and Grace decided to give it a try. She found out that she liked teaching which is why she decided to pursue a Master of Science in Teaching in Lower Manhattan paid for by the New York City Fellows Program. This program required her to teach at a high-needs middle school where she was placed in the middle of the academic year. Between the daily difficulties faced at work and her night classes, Grace never thought she would make it. However, she did and kept it up for 4 years. In 2008, she helped found a charter school and worked there for one year. Despite fully believing in the mission of the school, she learned that putting students' achievement first and foremost, was demotivating to her and it led to complete burnout.

After a small experience in Minnesota as a substitute teacher, Grace, who had recently married her Turkish husband, decided to move with him to Turkey in 2010. Her first work experience in a country was at a renowned foundation institution where she taught speaking to 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. After six years there, Grace started working at *School B* where through the years she has worked with all middle school levels at one point or another. In addition to her teaching, in the 2018-2019 academic year, Grace was the coordinator for grade 5 which meant she was responsible for the curriculum as well as a team of four.

Grace has three children, two elementary-school-aged and one kindergartener, all of whom attend *School B*. Her husband is an exploration geologist, and he often travels for work. He is gone for three weeks at a time and stays at home for 10 days before his next trip. While he is away, the responsibility for the kids falls completely on Grace.

3.4 Data Collection

Before the official data collection process began, the participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire collecting biographical data such as experience, qualifications,

marital status, etc. (See Appendix D) The background knowledge about the participants was intended to guide the researcher in terms of better managing the data collection process through the asking of the right questions. The qualitative data were collected from a series of semi-structured interviews, the first one consisting of seven base questions (See interview schedule in Appendix E). The questions comprising this interview schedule were chosen with the intention to guide the interview and allow the researcher to enter the world of the participant rather than simply investigate it as recommended by Smith et. al. (2009). Researchers have argued that the typical interviews, often seen as one-shot occurrences taking approximately 1 hour, “are most often not sufficient to produce the full and rich descriptions necessary for worthwhile findings.’ (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 142). For the current study, the researcher conducted three interviews with each participant to better understand them and their experiences and reach data saturation.

Before the second interview, the participants were tasked with keeping a journal in which they wrote daily entries using the following prompt inspired by Mercer’s (2020) study and other similar ones in literature: *Every day, write down brief notes of specific incidents that affect your job satisfaction either positively or negatively.* This was done to aid the participants’ memory and get more detailed responses and specific incidents. The questions asked during this interview were tailored to each participant based on their journal entries. The third interview was a follow-up of the first two interviews and aimed to address any unresolved issues. The participants were asked if there was anything that they wanted to change or remove from their previous interviews. Also, some of the preliminary reconstructions and interpretations were discussed to ensure that they truly reflected the participants’ thoughts.

The interviews lasted between 42 and 76 minutes. All the interviews were audio-recorded to facilitate transcription and data analysis. Some interviews were held in person while others were held online using the video-communication software Zoom to accommodate each participant’s preferences. *Table 3.2* shows the complete

database of this study’s data including the duration of each interview with each participant and the word count of their journal entries.

Table 3.2

Database for the Study

Data Source	First Interview	Second Interview	Third Interview	Total (min)	Journal Entries (Word count)
Nora	64	76	42	182	458
Danielle	75	62	45	182	1904
Frank	70	68	56	194	2493
Grace	71	75	62	208	1102
Total				766	5958

3.5 Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis started with the transcription of the interviews. Certain passages from the interviews that hold particular importance were transcribed verbatim and these include significant pauses and other non-verbal utterances such as laughter and sighs. Then the researcher read and reread each transcript thoroughly, sometimes accompanied by the audio recording, before moving to the next one to become closely familiar and “engage in an interpretative relationship with the transcript.” (Smith & Osborn, 2007). As is the nature of qualitative research, data collection and data analysis go hand in hand and the researcher was actively involved in the process of analyzing each transcript as described above as the interviews took place.

To better manage the data and to see it more easily both holistically and analytically, the researcher used MAXQDA Plus 2022 (Release 22.1.1). This research integrates several methods of coding, as is customary in phenomenological investigations. Using two of Saldana’s (2009) recommended methods of coding, the researcher developed descriptive codes which summarize “in a word or short phrase - most

often a noun - the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data." (p. 70) and emotion codes "which label the emotions recalled and/or experienced by the participant or inferred by the researcher about the participant" (p. 86) to fully grasp the participants' attached meanings to their lived experiences. Saldana (2009) further explains that descriptive coding, also referred to in the literature as topic coding, is appropriate for all types of qualitative research and especially useful for new researchers.

Furthermore, the researcher used in-vivo codes: some of the codes were directly taken from what the participants stated and placed in quotation marks. Significant statements were also found at this phase, which Moustakas (1994) refers to as the horizontalization of the data. In keeping with Creswell's (2013) advice, the researcher developed a list of non-repetitive and non-overlapping statements and weighed them equally. Additionally, during this phase, the researcher annotated anything of interest in the transcripts, and as Ahern (1999) recommends, kept personal notes in her reflective journal and added comments as needed. Such comments included first impressions, observations recalled from the interview, and any follow-up questions to be asked to the participants in subsequent interviews. These notes were visited whenever lack of neutrality became a problem to "gain insight and separate...[my] reactions from past events and ...[my] present research" (Ahern, 1999, p.409).

At a later stage, all the codes that could be grouped were organized into themes, a phrase or statement that describes and/or defines what a unit of data is about (Saldana, 2009), which were inspired by the theoretical framework used in this study and terminology present in literature. The themes emerged naturally, and they allowed for the identification of patterns and the making of connections within each participant's responses and across participants. As was expected, the themes resulting from one participant informed the analysis of the subsequent participants and helped identify what was similar and different between them, or in other words, converging and diverging themes. Throughout the process of clustering themes, the researcher referred to the source - what the participants actually said, so as not to allow the interpretations to go astray. To ensure the accuracy of transcripts and interpretations, the researcher made use of member checking which was done during

the third and final interview. At this stage of the process, the first two interviews were discussed, and the participants were given the opportunity to add, change, or remove part of the answers altogether. Additionally, some of the initial interpretations of the researchers were confirmed thus ensuring a deeper meaning-making of the participants' own experiences.

In the final stage of data analysis, the researcher refined the themes by further combining them or eliminating some of them so that the remaining themes could be organized in such a manner as to answer the research questions. Particularly, the frequency with which the themes were repeated played a key role in answering the third research question and identifying the aspects of the job that mostly affected the job satisfaction of each of the participants. Furthermore, the remaining themes were categorized into motivators and hygiene factors to fit Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1965), also serving as the guiding framework of the current study.

3.6 Trustworthiness

For research to be trustworthy it must be valid and reliable. Validity is referred to in qualitative research as the truth (Silverman, 2013), and the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2013). In other words, the goal is to ensure that the research truly captures the phenomenon under investigation (Hycner, 1985). To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, the researcher followed the criteria of *credibility*, *conformability*, *dependability*, and *transferability* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility, a central element of trustworthiness, is what in quantitative studies is known as internal validity (Calder, Phillips, and Tybout, 1982). Saldana (2011), for instance, summarizes credibility as follows in the following excerpt:

In our qualitative research projects, we need to present a convincing story to our audiences that we “got it right” methodologically. In other words, the amount of time we spent in the field, the number of participants we interviewed, the analytic methods we used, the thinking processes evident to reach our conclusions, and so on, should be “just right” to persuade the reader that we have conducted our jobs soundly. (p.135)

To establish credibility, the researcher engaged in the validation process following Creswell's (2013) strategies. To begin with, the researcher attempted *data*

triangulation by making use of different data sources, the interview transcripts, the participants' journal entries, the researcher's observations, and notes in the reflective journal. Silverman (2013) clarifies that this technique, though faulty, may help to "get a 'true' fix on a situation by combining different ways of looking at it or different findings" (p. 212). Moreover, participants' views and reactions to the researcher's reconstructions and interpretations of what they shared were solicited through *member checking*. In the end, all the findings presented were supported with specific evidence, as Saldana (2011) recommends through direct quotes from the participants. Finally, the findings were juxtaposed with the relevant literature review, which was extensively done both before and after the data analysis process (Ahern, 1999; Hycner, 1985).

Confirmability, which Schwandt, Lincoln, and Guba (2007) have presented as an equivalent of objectivity, attempts to ensure that the results are grounded in data and that any biases on the part of the researcher are eliminated. To achieve this, first and foremost, the researcher *bracketed* herself and clarified any potential biases and past experiences from the very beginning (Moustakas, 1994). She reflected on her prejudices so that the sole focus was on the experiences of the participants. This step was reflected in the *role of the researcher* section. Also, the researcher tried to explain the methodology part in detail so that an *audit trail* could be established (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Dependability, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain, is used to denote reliability which is a prerequisite for validity as "an unreliable measure cannot be valid" (p. 292). For a study to be dependable, it must be consistent in that if replicated, similar results will be achieved. To increase the current study's dependability, the researcher tried to describe in detail the study design and the steps of the data collection and analysis processes.

Transferability in qualitative research is what in quantitative studies, researchers call generalizability, or as Schwandt et. al. (2007) explain external validity. However, the latter is not a concern of phenomenological studies since the research's aim is not to generalize the findings as much as to ensure transferability- allowing the

implications of the current study to be transferred to similar contexts. The small sample size, though purposively chosen, and the focus on unique individual experiences make generalizability impossible. Transferability, on the other hand, was ensured through rich and thick descriptions to illuminate the experiences and worlds of each of the participants (Hycner, 1985). Both the participants' backgrounds and their settings were described in detail to allow the reader to "draw inferences of how the case speaks to a broader population or issue" (Saldana, 2011, p. 9).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Potential ethical issues were considered by the researcher throughout the study. Before data collection started, the researcher applied for and received approval from METU Human Subjects Ethics Committee (See Appendix A). The participants were duly informed about the scope of the research study and their rights via the debriefing form and the informed consent form respectively (See Appendices C & B). The consent form made it clear to the participants that their participation was completely voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time if they felt uncomfortable, though they were assured that the study would cause neither physical nor psychological discomfort. To ensure their anonymity, the participants were given pseudonyms and their workplaces or any details that might identify them were never mentioned throughout the research process. The necessary precautions were taken to ensure the meeting times were convenient for the participants and some of the interviews were even carried out online on Zoom.

3.8 The Role of the Researcher

In phenomenological research, it is expected that researchers bracket their own experiences to fully immerse themselves in those of the participants (Moustakas, 1994). It is, however, impossible to be always completely aware of one's preconceptions related to the study and its participants. Hycner (1985) holds that "given the approach of phenomenological research, there is no way to eliminate the "subjectivity" of research" (p. 297). As Eatough and Smith (2017) clarify, when engaged in IPA research, researchers are aware that biases and preconceptions are inevitable and use this awareness to reflect on how these shape their research and

understanding. Thus, the researcher must engage in a careful and methodical examination of one's consciousness and lived experiences (Smith et. al., 2009). This helps to assure validity and reduces the likelihood that readers will question the study's methodology. By using bracketing, the researchers allow the readers to comprehend their background and point of view without doubting that they are interfering with what the participants are saying. The reflexivity required by bracketing is necessary throughout the entire research process. It is also recommended that researchers start keeping a reflexive journal to aid reflexivity before even they refine the research questions, particularly their feelings before, during, and after the collection of data and areas in which subjectivity might be a concern (Ahern, 1999).

My own experiences as an expatriate EFL teacher in the Turkish private K-12 system may affect my interpretations of the participants' experiences; therefore, I must bracket my previous experiences, preconceptions, and biases related to job satisfaction. I constantly reminded myself to keep my personal experiences apart from the information provided by the participants. I reflected, with the help of a journal, on how my personal experiences could interfere along the way to avoid swaying the participants' opinions. Additionally, I made use of member checking, rapport-building, and close collaboration with my participants to create a safe space for me and my participants to co-construct meaning together and most importantly, to ensure that the findings did not just represent my interpretations.

Five years ago, I started my first job as an expatriate EFL teacher in the Turkish private K-12 system. It was challenging due to a myriad of factors that when combined, created a lot of stress. I was a skills teacher in 5th and 6th grade, teaching a course that was not evaluated. The course taught by the LETs, called "*main course*", was the only English class that made it into the report card. This negatively affected the students' perceptions and expectations regarding my lesson. The heavy workload and uninterested and disruptive students made classroom management especially difficult. The only things available to me were my self-discipline and any connections I managed to foster with them. Unfortunately, the students cared only

about their grades, and this was a strong motivator for them. This tool, available to the other teachers, was not available to me. Unfortunately, the help of assistant principals was not something I could count on either. Before leaving, I expressed dissatisfaction with my salary and asked the school to reconsider its offer, but my request was ignored. I felt unappreciated and undervalued. It seemed like everything I did was taken for granted and I was made to feel expendable. So, I left.

I have learned to love my job. Currently, I teach a subject that is properly evaluated, the students are interested in the lesson, and I have formed close and loving connections with them. I work under people who express their appreciation for my work, support me with issues concerning students and parents, and are invested in my growth and development. Even though I have formed some strong bonds with teachers who work or used to work with me, collaboration and socialization have not always been possible due to rivalry and competition between teachers. Finally, salary has become a source of dissatisfaction for me again over the past couple of years. Since the pandemic and the economic crisis that followed it, my employer made changes to my contract that have resulted in a lower salary and fewer benefits. This year, for the first time in my current job, I considered quitting because what I earn is no longer enough to support my family.

These experiences have made me biased. I am predisposed to believe that expatriates are likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs and experience low levels of job satisfaction overall. These biases are more likely to be exposed in my interactions with three of the four participants of this study since I work or have worked with them at my current job. I had to make sure that I did not allow our friendships and shared experiences to affect the research. I refrained from commenting on what they were sharing so as not to validate or deny what they were saying. Also, I observed them in their interactions in the workplace to support the findings of my research. I reminded myself that despite working together in the same environment, our perceptions and interpretations of events could be completely different and that my priority was to bring their experiences to light.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.0. Presentation

This phenomenological research study explored the definition of job satisfaction and levels of said job satisfaction for four expatriate English language teachers working in private K-12 schools in Ankara, Turkey. Additionally, it investigated the aspects of their jobs that either positively or negatively affected their levels of satisfaction. This chapter presents the findings obtained over the course of three interviews, journals, and researcher observation. Since IPA was the chosen method for this study, the analysis process was done separately for each case. Only after each participant's transcript was analyzed in detail, the researcher moved on to the next participant. With the completion of each case, the researcher looked for convergences and divergences among the participants which led to the final themes - a reflection of the combined experiences of all the participants. At the end of this stage, the researcher employed interpretative methods to provide the arising themes a depth that is consistent with the theoretical underpinnings and research goals of the study.

The findings are presented case by case with three sections for each participant in the order of the research question they address. The researcher first looks at the definition of the concept of job satisfaction given by each participant. Next, the levels of satisfaction of each participant are looked at, briefly looking at what would make a difference in the way they feel. This refers to the participants' ideal or imagined work environments. After that, the most important aspects of the job that affect the participant's satisfaction are closely examined and categorized into hygiene factors or motivators. Finally, a deeper discussion of these topics took place,

and the researcher used an interpretive lens to examine participants' convergent and divergent issues. This was done, keeping in mind Smith et. al.'s (2009) advice to pay attention to "the identification of the emergent patterns (i.e., themes) within this experiential material, emphasizing both convergence and divergence, commonality and nuance, usually first for single cases, and then subsequently across multiple cases." (p. 72).

4.1. Case Summaries

4.1.1 The Case of Nora

4.1.1.1 Definition of Job Satisfaction

"It is hard to say it in one thing"

Nora sees job satisfaction as a complex phenomenon that cannot be defined in one sentence. She believes there are a few things involved among which she emphasizes self-accomplishment and growth, both professional and personal. However, her definition of job satisfaction can be briefly summarized as *the mutual sharing of knowledge between students and teachers and among teachers which leads to the growth of all involved*. For this to happen, Nora believes that the school environment has to be just right to engender such exchanges and support any potential growth, be it the students' or the teachers'. She expresses her expectation of a great work environment as follows:

This is not a swamp, it's like a garden and things are growing, it's moving along. And when I get that feeling that good things are happening, not just for my students but also for me, I see myself learning a lot of things and growing in my role as a teacher and as a person and as a colleague, so in all my relationships involved in this space (Interview 1).

Support is also a word that often comes up in the interviews with Nora as she sees it as a key ingredient to teachers' job satisfaction. If support from the higher levels of the hierarchy in the school administration is lacking, the amount of work that can be done by the teachers as well as its quality will suffer. As a result, Nora sees the direct impact on her job satisfaction. Specifically, when she feels dissatisfied when she is not doing right by her students as evidenced by the following excerpt:

And we know that we should be teaching it and we know that we're not because we don't have enough time. And that creates this discrepancy within

us and of knowing what we should be doing but we're not doing it because of different reasons. So that also creates a feeling of dissatisfaction. (Interview 1).

It is noteworthy, however, to point out that despite the definition given above, Nora oftentimes makes it clear that job satisfaction is not only about achievement but also about the recognition of such achievement. Growth is one thing, but Nora deeply cares about this growth being noticed and appreciated by the school leadership. This will become abundantly clear in the presentation of the findings regarding aspects that affect job satisfaction for Nora.

4.1.1.2 Levels of Job Satisfaction

“I am disappointed”

Nora, despite often feeling upset and disappointed, when directly asked how satisfied she feels with her job, claims to be about 70 to 80% satisfied with her job. Perhaps this is because Nora’s first full-time job in an educational institution started at *School A* and she has not had experience anywhere else. This lack of a point of reference she can use for comparison might be affecting her estimation. One could also argue that because of her long tenure at the school, she has seen a lot of people come to power and then leave and she bases her judgment based on those past experiences. In her own words, “You always compare it to the worst thing we've seen. Compared to that, they're great.” (Interview 2). She expresses joy whenever she talks about what she was able to achieve in the classroom with her students, about meeting her objectives, as well as feeling the support that comes from the current management regarding the allocation of workload. Interestingly, every time the topic of satisfaction comes up indirectly her response is more nuanced. In a few instances, she plainly states that she is not satisfied with her status as an expatriate teacher in the school. As to be discussed in detail below, Nora is quick to clarify that this is related exclusively to the financial treatment of the expatriate teachers. She elaborates:

The finances is one thing, but I don't feel that I'm treated with less respect for my co-workers or my supervisors, the school principal. So, over the years that hasn't changed, I've always been treated with respect, but they're not the ones that decide our salaries.” (Interview 3).

She feels like the school used to value Nora and her colleagues more and showed that appreciation in different ways, including a respectable salary and other benefits. In the last couple of years, when the entire world was faced with numerous difficulties due to the pandemic, the school leadership has had to make some tough decisions. As a result of these decisions, she has noticed a change in their attitude and has not felt cared for. As she puts it, “I think we were not at the top of the list of their priorities.” (Interview 1). Such treatment from the school that Nora loves being a part of, has led to many disappointments and adjustments on Nora’s part. She says, “I’m not as satisfied with my salary as I used to be at the beginning” and as a result, “I’m trying to be more flexible than expectant because I don’t want to be disappointed and that has happened a lot lately” (Interview 2). These disappointments have been strong and painful enough to have led Nora to question whether she would continue to be a teacher at *School A* in the future or at all. Her response, given reluctantly and with a faraway look on her face, did not come as a surprise. She confesses, “it is the first time that I have doubts whether I want to stay here or not. If I’m going to stay here or not. There is a lot of uncertainty.” (Interview 2). This uncertainty is also rooted in the fact that her current salary, not paid in foreign currency as it used to be if converted, is less than what it used to be five years ago, and that “is concerning for me.” (Interview 1). Being a single mother and a new homeowner compounds this concern.

In addition to the reinstatement of the previous contractual terms regarding the salary, for Nora to feel truly satisfied with her job, as she implied in her definition of job satisfaction, she says,

But I would feel satisfied with my job if or when I feel self-accomplished. So, I feel like I’m giving but also getting from this environment. So, I am sharing my knowledge and experience and character and personality, but also I am gaining new knowledge and experience and I am growing as a person as a teacher, as a human being. (Interview 1).

The extent to which she feels like this is currently happening is unclear, but it is safe to say that there is room for improvement and her satisfaction levels still left to desire.

4.1.1.3 Aspects Affecting Job Satisfaction

Throughout the research process, Nora spoke openly of the aspects that affect her satisfaction levels. In answering the third research question of this study, she discussed a variety of facets that make her feel either positively or negatively about her job satisfaction. It is worth noting that some of these aspects may affect her in one direction at one time and in the opposite direction at another time. Her answers on the aspects that make her satisfied with her job are textbook examples of what Herzberg (1965) calls motivators as it became evident during the analysis of the most common themes discussed in the interviews. A summary of her codes revealed that achievement and recognition of that achievement take the lead as a major cause of satisfaction with 18 mentions. In contrast, the second most talked about aspect (16 mentions), the administration and school policy, was mostly a source of dissatisfaction, even though Nora was fair enough to give her school credit when credit was due. Similarly, the workload was the next most common thread which Nora talked about 15 times as a source of dissatisfaction. Finally, relationships and collaboration with colleagues (surfacing 11 times) were a source of satisfaction when present.

“My day was worth it; my efforts were rewarded”

When it comes to the most important aspect affecting her job satisfaction, Nora distinguishes between the *what* and the *why-s* of her job. She says what is “the content, the part of my job that I have to do daily, and I do enjoy what I’m doing. Despite all the difficulties, I come every day with joy to my job.” (Interview 3). The *why-s* on the other hand, are a handful of reasons that make School A a nice place to work but at the end of the day, Nora says “if I didn’t enjoy what I was doing, I wouldn’t be here.” (Interview 3). It was obvious that for Nora the content of her job is inextricably related to her students and that is where she derives her sense of achievement from. She sees achievement first and foremost as successfully teaching her students what they need to learn in a way that is fun and exciting for them. Also, due to her personality, achievement is sticking to the plan and meeting her expectations. Recognition of achievement, though mostly absent, would ideally be coming from students, superiors, and parents and would motivate her to do her job

even better. During our interviews Nora revealed that she had been feeling accomplished in the classroom as evidenced by the following excerpt:

It was a productive day overall. It felt productive because I was able to go through all the things I had planned for the lesson and other things for the day: complete the fiction reading, vocab, check homework, identify the students that skip homework, send SMS to parents. (Journal).

Nora elaborates in the follow-up interview that “the majority of times I do accomplish what I set out to achieve.” (Interview 2). However, not only is it important for her to complete her work within the scheduled time frame but also to do it right. A good day at work for Nora would include “something interesting to teach in the classroom. So, my time during the lesson is fun and exciting. And the students are also excited and eager to listen and participate.” (Interview 1). This was the case the week Nora journaled because she writes about interesting discussions on nanotechnology and great teamwork between her students while trying to solve a murder mystery game. These achievements are particularly important for Nora because as she makes clear in her definition of job satisfaction, Nora loves learning and growing alongside her students. She writes, “I enjoyed doing some research and passing on some current information about this topic to my students.” and “ it was fun to watch them work together to crack the codes and find the clues.” (Journal). More importantly, she observed that her students enjoyed the activity and that is the best feedback she can receive. In our final interview, Nora further explains that it matters very much to her that her students enjoy the lesson because it “ increases their love of language and that will overflow outside of the classroom.” (Interview 3). Just as seen in EFL teacher job satisfaction literature, teaching English is more than teaching a language

Nora hypothesizes about situations when she would not feel self-accomplished in the classroom because of behavioral problems. She describes a bad day as follows:

Behavioral problems would make it a bad day if I have misbehaving students during my lessons, or sometimes it happens that they're particularly restless during the lesson and they talk more than necessary. So that would kind of hinder my lesson plan. So, I would not cover everything I had planned because of that, and that'd make me fall behind. And that'll cause some stress (Interview 1).

Fortunately, these instances are few and far in between. Nora attributes this to her discipline and classroom management skills. She explains, “I’m very disciplined and I make that clear at the very beginning of the school year, so I normally don’t have a lot of behavior problems in my classes” (Interview 2). She lays down the law from the very start and the students get it resulting in very few issues during the school year. This sense of accomplishment is also noticeable in her responsibilities outside the classroom. First of all, she is confident in her leadership abilities and believes she is doing a good job with her team. She says, “I have the impression that as a leader, I am doing well. I feel comfortable in this position.” (Interview 2). The fact that her teammates freely share their suggestions and agree with her decisions makes her feel this way. Here is how she puts it “I always ask them to share their suggestions and they’re always happy with whatever I suggest. So, I just take for granted that they’re happy.” (Interview 2). However, this is where the positive feedback ends.

Nora shares that there is little, if any, positive feedback coming from the administration. As to be discussed shortly, negative feedback is more forthcoming as according to Nora, the administration tends to blame teachers when things go awry. When students do not get the grades they expect or when they do not pass certain examinations, it is easy for those in power to put the blame on teachers and see these as their failures. But when it comes to a teacher’s job being well done and having a positive effect on the institution’s progress, feedback leaves much to desire. Nora would love to hear more about what she is doing well and how her efforts tie into the rest of the school. She says it would be nice:

knowing that my job affects the whole school, I mean, in a positive way. So, I’m not just an isolated case, but I’m part of a bigger team that helps move the success of the whole school forward. So just being appreciated in that way (Interview 1).

Such feedback and recognition for achievement is sadly not a regular practice at *School A*. Parents also play a big role in providing feedback to the teachers but even with them, either there is no feedback, or it is negative. Nora talked about a recent conversation with a parent who shared that a lot of parents seem not to respect the teachers at the school. The complaints, though not necessarily addressed to her, seem to be varied and Nora feels very strongly about this. She says, “I don’t appreciate

them complaining about the way we teach or the materials we're covering or things that they have really no knowledge or experience over. So, making comments on that is not really helpful.” (Interview 1). This cycles back to her believing in herself and knowing that she is doing a good job and receiving the deserved recognition would help her feel more positive about her job. She ends by saying, “I want to be respected by the parents because I think I'm doing my job well.” (Interview 1).

“Teachers are in the frontlines”

Nora wavers in her opinion of the administration because for the most part, she respects those who are in leadership positions. She speaks highly of her former principal, calling her a visionary, and her current head of department, praising the support she has given to Nora and the rest of the department. Nora emphasizes a few times that for her it is important to be heard and she has found that oftentimes she is. An ideal workplace for her would offer:

open communication between teachers and management; feeling comfortable sharing different concerns, knowing that that door will always be open, and not feeling, you know, concerned with the reaction. So being able to voice your opinion in- during meetings, but also to higher levels of hierarchy, without feeling intimidated. (Interview 1).

One example she shared during our first interview, is when she went to her current principal to suggest a change in how the library is currently being used to encourage more reading and a genuine love for books in her students. She says that “I don't feel threatened when I voice my concerns to the principals.” (Interview 2). Nora is hopeful that the response will be positive, and that a space will be created in the library to facilitate an English-only space for reading lessons to take place.

Nonetheless, there are aspects of the administration that she takes issue with, and these are ineffective communication and decision-making. As far as communication goes, Nora admits that the school has a decent network through which information is disseminated and those who want to get the information can easily do so. What the problem seems to be for her is the fact that good face-to-face communication is lacking. Most of the time in the meetings that Nora describes is taken up by announcements. In her opinion, these announcements, despite being important

reminders on deadlines, upcoming events, etc. can easily be shared in written form via email or WhatsApp. Nora believes that it would be time-saving since the teachers do not need to take notes and useful since they can refer to the messages whenever needed. She says, “thank God for WhatsApp because we get a lot of communication done through WhatsApp.” (Interview 2). Still, at times even WhatsApp can be a hindrance to quality communication because of the heavy traffic of messages and a poor substitute for face-to-face communication. Nora’s solution to the latter issue is:

Sometimes there's just a lot of useless information shared along with a useful one. So, there should be some kind of a filter, kind of when information sharing platforms especially the common ones. What I mean is instead of having all the teachers comment, there is a type of WhatsApp conversation, where only one person can write (admin) and everyone else is a receiver. You can't write back and that stops a lot of useless conversations. (Interview 2).

The second issue, communication in person, is even more important to be addressed. Going back to the meeting and how time is used, Nora says that what is needed is more collaboration between the teachers and this could be easily achieved if “more time (not just the last two minutes) could have been allowed for each team to share their concerns or suggestions.” (Journal). In her role as a grade 6 tester, Nora must coordinate a team of 3 other teachers. For her role to be carried out successfully, she needs to get information from her superiors and then arrange meetings during which things are shared, planning is made, and decisions are taken. This is not always possible because “we have very little free time. And because that's very limited, it's hard to communicate. So oftentimes, you need to set an appointment or kind of bug people to be able to have some time and communicate with them.” (Interview 2). Unfortunately, the way communication is done at her school, affects the way Nora communicates in turn, leaving her dissatisfied.

The second aspect of the administration that leads Nora to be dissatisfied is with how decisions are made in the higher ranks of the hierarchy and little consideration is given to the teachers’ concerns and feedback. Nora sees this as a big failure on the part of the administration because she believes that their input into decisions that affect teaching and students should be heard first and foremost. Nora expresses her feelings in the following excerpt:

Teachers are not asked on a regular basis about what could be done to make things better. This could either be on a personal level, like, how can they make the teacher's life easier, but also on an academic level, like what can we do to make the program work better to meet the needs of students. So oftentimes, decisions like this are made arbitrarily... So, I would appreciate teachers being asked what they think about certain issues that are related to her job immediately... Teachers [...] know more about the students' needs, and what things work, what things don't work, compared to people that sit in an office in higher management. (Interview 1)

This kind of attitude from the part of the administration takes away from teacher autonomy, leaving Nora sometimes feeling like she has no say in what or how to teach, how to evaluate students, or even something as simple as what professional development opportunities to pursue. When things don't go as well as they should, then it seems like Nora's sense of efficacy and achievement also suffers. Nora recalls the time when she was made a tester without being asked if she wanted the position in the first place or if she needed any training to be able to carry out the responsibilities of that role using the following words, "Nobody asked whether I was trained to prepare tests when they threw the testing job at me." (Interview 2). The worst part of this is that after 6 years in the position, at times, she still wonders whether she is doing a good job. Unfortunately, the situation threatens to repeat itself as Nora was recently told that she might be spearheading the implementation of an international program in the next academic year. In summing up her feelings, Nora says, "well, I need to train about this thing that is coming. I don't want to be unprepared because most probably this will be thrown at me and nobody's going to ask me whether I'm ready for it." (Interview 2). This need to be prepared for what is coming comes from Nora's dislike of surprises and by being proactive, ensures that everything runs smoothly whenever she can control the situation.

"There's not enough time"

Not only is Nora not afraid of work and taking on responsibilities, but she also admits that she loves being busy. She says, "I'm used to the [high] tempo and I like that I have lots of things to do." (Interview 2). However, at times she feels like the amount of work that she is required to do is both daunting and takes away from quality leading her to be dissatisfied with her job. Throughout our interviews, Nora

discussed the heavy workload in terms of what happens inside and outside the classroom and how it affects her relationship with the students and colleagues. At *School A*, teachers usually teach on average 24 lessons a week and have two hallway monitoring duties per week. On top of these, Nora is also in charge of creating exams and worksheets. Not to mention, other duties thrown at teachers like substitutions, club sponsorships, etc. During the time of our interviews and her journaling, Nora was going through some particularly hectic times as is obvious by this journal entry:

Today was duty today for me. Teachers who are on duty have to take care of substitutions and I got one last-minute substitution. The sub was given in the only period I could have my lunch. I was also very stressed about not having anyone to replace me on my duty so I could go eat. (Journal).

Even though, according to Nora, not being able to have lunch is a rare occasion, the fact that it happens at all is very upsetting. In the interviews, she gets into more detail about her workload.

As a sixth-grade English skills teacher, Nora teaches 5 classes 4 times per week. She believes that the time with each group is not enough to cover all the material they must cover which adds to her stress. She says:

We only have four lessons a week, but we have to cover two different subjects, reading and writing and we're expected to do as many units as possible from the textbook. So, we rush through many things [...]. And then we have the writing pack. And writing is a long process. And we don't go through all the steps of the process because of lack of time.[...] So we go through them really, really fast without going into detail, letting it sink in. (Interview 1).

This is upsetting for Nora because she feels she is not doing justice to the kids. Because of the packed curriculum, she is unable to incorporate discussions and teamwork into her lessons. She believes they should be a regular part of her class so that kids can learn collaboration and problem-solve in addition to English. But this is not the only reason why Nora is dissatisfied with everything she has to juggle in the classroom. She is also a believer in the importance of differentiated instruction and expresses it as follows:

Not all students are at the same level, so there is differentiated learning that we need to consider. And we don't often plan for that because we have a limited amount of time to cover a lot of things. So, we're often rushing

through a lot of things just touching upon them but not really teaching thoroughly or in detail. And we know that we should be teaching it and we know that we're not because we don't have enough time. (Interview 1).

The discrepancy between what Nora knows should be done while being acutely aware that it is not, is a source of dissatisfaction for her. She has high expectations of herself as a teacher and they are not being met due to the circumstances.

As previously mentioned, Nora is more than just a teacher. At the beginning of the second interview, she answered the question about how her week was going as follows:

The last couple of weeks have been a little stressful as the exam is coming up. I had a lot of things I needed to prepare, get done. Prepare the students, prepare materials for students, all sixth graders. Prepare an exam, have it ready, make sure it's the right level. Write material. It's hard to find resources to use so sometimes I have to come up with my own text. And I did a lot of homework checking and follow-up. And that was also very strenuous. (Interview 2).

To offer some relief to the test writers, the school usually makes certain allowances for them such as reducing their teaching hours or days of hall monitoring duty. Unfortunately, this was not the case for Nora until this year. She always had the same number of lessons as the other teachers and no real support from the previous head of the department. She was simply expected to do everything without being compensated for her efforts. Nora stipulates that the reason for this might be the lack of enough expatriate teachers in the school. She says that this is the case because "it's harder to hire foreigners in a country than locals and then hiring foreigners would mean more expenses for the school" (Interview 1). No matter what the justification, Nora felt discouraged and unmotivated because she expects fair treatment but instead got a lot of what to her felt like "uncalled for criticism" (Interview 1). In her opinion, criticism is part of work-life, however, it is important to praise teachers when praise is deserved. She says, "they should be balanced to have a healthy work environment." (Interview 3). This goes hand in hand with her belief about the importance of being treated fairly. This is the first year since she started her job that Nora feels like she is being so treated. The person who currently leads the English department, through lots of perseverance, managed to reduce the number of teaching

hours for Nora. She explains, “this year is the first time in years that I'm on schedule and not behind schedule, with preparing exams and worksheets and weekend stuff and just being more prepared ahead of time for what's coming.” (Interview 1).

Perhaps this is one reason why Nora feels more positive about her job overall lately.

“It's the people that make a difference”

Relationships with colleagues, especially positive ones, are a great source of satisfaction for her. She speaks often of how collaborating and socializing with her friends adds to her positive feelings toward her job. In describing what makes a good day, Nora says it is “when I have some time to see my friends, my colleagues and sit down for a chat every now and then.” (Interview 1). She goes as far as saying that when she has a chance to socialize with her colleagues, “it is the highlight of my day” (Interview 3).

Nora loves cooperating with other teachers, especially with her immediate team. As she is the team leader, she is responsible for the team, and she takes great care to keep them informed and updated as much as possible. Additionally, her sense of fairness leads her to delegate the work that needs doing in a way that is as just as possible. This helps to even out the workload so that everyone is happy and not unnecessarily burdened. She says,

[I feel happy] knowing that everybody that is part of the team feels responsible and feels that they have a role in the team. Knowing that everyone appreciates that and does their best would also make me feel happy to be part of the team. So, a team is a team. There should be equal effort from all the team members. (Interview 1).

This was the case in the past but not this year. Unfortunately, this year, because her teammates are overextended, teaching more than the normal 24 hours for the second year in a row, she has been reluctant to delegate as much work as she used to.

Therefore, Nora says, “I end up doing everything myself” (Interview 3). What she mostly appreciates about them is their willingness to contribute ideas, take on a share of the workload, support in any way they can, and most importantly their polite and respectful attitude towards her and each other. Because of this, decision-making when it comes to textbook selection or planning of lessons or extracurriculars

becomes easy also. To exemplify, Nora writes “my team and I evaluated some textbooks for next year. I am happy to be on the same page with the other two teachers on my team.” (Journal).

Sadly, such collaboration, let alone socializing, is not always possible. One reason that Nora provides for this is the global COVID-19 pandemic. The physical distance that was mandated under the pandemic regulations played an important role over the last couple of years. Nevertheless, the main reason is the previously mentioned workload. Because Nora always has something to do, she is perpetually locked in her office. Therefore, her socializing consists of spending time with her office mates “because it's been hard to find a common time with other friends to hang out with. And I'm usually in the office preparing things. So not really available a lot.” (Interview 1). Nora only leaves her office to go to class to teach or to go to her duty spot at break times. On her two duty days, she spends recess, which lasts 50 minutes, controlling student traffic in a large, crowded space. This adds to her work stress for two reasons. First, it is stressful because “you always have to be alert to make sure that nothing extraordinary happens.” (Interview 1). Nora further explains that students are extremely physical and aggressive towards one another, so she has a hard time preventing accidents or disciplining students after something bad happens. Second, because teachers on hallway monitor duty have to wait until all the students are gone to class before leaving their spot, sometimes there is no time to even take care of personal needs. Nora does not want to take any chances because as she says, “I kind of feel like when I leave, something bad is going to happen. And usually nothing happens. Absolutely nothing. It's just that I am responsible if something happens.” (Interview 2). With such a packed day, it is no wonder that Nora finds no opportunities to spend time with her friends.

4.1.2 The Case of Danielle

4.1.2.1 Definition of Job Satisfaction

“What makes up a school is the people you work with”

Danielle associates the word satisfaction primarily with relationships. She believes that positive relationships in the workplace are the most crucial ingredient in a

teacher's job satisfaction. She emphasizes that it is important for her to be surrounded by people who are nice to one another, to work with colleagues who enjoy working together and do not engage in drama or competition. In her own words, job satisfaction means "to be happy to wake up in the morning and go to school." (Interview 1). This can only be possible though if there is trust among the teachers and trust in the administration. To be satisfied, Danielle wishes to be led by individuals who make decisions according to the teacher's needs and not only based on what the school's name and reputation dictate.

Danielle also includes her relationship with her students in her definition of job satisfaction. As soon to be examined in detail, her students are the main source of satisfaction for Danielle thus it comes as no surprise when she ends by saying, "the students keep me going." (Interview 1). However, when basic needs are not met, and in Danielle's case that financial security, nothing else matters. Being close to retirement, Danielle is forced to think about the future, and she does not feel that she has enough money to retire and live comfortably with her pension. No wonder she is leaving her job. She says, "And the reason why I'm leaving is the salary, the package." (Interview 3).

Based on all the above, Danielle's definition of job satisfaction can be defined in a few words as *the presence of positive relationships in the workplace with peers, superiors, and students all of which are based on mutual trust*. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that for Danielle, in her current situation, relationships may not suffice to engender a feeling of satisfaction as salary is a very commonly discussed issue.

4.1.2.2 Levels of Job Satisfaction

"I don't feel I'm in a good place right now"

The first interview for Danielle was particularly emotional as she reminisced about her 27-year-long career. She smiled while recounting happy moments and even shed a few tears when discussing disappointments. The disappointments were what she had in mind when she confided:

I'm a little bit dissatisfied. Everything that's happened since January 1995. It happened. I'm proud of this long career. I'm happy to have met so many wonderful people in different schools but am I happy to be where I am right now, at this time in my career? No, I'm not! (Interview 1)

So deep was the disappointment that at the time of our interview, Danielle was completely immersed in the job search process. Her unhappiness with her current job was reflected in her desire to leave it behind as quickly as possible. The reasons for the current state are many and varied which is precisely why Danielle could not think of what aspects of her job positively impacted her satisfaction. She says, "I'm not satisfied with so many things that it's hard to see a positive aspect." (Interview 1). In the end, the why-s or what-s do not matter as the bottom line remains "I'm not satisfied anymore. In the long run, this job brought me a lot of disappointment, and I'm not motivated anymore." (Interview 2).

For Danielle to be truly satisfied with her job, she needs to be in a different environment where people not only enjoy working but are also kind to each other. She dislikes drama and abhors competition between teachers. In her ideal work environment, Danielle sees respect for each other's ideas and support in implementing them. Unfortunately, she has witnessed a lot of ostracizing both as a recipient of such behavior and as an observer. She is a firm believer that the school culture plays a major role in levels of job satisfaction for teachers and the one she currently finds herself in does not tip the scales in the right direction. In our final interview, Danielle also confesses to reflecting on her feelings of overall dissatisfaction and how she might be affecting it and coming up short of a reason. She shares the following:

I am wondering as part of my reflection, am I dissatisfied as I'm getting older because I have more expectations? You know what I mean? Like, is it me? If you compare, if you have this interview with another person at the school, they will see things more positively? I don't know. I have no idea. (Interview 3).

4.1.2.3 Aspects Affecting Job Satisfaction

In answer to the third and final research question, Danielle distinguishes, though with some difficulty, between aspects that positively or negatively affect her satisfaction as she is currently experiencing low levels of satisfaction. The aspect that came up

the most in regard to bringing joy to Danielle in her day-to-day life was the work itself as it relates especially to her students. She talks about her relationship with and connection to them a total of 27 times. However, in some instances, this relationship, or lack thereof, led to a lack of satisfaction. Similarly, good relationships with colleagues and ongoing collaboration would ideally serve as a source of satisfaction for Danielle, but during our interviews, she sometimes talked about them pulling her in the opposite direction. To justify her overall low levels of satisfaction, Danielle provided further insight into additional aspects of her job that create negative feelings towards it. The most mentioned aspects, in order of priority, were the school policy and administration (17 times) and the language barrier in her communication with them (8 times), the workload (13 times), and relations with parents (9 times).

“Honestly, the students keep me going”

For Danielle, her work with the students takes center stage. In her description of a good day, she begins by saying how great a sense of achievement she feels:

When I see those little lights [above the students' heads] when I see connections are made. Whatever's happening in the classroom, when students can make a connection between what they're learning and what they know, or when I see interest, when I see “oh, okay!” That's a good day. Sometimes students will tell you “Oh, that was a good lesson”. That's concrete, I felt it too. It's good. (Interview 1)

According to Danielle, these moments of enlightenment can only happen when certain conditions are met. First of all, she says the students “need to trust you, they need to feel safe in the classroom and safe to take risks” (interview 2). Only then “students are relaxed, they're very confident, they ask questions, they take risks, they want to contribute to the learning.” (Interview 2). She tries hard to make such an environment a reality each day. To achieve this, Danielle tries to create strong bonds with her students, connecting with them at a personal level and most days it is as easy as starting each lesson by asking them how they are and other personal questions. Even if this chatting takes away precious lesson time, Danielle is willing to do it because she understands one crucial fact, “if we don't do that, they will not respond to you.” (Interview 1). These bonds are especially when things do not seem to be working as they should as explained in the following excerpt:

sometimes you have to reset and okay, it's not working here. Let's try something else. If they're not engaged, they're not learning, period. So if you're not working on that, it's not going to be very effective. Yeah, sometimes it's important to reset. it's not working. That's where we start something different. And by engaging, I mean getting really involved with what they're doing, wanting to know more, wanting to bring their voice to something we're doing. (Interview 2).

In addition to what happens during lessons, Danielle also cares about her relationship with her students outside the classroom. She says, “what I genuinely like about my job is talking to the kids outside of the classroom” (Interview 1). She wants to get to know them at a personal level, to be there for them when they need her like she was for a student whose father passed away mid-year while she was teaching high school English in her hometown. Danielle is grateful she was able to support that student since they were close to each other. At the end of the day, Danielle is aware that “You're not just teaching English. You're teaching individuals with feelings” (Interview 1). Not only that, but Danielle argues that “when you have the time to talk to the kids, you have less problem with the kid in class” (Interview 1)

It is disheartening to Danielle that she has not been able to truly connect with her students since her move to Turkey. On the first day of work at the private high school where she worked for three years, Danielle remembers the cold and disrespectful welcome she received from her students. She says, “some students came to see the new teacher. And one of them said, “Where are you from?” I said from Canada. He said, “I hate Canadians.” That was my first experience.” (Interview 1). Things did not get better unfortunately as the year progressed. Because Danielle was put in a grade level she had specifically asked not to be in and asked to teach content she did not feel comfortable teaching, even the academic aspect of her job became challenging. As a result, her students sensing her insecurity did not trust her and continuously asked to be taught by their old teacher. Danielle speculates that their behavior had little to do with her and more with the fact that “in that school, the students are extremely spoiled.” (Interview 1). Perhaps the cultural differences between the countries where Danielle has previously worked and is currently working play a part in this assessment.

After being let go from this job, Danielle started working in the middle school of a different private K-12 school teaching this time grades 5 and 8. Unfortunately, the behavior problems continued there as well. She tells the following story to demonstrate the level of disruption, “Big discipline problems in grade eight. I’ve never seen that. One of the students was eating his homework. Literally eating his homework, eating the papers.” (Interview 1). Her seventh graders at *School A* sometimes cause Danielle to feel dissatisfied with her job because of their behavior as well. She says that some of her groups are very challenging for all their teachers because “they don’t talk, they shout. They make each other laugh and don’t care about losing a lesson” (Journal). But Danielle cannot accept this as she knows that behavioral issues prevent learning for those students who are interested. So, she ends by saying that “I always try to make every class a good class” (Interview 1) by doing whatever it takes to get there. She is invested in her students’ learning. Additionally, she understands that the pandemic has affected them in many ways, and she is doing her best to show understanding and support them in whatever way she can. She says,

I think we underestimate what happened during the pandemic, you know, having the kids for one year online... The first part of the year was about socializing because those kids did not socialize when they were online. We have seventh graders, but they behave like fifth graders. But I cannot blame them for what's happened. They are victims of what happened so I couldn't blame them for their behavior. I'm trying to reflect on the whole thing. (Interview 3).

This excerpt shows how Danielle refuses to see her students as a source of dissatisfaction by trying to look at the bigger picture. She loves her students, but the circumstances have not been favorable either to them or to Danielle herself.

“The best part about that job was the community”

Upon graduating back in 1994, Danielle found a job in a secluded community in the north of Quebec. She was one of many new teachers who started teaching in that school that year and they all felt welcomed by the local and more experienced teachers. Despite being away from home, she felt right at home. Throughout her tenure there, Danielle collaborated with, learned, and grew alongside her colleagues, and to this day she believes “it was the best cohort of teachers ever” (Interview 1). In her next job, despite experiencing a rough beginning and a few toxic colleagues, she

also had the opportunity to work hand in hand with her colleagues which then led to the creation of some strong bonds. Her experience with the international school in China introduced her to a new environment, elements of which she loved and others she did not.

Working in an international school setting was an eye-opening experience for Danielle. She noticed that while her colleagues in Canada were selfless and would do anything for their students, there were other types of teachers out there. She says:

I think some expats who come to China go there for fun. They want to experience life in China but they're not super teachers. They just go there because they want to experience another country. So, they did not really commit as much as they should have committed to their schools. (Interview 1)

And maybe this is why in her role as head of the department she faced challenges when it came to managing her team. She was faced with colleagues who would undermine her authority and go straight to the head of school when needed to resolve an issue instead of working them out as a team. The explanation offered is that “that colleague was really hard to deal with because she was very egocentric. So, no team spirit.” (Interview 1). However, these types of colleagues did not take away from the fact that the international school created an environment where different cultures and backgrounds blended. Danielle confesses that:

Working together on a similar project is very interesting because we have different points of view and different perspectives. That's what I like. To have discussions about education with people from all around the world. That makes you think “look at us working together”. This is bigger than education. This is something that's very stimulating for a teacher” (Interview 1).

However, Danielle left the international setting behind when she decided to move to Turkey. In the first job she had, she was once more faced with a toxic colleague and leader, who with their attitude made work unbearable for Danielle and others whom they worked with. Her work was undermined, and she made to feel incapable to the point where she lost her self-confidence. Danielle says that she was not only stressed but completely destroyed by the experience. It took her over a year working at a different school with fantastic colleagues and no drama to get her confidence back.

Now, thinking back on that experience, Danielle says “I realized I wasn’t the only one. It’s not me. It’s the whole situation.” (Interview 1).

Currently, working at *School A*, Danielle relies on the English department as a whole and the team of four she manages to carry forward. When asked what a good day looks like she responds, “You have to look at very micro activities that happened during the day, for example, having a coffee with my colleagues or finding the time to debrief about what’s happening.” (Interview 1). She speaks positively about meetings that are productive in which decisions are made and there are no arguments. One such meeting is described as follows:

The meeting was quite satisfactory. We discussed the material for next year and the term Project. First, we all agreed on the same textbook for next year. Then, we had a constructive discussion about the theme/subtopics for this year’s term project. (Journal)

However, this is not always the case. Danielle admits that sometimes there is tension and drama that needs to be handled before planning can be addressed. She says, “I’m not a drama person. And I hate when people take things personally.” (Interview 2).

“The system is really putting the teachers against each other”

Danielle is very dissatisfied with the administration at her workplace and how it affects the functioning of the entire school. There are three main aspects that Danielle talks about: too much bureaucracy, heavy workload, and inefficient communication. Another aspect related to communication that affects her more than it does other people is the language barrier. Danielle speaks barely any Turkish and is often in situations where everyone speaks anything but. This happens even when she is in the English department where one would expect the main language to be English.

The first issue that Danielle talks about is the fact that things take a long time to happen, and this is because of the many layers of the hierarchy at the school. She says:

the bureaucracy kills me; a paper for this, a paper for that, extra, extra. The length of time it takes a request to get approved. I’m usually quick when somebody asks me something, I’m going for it. But not everybody works like

that. And it is hard to work with people whose priorities are different. So, I need a signature here or I need your approval on this because we need to go on but then I have to ask twice or three times. (Interview 1)

An additional side effect of such a management style is that decision-making happens at the top and oftentimes the teachers are not involved, and even when they are, their opinions are not taken into consideration. Such was the case last year when the school hired a consulting firm to interview the teachers and find out what they needed. Out of everything she shared during that interview, Danielle says, “nothing was addressed. We are still waiting.” (Interview 3). According to Danielle, “all the decisions that the school makes without thinking about consequences. [The administration] doesn't make decisions according to the people in the school...and that is very disheartening” (Interview 1). To exemplify her claims, Danielle shares a recent event. She confides that due to the pandemic her school made an important contractual change at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year that negatively affected the salary of all the expatriate teachers. Showing understanding, Danielle and her colleagues accepted the change in hopes that this was a temporary situation. So, this year, “we met [the principal] in the first semester about our salary because we were afraid of the economy. What's going to happen? He was supposed to come back to us but never did.” (Interview 2). Thus, it comes as no surprise when Danielle says, “I'm not satisfied with the salary right now.” (Interview 1) and the only thing she wishes she could help change before she leaves is the salary package. She believes that “You can bear a lot more things when you are paid well. So, I would bring the old contracts back. I would readjust the salaries for the foreigners” (Interview 3).

This way of managing the school also affects the communication between the administration and the teachers and often causes confusion and chaos and it ultimately leads to unnecessarily heavy workloads. Danielle claims that

There's a massive lack of communication in that school. Sometimes I have to ask and I'm a tester. I'm not just a teacher. I need to know things. I need to know things to make sure that the team is going to receive the right information. So sometimes I feel I have to run for it. It's not explicit. (Interview 2)

Such lack of communication naturally affects the work of the teachers who often find themselves chasing after the information that Danielle believes should be provided to them in advance. She says, “there's always something happening at the last minute” (Interview 3), especially when it comes to substitutions. The planning for the substitutions is often done last minute as emergencies arise. However, even in those instances when the school has had previous knowledge of a teacher unable to come in, the plan is nonexistent. Danielle tells of a time when she was asked to substitute for a colleague but nothing about the material she was supposed to cover. She had to find the person in charge and was given the information she needed only to find out that another teacher had covered the same material in the previous class. So, again she found herself going to the same person to confirm what she was supposed to do in that lesson. Danielle shares that, “she suggested a few things, adding that I could do what I wanted. I don't mind subbing (I would actually prefer being paid for it), but not babysitting.” (Journal).

This kind of situation is extremely challenging for Danielle for two reasons. The first reason is that she is an exceptionally organized person. As a tester, she also has had to plan for substitutions when members of her team were absent but, in her case, “I always make sure that sub teachers know what to do, and I always publish the list of teachers and instructions in our WhatsApp group.” (Journal). So important organization is to her that she includes in the top three necessary things needed for the good functioning of a school in addition to good communication and transparency. The second reason why Danielle struggles with the current situation is that she believes when teachers go into the classroom unprepared it causes great stress. She is an experienced teacher and has confidence in her own ability to teach under different circumstances, but this doesn't change the fact that “it's less stressful when you know what you're doing.” (Journal). At the end of the day, however, no matter if and when the substitution instructions are shared, they are still a burden to the teachers, according to Danielle. One adverse side effect is undoubtedly that “[teachers] are getting mad. We should be sorry for those who fall ill but we have mixed feelings because we have to sub for them.” (Interview 1).

In addition to substitutions, there is a myriad of other things that the administration requires that cause increased workload and stress to the teachers. So busy is she that between hall monitoring duty, planning, exam writing, and subs she says, “by the time you go home, you’re dead.” (Interview 1). Perhaps due to the COVID-19 pandemic, things have been extra strenuous this year. As a teacher in the classroom, there are added tasks that need taking care of such as logging in on Zoom for the students who are quarantined. And as a tester, Danielle has other responsibilities like creating worksheets, and exams, writing communications for the parents and most importantly managing a team. She says,

The most difficult part is making sure people get along and do whatever we decide to do and that I don't have to run after somebody because that somebody didn't respect the deadline or something. That for me is more exhausting than just doing whatever we need to do. (Interview 2).

As briefly touched upon in the previous section, this is also since some team members don’t always act like they are part of a team since they, except for one teacher, “don't offer help, they're passive or idle. I have to do everything.” (Interview 2). Because of all these things, Danielle confesses that “the days are full. And this year, I especially don't remember when I had the time to sit down with colleagues and talk just for fun because I'm always working on something.” (Interview 1).

Finally, the last topic Danielle mentions as a great source of dissatisfaction is the language barrier. Danielle has lived in Turkey for a bit more than six years now, but the level of her Turkish is low. She communicates with her fiancé in English and is only able to handle the day-to-day tasks in her daily life with some difficulty. This is why at work she struggles when communication is not English. The fact that general meetings are held in Turkish, and it is still mandatory for her to attend boggles her mind. She finds no good reason as to why she is required to be there when she understands pretty much nothing being said. Below she expresses her feelings about the last general meeting held on Zoom just days before our interview:

I just connected and I had to turn down the sound and do something else because I don't understand a word. ... When the meetings are in Turkish, it's a waste of time for me. I cannot feel like I'm receiving any information. And by the way, after the meeting, nobody said anything about that meeting. So, I don't have the information of what was said there. So, every time there's a

meeting, I'm missing out. So that's it. Waste of time. My evening time, my free time- waste of time. (Interview 2).

But it is not only school-wide meetings that are held in Turkish. Even in the English department, the primary language of communication is Turkish unless Danielle is there to remind her colleagues of her special “circumstance”. She says, “when something happens in Turkish in the English department, it makes me extremely dissatisfied.” (Interview 1). In these cases, she asks people to switch to English. But when the information is disseminated through WhatsApp messages or email, she is left feeling helpless and in constant need of help.

One solution Danielle has tried to overcome the language barrier is to Google Translate everything but not only is this unreliable but also time-consuming. The other solution is to reach out to her department head or other colleagues for proper translations. There are two problems with this solution. First, Danielle feels “like a burden in my English Department because I don’t know enough Turkish” (Journal). Second, she says it takes a long time to get things back. Such an example is the Teacher Evaluation form that the principal will use to provide performance feedback to the teachers. Danielle writes in her journal on February 8th that she has been waiting for it since December. All this has contributed to Danielle feeling like she needs “to have a level of B1 functional Turkish to work here.” (Interview 2). Perhaps it is for the best that Danielle is leaving this job behind. The job search she talked about came to fruition with a new job at an international school in South-East Turkey. While negotiating her contract, Danielle learned that most of the communication there happens in English and for those instances that it does not, there are official translators that work at the school full-time to assist the teachers. (Interview 3)

“I always believed in the parent-teacher partnership”

In her effort to connect with the students and ensure their academic success, Danielle has always relied on the parents. She believes that by working together, they can get to the root of the problem and work towards a solution together. More often than not, this partnership has worked out for her and has been a source of satisfaction.

Especially in her time at the international schools, she found that the community was very close, and the parents were always present and involved. At present, though, these partnerships are harder to come by if at all. Part of the reason for this is that Danielle relies on the parents to make appointments with her as she cannot directly reach out to them due to the language barrier.

So, when there is a problem, she sends an SMS to the parents through the school system and hopes that they will take the next necessary step. Sometimes the parents reach out immediately but other times, she doesn't hear from them until it is too late. Such was the case of a student whose disruptive behavior was hurting not only his learning but also his classmates. Danielle reached out to his mother in the first semester and never heard from her until the beginning of the second semester after the grades had been submitted. Danielle says she came to the school unannounced demanding a meeting which happened in the presence of the head of department serving also as the translator. The issue was the exam grade with the implication that Danielle was the reason why her son did not love English anymore. Danielle describes what was going through her head as follows:

I am not there to please the parents. I'm there to inform the parents. I'm there to tell them this is a situation. What can we do? Can we work as a team? Fine, but I'm not gonna give a good grade to a student just for the sake of giving a good grade. This is not me. I'm not that kind of person. (Interview 2).

Ultimately, an understanding was reached, and the mother left happy and sure in the knowledge that her son had received the grade he deserved. After discussing potential solutions, Danielle left the meeting satisfied and armed with ideas. She was happy to share that “the whole situation changed. It could have changed before, had she replied to my SMS.” (Interview 2).

4.1.3 The Case of Frank

4.1.3.1 Definition of Job Satisfaction

“It's hard to say”

At first Frank struggles to come up with a definition for job satisfaction as for him, too, it is a complex phenomenon. Also, he is aware that the way he has looked at job

satisfaction in the past is unrealistic and has served as a source of unhappiness. His expectation used to be “does the job do what I want?” (Interview 3) but now, as he takes a minute to think about it, he comes to the realization that satisfaction amounts to doing work that makes sustainable use of his time and energy, allows room for learning and growth and doing it well enough to leave you feeling seen and recognized. He elaborates:

The more I go through life in work, career, and thinking back on other jobs I've had, I really do believe that satisfaction in any job is about feeling like you are seen and recognized. And it doesn't matter what-- the nature of the work. If you feel like you're seen and recognized by people that you see and recognize, it gives you a sense like “Yeah, so there's a reason to be here. There's a reason to give and there's a reason to keep trying in a foreign country, away from home. (Interview 1).

Frank confesses to having “for the last few years been thinking of working on and moving towards more administrative issues” (Interview 1) within his institutions. But he is aware that for him to move up in the ranks of *School B*, he needs to be seen and trusted by those in power. They need to have confidence in his ability to contribute certain things. The fact that he missed out on an opportunity to become head of the English department recently, is proof that “I really was not on the radar enough and I think that was a big part of things working out the way they did.” (Interview 1).

Equally important for him is feeling or believing that he is making a difference in his job while feeling like “I have some control over my job and experiences every day.” (Interview 1). This sense of autonomy is important to Frank because it would allow him to “express my true self” (Interview 3) which is artistic, musical, and poetical. All of this would go a long way for him in terms of job satisfaction because he knows that in the future when it is time to look back on what he did, he will be glad that he did what he did. He hopes he is going to look back on his life and the work he did one day and say, “that was energy well spent.” (Interview 1).

In short, for Frank satisfaction could be defined as *the exertion of energy at work which will result in the trust of those in power and their recognition of his effort, alongside a personal feeling of having done something worthwhile*. Additionally

important for Frank is the autonomy that a job could afford him as well as fair financial compensation. Without the latter two, job satisfaction seems hard to reach.

4.1.3.2 Levels of Job Satisfaction

“I don’t think teaching is going to do it for me”

Satisfaction is not static for Frank; it goes up and down. At the time of our first interview, he said he had been pretty satisfied the previous few weeks. When asked to specify “pretty,” he said that it was not high, definitely not high, but decent. The reason for this decent level of job satisfaction is attributed to some valuable interactions in the workplace that both Frank and those he works with will always see as worth doing. When asked to provide specifics, he talked about collaborating with parents and the other teachers, being on the same page, and working together towards the same goal. Nevertheless, this feeling was at times overpowered by low levels of satisfaction as evidenced in a whispered conversation during a department meeting between Frank and a trusted colleague. His colleague asked, “Do I even want to be here next year?” while Frank was shaking his head with the same question. (Interview 1)

For Frank to be truly satisfied with his job, his ideal work environment would need to provide feedback on his passion and his artistic self that will arouse feelings of “Ah, this is what it’s about.” (Interview 1). Unfortunately, he hasn’t felt like that in a long while and he does not think that teaching is going to do that for him. He admitted that he is constantly on the lookout for a practical opportunity that will allow him to pursue music, writing, acting, or some sort of performing in a realistic way. This comes back to his definition of job satisfaction which would require Frank to express his true self.

4.1.3.3 Aspects Affecting Job Satisfaction

Throughout the data collection process, Frank’s answers kept leading back to one word: relationships. This was surprising to Frank as he expressed during our third interview because he sees himself as being “not relationship driven but idea or concept-driven” (Interview 3). However, a close look at his codes shows that all relationships with different stakeholders play an important part in his job satisfaction.

A closer look at all the coded segments reveals that he talked about the interactions with the administration a total of 17 times and with his immediate supervisors an additional 9 times. Furthermore, he mentions his relationships with the students 13 times, with colleagues 10 times, and with parents 11 times. What is happening in these relationships and the kinds of interactions taking place surely influence his satisfaction in different directions and have an impact on his sense of achievement and perceptions of being seen and recognized. Finally, the last aspect that Frank talks about a total of 7 times is salary. This latter aspect, as to be discussed shortly, has become more of an issue in recent years.

“Hierarchies are my most loathed systems”

Frank made it abundantly clear that he not only dislikes hierarchies but also has a lack of trust in those in higher leadership positions. He often speaks about policies, rules, and expectations that are put forth by fiat and whose intentions he questions. In his current job at *School B*, he describes how certain decisions are being made - what platforms to use, what curriculum to follow and how to teach said curriculum - at the top without ever consulting the teachers. Frank believes that such decisions are being made with only one goal in mind: to please accreditation agencies or other relevant parties without regard for quality education. In his previous job at *School A*, he was used to having a trusted immediate supervisor to whom he could go with a problem and believe that it would be taken care of. And in most instances, they were taken care of. But what happens when there is no such supervisor to go to? Currently, a great source of dissatisfaction for him is the fact that he cannot rely on those in power. He is worried that his or the department's best interest is not what drives them. He says that he is afraid:

the English department will turn into a cog of an ignorant administration if there is no support for teacher autonomy, if anything that the administration says that they believe should be the way things work is not challenged. The English department might get turned into mindless drones, who just check boxes. (Interview 1)

There is a good explanation for why Frank considers this scenario as dangerous and that is because he values autonomy. He spoke fondly of his first job which allowed him “to teach the things that I wanted to teach” (Interview 1) in the security of the

knowledge that his principal was going to support him and back him up if and when problems arose. However, he does not feel the same when it comes to his current job.

Frank has developed an interesting theory as to what the problem might be with some people in leadership at *School B*. In his eyes, bad communication skills and a need to distill messages are part of the problem. Additionally, he fears that the communications, intentions, and desires of the administration are being misread and misinterpreted because he doubts that the messages delivered to the teachers reflect what they want. It just does not make sense to him, so Frank admits that “there's sort of that lack of trust where I think like that's not what they're really thinking” (Interview 1). He is justified in having such feelings as he has experienced a constant break of promises in previous jobs. Each year he was given more work and more responsibilities with the promise that it would be better *next year*. The years came and went and “those promises just never, never came through” (Interview 1). In his current job, facing similar situations he is adamant about taking matters into his own hands or “stop this shitshow” (Journal). He is against the changes to the curriculum that are being recommended because in his opinion instead of “giving the middle school curriculum a backbone [...] it is making a skin bag in which we all have to stuff the bones and muscle” (Journal). Such a powerful metaphor explains why the following is going on in his mind:

Can I somehow get the admin to see how ridiculous these suggestions are?
Do I link arms with other teachers? new teachers? established teachers? Do I read the situation more and decide on a strategy? come up with the right tactics to present to other teachers or talk to them first? (Journal)

In our last interview, Frank shared that recently he has come to terms with the fact that whatever impact he might have at the school is now limited to his immediate environment. As a teacher in the grade 5 building, isolated and excluded from the other grades, he does not see himself changing how things are done in the sixth, seventh or eighth grades. He is now confident that he is seen and heard within the microenvironment he finds himself in and he is trying to change things within that locus. This shift in perspective has helped him feel considerably more satisfied with his job as he expresses, “I used to have very high expectations of job satisfaction.” (Interview 3).

“There’s more to you than I know”

Frank talks a lot about his students. In his 24-year-long career, he has worked with students of all ages - ranging from early middle school to high school, to university to adult learners and has derived some sort of satisfaction from all of them. In his experience with high school students at the private parochial school, Frank talks about the intellectually rewarding conversations he had with the students. On top of that, he speaks with affection of the sense of community that existed between the teachers and parents to the point that he was often invited to Thanksgiving dinners at their homes. At the community college, the last job he had before moving to Turkey, the source of satisfaction was the lack of stress due to subject matter expertise when teaching linguistics, and the connections formed between him and his students while teaching writing. At the language school in Ankara, what provided him with satisfaction was the fact that his adult learners were there because they wanted to learn and there was no stress or pressure from the employer. However, it is with his current students that he’d rather work because that is where he derives the most pleasure from.

Frank currently teaches ten-year-olds and expresses how he feels about that as follows:

there's still something there worth working on and holding on to and figuring out and they're more valuable at that age. And I've really started holding on to that. Yeah, they're shitheads but they're young shitheads with some potential still, some promise, something worth working on. And that's where I've been trying to change my thinking, the world is full of shitheads, don't give up on it. (Interview 1)

The reason why Frank refers to them as he does is because of the behavioral issues he faces in the classroom. He teaches kids who one on one are lovely but when put together in one classroom become “aggressively rebellious and defiant” (Interview 2) and won't stop talking. He shared a story of a student who despite being academically successful struggles to behave age-appropriately. This student is also disruptive as he is constantly “standing up, moving, talking, making comments” (Interview 2) which makes it hard to teach. Another student, a girl he describes as having an attitude, “rolling her eyes, controlling the conversation, and making fun of

the other kids” (Interview 2) also poses a problem for him. Frank admits that classroom management is what causes him the most stress.

Despite everything, however, he has not and will not give up on them. Even though he does not believe that systems work, he was willing to put in the effort to implement and upkeep a classroom management system. He expresses surprise in the fact that the system worked and is proud of how quickly his students adapted to it. In his own words, “honestly, I felt better after that class than I usually do, so I need to remember that investing a little effort in a system pays off.” (Journal). The best part of it all is that the students also appreciated it. Frank shared in one of his journal entries that “They agreed that they felt more respected by the whole class. they heard more. they were less confused. It worked.” He saw that as quite an achievement, so he decided to implement another system that rewards positive behaviors. By giving points for the successful completion of certain tasks and the display of subjective positive behavior on the classroom management tool, ClassDojo, he hopes to encourage his students to do well. The message that he wants to share is that “I care and see [their] value.” (Interview 3).

Another thing that Frank has found to be successful when working with this age group in terms of forming connections is telling them something they do not often hear: “There's more to you than I know.” (Interview 2). He elaborates,

The kids aren't told that a lot. The students need to know that I know. You are full of mysteries. I know that there are a lot of things about you that I don't know. Because we tell kids I know you I get you, I understand you and the kids are always thinking `You don't.` (Interview 2)

He tried such an approach with the one girl previously mentioned. He tells the story as follows:

She made some joke and I said I know why you said that. Or I know why you did that. And she's like, No, you don't. And then I stopped, and I said to her like, you're right. I don't know. I don't know why you said that. I don't know what you were thinking and there are a lot of things you think I don't know. And so, all I can say to you is when you do this when you do that, and the conversation switched right there where I stopped telling her I know everything about you. And I said I don't know but it's okay if I find out more. I think that's important. (Interview 2)

This one conversation had such a significant effect on his interactions with her to the point where despite problems still existing, things are a lot better. Her parents told Frank that she loves him and she all but said it when she gave him a very nice Teacher's Day card. Frank acknowledges that she continues to have problems but one thing he is sure about is, "I am not going to lose her!" (Interview 2).

"Turns out we're a good team"

Going back to relationships with adults in his work environment, Frank speaks a lot about his colleagues. He reminisced about some colleagues from his old job with whom he felt connected and shared some good experiences such as club sponsorship etc. Even though he's not at the same job anymore, he continues to call some of those people friends and is still in touch with them even though they are not in the country anymore. As far as his current colleagues go, Frank is happy to work with them. He says, "I've been fortunate to be able to mostly deal with adults that I'm happy dealing with day to day" (Interview 1). He speaks positively about visiting the shared room to sit, catch his breath, and talk to the same five teachers who also teach fifth graders. Frank perceives them to be a good group that gets along well. Despite some complaints about one person, Frank still finds these interactions with his colleagues to be positive and not stressful.

Collaboration is important for Frank, and he feels that he does indeed collaborate with his team. Despite his skepticism when it comes to belonging to a team, he enjoys being asked his opinion and input about different matters as happens when a more senior colleague, who is also sort of the fifth-grade coordinator consults with him. He mentions examples of such interactions with his colleague, whom he describes as humble, patient, and with a good sense of humor when they discuss curriculum or planning issues. Perhaps what makes these interactions positive in Frank's eyes is the fact that she "doesn't roll her eyes at any questions" (Journal) and this is important for him since "it's a tough thing for me to ask for help. I hate admitting that I need help. I hate admitting when I don't know something. That's a personal thing." (Interview 2). Having found the courage to ask for help from his colleagues, he jokingly says "weird how asking for help when you need it can get

you ... help. when you need it” (Journal). One more thing that seems to help Frank’s relationships with his colleagues is that they appear to be on the same page about many things.

Collaboration outside the English department happens occasionally but when they do they seem to be constructive. Frank provides a few reasons why more collaboration does not take place. First of all, there exists what he calls the “interest wall” (Interview 2). He is an English teacher and math, and social studies are not fields that he is interested in. Secondly, there is the problem of the language barrier. Even though communication is possible to a certain degree with everyone, he admits that “if they spoke English much more fluently, I think I would easily get into [the subjective approaches to marking math] conversation much more.” Here Frank is referring to an instance when the interest wall has come down and he would like to discuss an interdisciplinary matter with his colleagues who teach math. Finally, the last reason given is workload. Frank tells of an expectation from the administration regarding more interdisciplinary collaboration:

They've been talking about doing interdisciplinary and so that's become sort of a talk that they're kind of nudging on pushing it on the fifth grade “since you have the students a lot. Maybe you should do the interdisciplinary unit” and we're thinking, that's not how logic works. Since you're already doing a lot, maybe you should do more! yeah, I wouldn't say that B follows A there. But there would be some collaboration there obviously. (Interview 2)

This heavy workload is also understood when he gives another example of attempting to reach out to one of the math teachers. He says that while her English is pretty good, he is reluctant to ask her a question because she is very hardworking and always sitting at her desk working. He knows that if he does, “her attention comes up and she gets into the conversation, and I don't want to do that to her.”

An unlikely partner for Frank has been found in his students’ parents. When discussing his decent levels of satisfaction over the few weeks preceding our first interview, one of the reasons was interactions with the parents. He has found that parents can be part of the solution when it comes to classroom management. Here is how he puts it, “the type of feedback that I give to the students and the parents actually goes a long way to shaping their behavior.” So, staying in touch with them is

a goal Frank has set for himself. And these communications should be not only negative, reporting misbehavior or low performance, but also encouraging and reporting growth and improvement. He hopes that through the emails exchanged with the parents, the students will understand that “I am not the enemy” (Interview 3). On the contrary, he and the parents are all on the same side, his students’ side. In his current job, Frank appreciates the fact that he only has 2 classes which translates into more time with his students. This has helped on two fronts: the relationships with the students and with the parents:

I have stories about each but at the end of the first week, I had all the students’ names easily. In the second class, I was able to look at every student and use their name. I am able to go to the parents and say, I have a lot of things I can tell you about your child. I can definitely show you that I know and have been paying attention to your child. That makes a huge difference. (Interview 2)

However, this has not always been the case. In his last job at *School A*, Frank had approximately 140 students per year, and this made the connection with them weaker and the communication with the parents less productive. He confesses to sometimes being unable to recall the student during a meeting or provide clear and specific feedback about any issues to the parents. Now, on the other hand, he says he is “able to go to the parents and say, I have a lot of things I can tell you about your child.” (Interview 2).

Good relationships with his students’ parents have not always been the case for Frank. He describes the common perception teachers hold of parents, as “a school of sharks just ready to dine on the chum” (Interview 2). This was the case at his first job at the parochial school when Frank decided to teach *Odyssey* and ran into some parents who said, “We don't want our kids to learn these things. These books are dangerous. You shouldn't be teaching that” (Interview 1). This kind of parental interference and other examples have perhaps caused Frank to look for and develop strategies on how to better deal with the parents. Here is what he means:

When you're going to talk to parents, you have to be ready. And when they come at you, I gotcha. Yeah, it's like you're not gonna knock me over because I was ready for that. And then get them into a dance right away. And you're like, Yeah, there's no fight. Here. We're doing the same thing. We're working together. Your kid is so important. Your kid really has so much potential, and

your kid can do so much, and I want to help them do that. And then the parents are like, yes, and boom, they're on your side. (Interview 2)

By being on the same page with parents and working with them towards the same goal, Frank is developing partnerships with parents and learning to rely on them more often. He suggests instead of looking at parents as a school of sharks we should recruit their help in figuring things out and problem-solving because “if the parents are on your side and you have them all solve problems and work on things, what an amazing situation that could be. It's a community that has your back.” (Interview 2). Luckily, he experienced such a situation very recently when a parent responded to a group email asking for his students’ help in locating his laptop charger. She offered to reach out to the other parents through WhatsApp and give him their charger until he found his. Frank’s reaction was, “It floored me, and I thought what you're trying to help me out this much. I mean, why would you try to help me? Why would you?” (Interview 2). His joy was obvious as he was retelling the story.

“The money is what's got me there”

Frank got into teaching because he cared and in his first job he says, “I went in thinking I was going to change the system” (Interview 1). He often talks about giving to the community or seeing learning happening right in front of his eyes as what keeps him going in his job as a teacher as he does in this instance “I'm putting something good into the world. This one kid who, whose eyes opened wide upon a realization. That does something for me, I value that.” (Interview 1). More importantly, tied to Frank’s definition of job satisfaction is the feeling that he has something valuable to offer and that what he does matters. He likes knowing that his workplace and its community need something that he has because it gives him the sense that he is making a difference at his job. However, Frank admits that these are very occasional things, and the more practical reason why he is still in the profession, despite constantly questioning “Why the hell am I doing this?” (Interview 1), is money.

As a new teacher in America, Frank’s priority was learning, growing, and being seen. Money was not an issue that concerned him since during his time as an adjunct

professor he felt he was paid well enough. With his move to Turkey, his first job as an instructor at a language school paid very little but he was happy there. So even then, the money didn't really matter. But when his friends left the school for a better-paying job and started telling him about it, "the idea of money became important" (Interview 1). So, he left a job he enjoyed to take a job that was harder, more stressful, and left him feeling like he was barely scraping by both personally and professionally in *School A*. He continued to stay there for five years because he convinced himself that somehow, despite everything, this job was worth it. This went on until an event, which Frank describes as "the money became something that they stabbed us in the back" (Interview 1), happened. He is referring to a change in his contract which resulted in major financial loss. Once more, in addition to the dissatisfaction felt with the salary changes, Frank is using language that reflects his lack of trust in the administration and those in power. As the only thing keeping him at his job was taken away, Frank decided to leave his job, the reasoning being, "If that's why I went there, then that's why I'm leaving." (Interview 1). At *School B*, an international school, the salary is more satisfying, so not having to worry about his financial situation means that he can concentrate on what truly matters. He says that "the stress comes from the kids and I'm figuring out ways to be a positive part of that stress and so far, I see it can be rewarding." (Interview 1).

4.1.4 The Case of Grace

4.1.4.1 Definition of Job Satisfaction

"I would say community, a strong, supportive community"

For Grace, the first word that comes to mind when thinking of job satisfaction is without a doubt, community. She believes that everyone has a unique set of skills and experiences that they bring to any situation, and all of these are valuable to the whole community. For Grace, it is extremely important to rely on the experiences and expertise of everyone rather than on one person. When people work together, they can build and improve. Forming such relationships in the workplace is what she loves about the job. As she talks about such an environment, she was a part of years ago she says, "It really showed me the power of community and how it can't rely on one person, that it's everybody together. So, my ideal situation is working in a

community that's powerful together. (Interview 1). Grace says that her relationship with her students is also really important since after all, "that's what got me into teaching." (Interview 1), however, "I don't neglect any relationships. It's everything, a balance of the two." (Interview 3). Unfortunately, for Grace, relationships seem not to be the equivalent of job satisfaction. She confesses that in her second job, a charter school she helped found, she found exactly what she was looking for in terms of relationships, however, it still was not enough. She says, "I'm not really sure why it didn't work out. But that's definitely what I loved about it. I had good relationships there, so it can't just be relationships." (Interview 1).

In answer to her dilemma, Grace offers teacher autonomy as an indispensable component of job satisfaction. The evidence she provides for this can be found in the following excerpt: "Part of the reason I enjoyed [my first job in Turkey] so much was, that I had my freedom to be creative. And there was no consequence for failure; there was no fear of failure. And so, I think that is a big thing." (Interview 1). Since she considers teaching to be an art and considers herself to be creative, the ability to express herself freely inspires and fulfills her. As a graduate of a writing program, she enjoys writing in general, but most importantly she finds pleasure in creating English curriculums so much so that referring to the same job she says, "I just created everything, and it really made me find my creativity again and find my joy of teaching again." (Interview 1).

In brief, what Grace sees job satisfaction to be is *the existence of a strong community where each member is valued for their skills and the expertise they bring to the table and contributes to the improvement of the community while still feeling autonomous enough to make decisions without the fear of failure*. This, coupled with her love for her students and the teaching profession in general, provides the perfect ground for Grace to experience job satisfaction.

4.1.4.2 Levels of Job Satisfaction

"Maybe it's time to start writing that book"

For Grace, it was not easy to answer this question as clearly expressed here "I'm not sure, I'm in a weird state this year." (Interview 1). She admits that due to the current

situation, with the global COVID-19 pandemic and the changes that have come about as a result, she has contemplated not only leaving her job but the teaching profession completely. Part of the reason why this was the case was also the fact that her school made her feel like she had no say or power over her career, which ties back to her definition of job satisfaction. Certain decisions were made that affected how and what she taught which left her completely unmotivated and dissatisfied.

During the last couple of years, these feelings of powerlessness were sometimes overpowered by a desire to take matters into her hand. However, they were overcome by thoughts of not being ready to “stick my neck out, yet” (Interview 3) as she has found taking initiative and problem-solving to be great investments which often lead to disappointment. The use of the word yet is interesting because it implies that Grace can still possibly take action. After our third and final interview, Grace sent me an email with her wrap-up reflections which confirmed my suspicions. She writes that she was offered a position that would give her decision-making power and the ability to truly influence things for the better. And she accepted saying “that I should have been the one [to apply for the role last year] and it was a mistake that I didn’t.” (E-mail). Ultimately, Grace decided to stay, and she has two good reasons for her decision. First of all, teaching is still something she loves. As she puts it, “I still enjoy teaching, and that couldn’t be taken from me.” (Interview 1). Secondly, despite all the challenges and heartbreaks, Grace expresses satisfaction with the people she worked with last year and the new people she is currently working with. The relationships truly matter to her.

4.1.4.3 Aspects Affecting Job Satisfaction

The most common theme of the interview with Grace, mentioned well over 30 times, was the administration interwoven with aspects of ineffective communication and a general feeling of mistrust. There were also instances when the administration and those in power were spoken of in a positive light, but these were rare which means this aspect was primarily a source of dissatisfaction. The next most important aspect for Grace, talked about in 20 instances, is her relationship with her colleagues and the teamwork they engage in. Unlike Herzberg's (1965) expectation, for Grace,

positive relationships were a source of satisfaction whenever they occurred. The third most common topic, which came up 11 times and is perhaps related to the first two, is workload. She talks about how it serves as a demotivator while her relationship with her students, which makes the core of her job, an aspect that brings satisfaction, comes up 8 times.

“There always seems to be a cloud of confusion”

Grace is dissatisfied with the way the management at *School B* makes decisions and communicates with the teachers. This is the biggest source of frustration for Grace precisely because she perceives the management to be “unclear or too weak to be clear about things and make decisions about topics. When the principal or director puts forth a mandate without discussion, it becomes very demotivating for the people.” (Interview 1). One way this behavior is manifested is through mixed messages that leave teachers guessing and speculating about their implementation. The example Grace provides here is about logging in on Zoom for students who were absent as it was unclear as to who had access to the platform. Was it students with Covid? Was it students who were sick but not Covid positive? Or was it students who couldn’t go to school due to the weather conditions? After a while of struggling to understand the messages sent out, Grace decided that the best course of action was to just log in no matter what. If someone joined, fine, if not, still fine. In a different instance, the communication was so unclear that the teachers didn’t know whether a scheduled meeting was going to be online or face-to-face. In trying to figure out what changed from the original plan, Grace recalls the following exchange with a colleague who exclaimed, “I don’t know, read one of the seven emails.” (Interview 2). The complete list of sources of frustration for Grace includes “mixed messages of what I’m supposed to do and what should have been done or unclear expectations or expectations that aren’t realistic.” (Interview 1)

In addition to lack of clarity, another problem with communication at her workplace is related to the tone of messages. A lot of the things said, or emails sent out sound like directives that leave absolutely no room for discussion. Grace mentions blanket emails or mandates sent out from the management which the teachers are simply

expected to follow. One such example is a meeting during which she was told mid-year that they were going to change her grade level in the upcoming year. This event happened after she was asked whether she wanted the change and she kindly refused. Their reaction was not kind in turn. Grace recalls being told that they didn't like her attitude and that she was looking at the situation like the "glass was half full."

(Journal). In addition to turning the tables on her, they went ahead and forcefully changed her grade level anyway. To top it off, she was "ordered not to talk about this meeting" (Interview 3). This seems not to be an incident limited to Grace.

Apparently in other cases too, "the books and teachers have been forcibly changed by the administration." (Journal). All of these made her lose her trust in the administration and made her feel like she had no control over her career; she had lost her autonomy which is rather important to her. Grace reminisces about the autonomy she felt at her previous job saying, "what I loved about that job was it really was just what I needed because I had complete freedom to create my curriculum." (Interview 1). She sees teaching as an art and describes herself as a creative person, so this freedom to create is motivating and satisfies her. The communication style of her superiors is also affecting the level of collaboration between Grace and her colleagues. In the previously mentioned meeting, which was unexpectedly changed from face-to-face to online at the last minute, Grace was supposed to do a presentation for her colleagues. She had prepared handouts and questions and was rather excited about it. She says, "I'm such a dork but that's why I'm a teacher." (Interview 2). But when the meeting began, she was asked to just show the handout on the screen and after a brief back and forth they decided against it. Grace explains this decision as follows "I don't want to just show stuff, I want to discuss things" (Interview 2) and an online, one-sided conversation would not have enabled that.

The last aspect of communication that Grace is dissatisfied with is the mode of communication. She says that a lot is communicated through WhatsApp groups, and she thinks of them as "the new PA system" (Interview 2). They are an indispensable part of the daily functioning of the school and were a part of Grace's professional life ever since she joined School B but with the beginning of the pandemic, the traffic became a lot heavier. In trying to keep up with all the messages, Grace invested in a

smartwatch but even that did not help. She kept missing important messages due to all the noise in between. Also, she does not like messaging in general for two reasons. The first one is that she could not trust the veracity of what was being written. She says, “It couldn't be my form of communication because a lot of it was speculation and not facts and I just didn't have the brain space for it.” (Interview 2). The second reason is how some messages can be misinterpreted. She says:

Messaging in general, I take issue with as a form of communication because there's a lot of tones and passive-aggressive attitude that is put into the message that's inappropriate. It's a message that should go directly to a person, not to a group of people. And I think it can be dangerous. (Interview 2).

Grace goes as far as to say that using WhatsApp to communicate in the workplace is “unprofessional” (Interview 3), which is why she decided to stop using it during the pandemic and removed herself from any groups that she was not obligated to stay in. Despite everything, Grace did mention times in which using a WhatsApp group helped her overcome difficult situations. Such was the time when she received an emergency phone call from one of her children’s teachers and needed to leave urgently. A quick message asking for help resulted in three teachers racing to her classroom to assist. This support left Grace free to go to her daughter and extremely grateful to her colleagues.

This feeling of satisfaction, of being cared for, has surfaced every so often and in one of her journal entries, Grace wrote about one of the most recent ones. Winter in Ankara was uncharacteristically cold and snowy this year and on one such day driving to school was not only difficult but also dangerous. Having three kids in the car made the task even more challenging for her. This is why, when the school principal emailed saying the school would reimburse anyone choosing to take a taxi to work instead of driving, Grace felt relieved and grateful. She emailed back thanking them for thinking of the teachers. Nevertheless, this feeling was short-lived as upon arriving at school Grace found that students were given the option to stay at home due to the adverse weather conditions and join lessons online. Grace expresses her frustration as follows:

Can I stay home due to weather conditions, too? I am having a hard time pinning down this feeling - if a student/family decides not to come because of weather conditions - doesn't this suggest that the weather conditions are difficult? Maybe the roads are dangerous? Doesn't that imply that it may be dangerous for me to come to school? (Journal)

This comes down to fair treatment. Grace does not believe that the administration is being fair to their teachers when not taking their and their family's needs into consideration the same way they do their students.

“I wish I knew the new people better”

From her very first job in the high needs middle school in New York, Grace has always relied on her colleagues to pull through. When asked what makes a good day, one of the first things that she listed was “when I see teamwork with my colleagues” (Interview 1). But this collaboration is not only for the benefit of teaching, it also has to do with how they support one another during tough times. She describes the group of people she worked with there as follows:

My colleagues that I worked with were young, hopeful, dreamers. They really wanted to make a difference in the world. And everybody was going through war, and we would all go out for drinks on Friday, and it was just like a support group. (Interview 1)

At the same time, Grace was attending evening master's classes and her cohort was another great source of support for her. She found a similar, powerful community of teachers at her second job at the charter school. There, Grace learned about the power of community and how one person cannot do it all, but everybody together can. An environment like that is her ideal workplace. Unfortunately, this is not the kind of environment where she currently finds herself. Even if she has had great isolated experiences there, the general feeling is that she does not have good relationships with everyone she works with. And this is not for lack of trying.

One of the reasons why Grace has not been able to connect with all her colleagues, even those in the English department, is due to the physical separation between the fifth-grade teachers from the rest of the school. Grace says that she has good relationships with the teachers in the grade 5 building, both with the teachers in her department and outside. She is currently working with a teacher she has previously

worked with and two new colleagues who joined the team just this year. However, three new people joined this year but with whom she has been unable to connect. Grace finds this to be a great impediment to the efficient functioning of the entire department. The outcome of this is twofold. First of all, certain issues have come up that need to be resolved as a team, but this has not happened thus far. Grace says,

conversations that end with “Well, let's agree to disagree.” are detrimental to a team because that should never be the conclusion of a conversation. We bring these things up to say, “Hey, where are my gaps? Do you agree with me?” If I had, in my team four or five people disagreeing with me, a majority, I would go with the majority because that's the whole strength of a team. I'm not going to assume that you guys are crazy. I'm going to rely on that combined experience and judgment. I'm not going to agree to disagree. I'm going to compromise and build something together. And I think a lot of us feel that way on the team. (Interview 2)

Since there is a lack of cooperation and no compromises are being reached, a lot of decisions are being taken by one or two people which leaves Grace feeling disheartened. Not only are important decisions just being made and then communicated as news to the rest of the team, but there is also an undertone of superiority that is undermining the work previously done by Grace and some of her colleagues. This atmosphere is hurting everyone, including the students, according to Grace. What she wishes were the case is “having something in place and then being able to hash it out together” and “come up with something that makes sense for us as a team, and then tell [the administration] what makes sense.” (Interview 2). Grace has an interesting theory to explain why this is happening. She believes that “when the wrong person is put in leadership, things stop functioning. And that's where we are right now.” (Interview 2). Unfortunately, even if she could do something to improve the situation, she is unwilling to do anything about it. Grace sums up her feelings with the sentence, “I'm not feeling very brave” (Interview 3). Part of the reason why she is lacking the courage to take action and take matters into her own hands is perhaps the fact that she perceives self-preservation as a crucial component of the culture at her workplace.

Nonetheless, it is important to point out some of the positive experiences that Grace talked about over the course of the interviews because within these exchanges lies

the key to the solution to the current problem. During her third year at school B, Grace was put in the position of Coordinator for grade 5 which meant she managed a team of four other people. She was thrilled about this role because she would be carrying forward a wonderful program implemented by someone she admired. The best part was the opportunity to work with her four colleagues because,

They were four amazing people. And we got together every week. We had a three-hour block of planning, two for reading, one for writing. I would give them the plan overview and then together we would work out the details. As a team, we just divided work so well. And we were very efficient. And we just kept coming up with great ideas, kept improving things and making mistakes too, but we just worked so well together. It was just an amazing year. (Interview 1)

Part of the reason why this is important to Grace is that in addition to the great collaborations and growth that took place, the team formed bonds that go beyond those of simple work friends. And this is also why to this day, Grace insists that the problems in her workplace would be much easier to solve if there were stronger relationships. She says, “When you have relationships with people you really work at, you work through these miscommunications for the sake of the relationship” (Interview 1).

“Is it ever done?”

When talking about some of the work she does or has done in the past, Grace uses the expression “take on.” This implies that she either volunteers for or accepts a lot of new projects either because she enjoys them or because she feels somehow responsible. For one such project, she decided to take the lead because “I looked at my colleagues and they didn’t look comfortable.” (Interview 3). In contrast, she took on the role of grade 5 coordinator because she loved the program and how it had opened up new ideas for her and given her a fresh look at teaching. In another story, Grace recounts how the school was changing from one system to another seeking accreditation and there was a great amount of work to be done. She says,

I’m working on our unit three because [...] last year’s group did not do. And so, we have to do it. And I’m most familiar with this curriculum [...] so I had taken it on because I need to organize the things that I know we did before. (Interview 1)

All these responsibilities add up and work needs to be taken home to lighten the amount of workload that has to be dealt with at work. Her daily schedule is so hectic that she doesn't even have time to drink coffee. Even though Grace admits that technically she doesn't have to bring work home, she often does. Her evening routine goes as follows; "Usually after I put my kids to bed, I work on something, and I try to pace myself because that's how I handle stress. I get things done ahead of time." (Interview 1). One would expect to be able to handle the work within work hours as the number of lesson hours is reasonable. Grace herself says, "I am very fortunate. I only have two groups. Because the fifth grade has more English teaching hours instead of 7, we have 13" (Interview 1). Clearly, this is not the case and Grace's typical day is a lot more hectic than it seems due to all the meetings and planning.

Additionally, the workload has exponentially increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only are the expectations regarding the hybrid lessons unclear, but they are also extremely time-consuming. The reason for this Grace explains is:

It has been messy to track who was in class, who was online, who was home and should be online, who was home with a sick report and can't be online, who was in a sport, who missed Monday's vocabulary quiz and was excused, who wasn't. (Journal)

Not only tracking is difficult, but the process of teaching with some students online and some face-to-face has proved to be taxing. There are a million things to consider, to make sure everyone is included and able to participate. Grace provides two example tasks that increase the workload for her, "I am tied to my desk for instruction or read aloud so the Zoomies can hear me. The other difficulty is note-taking. I've solved this by writing on the board and the zoom chat." (Journal).

Equally important is the strain the pandemic has put on teachers due to substitutions. With the need to get tested for any sign of infection and the need to isolate if positive, teachers are required to sub their colleagues' classes. During the week she journaled, Grace's kids got sick and had to get tested which meant she had to leave work to take them to the hospital. She did, but "it all took longer than expected and I wasn't going to make it back in time. My colleagues covered my classes. When I got to school I was stressed, hadn't eaten, and had a major headache" (Journal). When

the results came in positive, she had no choice but to quarantine with them and the responsibility of her classes once again fell on her colleagues. She prepared lesson plans and they taught instead of her. Grace writes:

My colleague has told me she has a “crazy day”, and my other colleague wrote that they are being “pulled in many directions”. I wanted to join their meeting to iron out the exam and project details (I’d been working from home), but they are both fried. (Journal)

As a result of all these, Grace says that the tension at her workplace has been palpable with teachers being unable to communicate, and collaborate, and therefore ending up resenting one another for the additional work. Speaking about her team, Grace says, “having conversations together this year has been really difficult - our meeting times are continually disrupted by other pressing matters such as coverage, extra homeroom meetings, etc.” (Journal). Even when important decisions need to be taken, the team cannot accomplish more than partial, unfinished conversations. It is important to note that COVID-19 is not the only reason for the increased workload. Grace acknowledges that an important factor is the added responsibilities placed by the administration on the teachers' already laden plates to implement or manage certain international programs. Here is how she summarizes it, “there's been quite a huge level of frustration with people, and I see everyone working so hard.” (Interview 1).

However, Grace understands that “it's hard not to resent extra workloads, and it's easy to resent the person, but I don't take it personally because I understand their feelings with what is happening in schools right now with the covid regulations.” (Journal). This should not be an excuse to allow the situation to continue. Grace suggests that the administration should take matters in hand and help out their teachers in managing their workload more efficiently. Having teachers seek out answers or digging through emails is not the way to go about it. This having been the case has led Grace to believe that when trying “to find answers there became more problems.” (Interview 1). Grace describes the ideal scenario as follows:

There are lots of things that need to be done urgently and now and I think in return, we need time to do it. So, I think that time needs to be given. So, the ideal time would be: you need to put all your unit plans on hold. We're closing school for today so you can do that. And here's a person that you can

ask any question you have to that knows the answers. And we're doing this new thing. You got to get it up right now, so we're going to give you these periods off so you can focus on it and do it. (Interview 1).

Whether something like this is likely to happen, Grace does not know. Truthfully, she has very little faith that it might as she believes that education is not put first in her school and maybe this is because at the end of the day, “private schools are business.” (Interview 1).

“My students are my caffeine!”

During the interview, Grace mentioned a few times that she enjoys teaching. When asked what exactly she enjoyed her answer was:

I like kids. I mean, that's what got me into teaching. I like the middle school age. I like their drama, and I like how much they change from fifth to eighth grade. I actually like fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth. I love that age group. It's totally my thing. Because I love every stage of that age. (Interview 1).

A good day for her must entail some kind of positive interaction with her students. In her own words, “A good day is when I can see and hear the students and be flexible” (Interview 1). She loves to connect with her students and be there for them in whatever shape or form they need her. From her very first job at the high needs middle school in New York City, Grace was aware of an important fact, “They needed to be crazy, and they needed me to be stable for them.” (Interview 1). This philosophy has accompanied her throughout her career and despite the ups and downs, it has often served her well. At her previous job, at a private foundation school in Ankara, one thing she regrets is precisely the fact that she was unable to form strong bonds with her students since she had about 180 students and only saw them a couple of hours a week. In her current job, on the other hand, she takes pride in the strong and close bonds she has formed with her students.

When talking about her classes a smile touches her lips. She talks about traditions they have created throughout the year that serve to further strengthen these bonds so important to Grace. She tells the following story to prove the point:

Once I told them how some days, we have a rough day because actually, a parent had told me a kid had a rough day. I said that's okay, I have rough days, mornings are tough. I said “If you have a rough day, just tell me and we're all gonna say, “You made it to school and did a good job. We're proud

of you.” And they loved it. So, Monday morning, I had forgotten about this and I said I had a rough couple of days. And my one student goes “Miss Grace, you made it to school today, good job!” and they all started clapping. It was beautiful. It was perfect. (Interview 2)

Even when students have behavioral issues, Grace still finds a way to connect with them. She explains that “somehow we have found our groove together, and we play, and we joke and when I'm serious, they get it.” (Interview 2). Perhaps this is due to her good classroom management skills, which according to Grace haven't always been great, but now they represent something she is proud of. This connection with her students, thankfully, did not wither during the pandemic and even online Grace says, “I was happy that I could stay connected with them.” (Interview 2).

4.2 Commonalities in Lived Experiences Regarding Job Satisfaction

The current study focused on three overarching objectives. To begin with, the definitions of job satisfaction based on the expatriate teachers' experiences were explored. Next, the researcher investigated the participants' current levels of job satisfaction based on their definitions and their lived experiences through a comparative lens. Their past experiences were also taken into account as the participants reflected on their current experiences. Finally, the aspects of the day-to-day work-life that affect job satisfaction either positively or negatively were examined closely. Further examination of the findings through an interpretative lens on the part of the researcher, three themes emerged, namely *relationships, community, achievement, and recognition of achievement; low levels of job satisfaction; and love for the job and community overshadowed by contextual aspects.*

4.2.1 Relationships, Community, Achievement, and Recognition of Achievement

Searching for the definition of job satisfaction was a strenuous journey and the definitions offered by the participants were as varied as the participants themselves. When directly asked to define what job satisfaction meant to them, the participants all offered interesting answers which despite the differences, seemed to converge in a few critical ways. This can easily be explained through Locke's (1969) proclamation that happiness at work is dependent on what one most values, the importance placed

on these values, and the perception of whether the job helps or inhibits them in their efforts to reach these values. It seems that the participants of this study held similar values and they all looked at job satisfaction as “community.” Though in different ways and through different examples, they all expressed that they value belonging to a powerful community that enables strong relationships with different stakeholders, recognizes and values achievement, and engenders personal and professional growth. As Locke (1969) also emphasized, it becomes evident that the environment does indeed play an important role in coming up with the definition of job satisfaction. Also, the participants’ expectations of teaching as a profession and the gap that exists between that and reality, play a role in the definitions offered.

Danielle and Grace, especially, seemed to be thinking along the same lines when they equated job satisfaction to good relationships occurring within a strong and positive community that fosters communication, connection, collaboration, and even friendships a finding often found in teacher satisfaction literature (e.g., Aydın, 2012; Juozaitiene & Simonaitiene, 2011; Pepe et. al., 2017, Skliar, 2014; Subaşı, 2021; Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2006). They both believe that teaching as a profession demands the sharing of knowledge and expertise which in turn leads to the betterment of the community as a whole. In this regard, Nora’s ideal work environment converges with those of Danielle and Grace as she also equates it to a garden where growth is happening for both students and teachers. Similarly, Frank also sees contributing and giving to the community as a crucial part of job satisfaction. Additionally, one more similarity between the participants, particularly Danielle and Grace, is the fact that at the end of the day, the most important relationship, the one that played a role in their career choice as well as their ongoing decision to remain in the teaching profession is with the students. As a matter of fact, relationships with students are often listed as the top satisfier for teachers, especially those of EFL (e.g., Cowie, 2011; Karavas, 2010; Kaski, 2009;).

Nora and Frank tended to be more alike in their definitions of job satisfaction as they spoke primarily of what the work environment would afford them. Both participants conveyed how job satisfaction would be impossible if the workplace doesn’t allow

room for growth and achievement and ultimately recognition of that achievement. They both value professional development, though this does not necessarily mean that they aim to have administrative roles in their institutions. What satisfaction is to them is learning and helping others learn and then receiving much deserved praise from those in power. These teachers, who have high levels of self-efficacy, know they are doing a great job and take pride in doing so. However, it is still important to them that they are noticed, appreciated, and properly thanked for their efforts. It matters to them that their contributions have a positive impact on the school, and they want to know in what way. Though these feelings did not come up in Danielle and Grace's definitions of job satisfaction, they do surface in the discussion about aspects of the job that affect job satisfaction. With all this in mind, I attempted to come up with the definition of job satisfaction for expatriate EFL teachers in the Turkish K-12 context as follows: *Job satisfaction is the blooming of strong relationships based on mutual trust within a powerful community that engenders learning and professional and personal growth and where achievement is seen and recognized.*

4.2.2 Low Levels of Job Satisfaction

One common feedback the participants shared during the research study is how their participation helped them reflect on their current situations and feelings. A participant went as far as saying this was like therapy for her. As it happened in the coming up with a definition of the phenomenon researched in the current study, namely expatriate EFL teacher job satisfaction, the participants of this study seemed to also converge on relatively low levels of job satisfaction thus supporting the extensive body of research on the low levels of job satisfaction for expatriate teachers (Carson, 2013; Khan, 2016; Mullock, 2009). It is important to mention that the participants did at times experience higher levels of job satisfaction based on what was going on around them. This observation is important because it sheds light on the fact that job satisfaction is not static. The phenomenon of job satisfaction is deeply reliant on various events surrounding it. Nonetheless, these moments of job satisfaction being at higher levels were few and far in between.

The bottom line remains that the participants seem to be experiencing a lack of job satisfaction, and even dissatisfaction. These feelings were so pronounced that they led the teachers to contemplate the possibility of changing jobs (Danielle, Interview 2), quitting and finding another job, (Frank, Interview 2; Danielle, Interview 3), or leaving the teaching profession altogether (Grace, Interview 1; Frank, Interview 1; Nora, Interview 2). For two of the teachers who, albeit briefly, considered quitting teaching completely, Frank and Grace, the reason was to pursue a career in something that would give them more pleasure, arts or writing respectively. For Nora, on the other hand, her thoughts about quitting teaching, though fleeting, came about due to the uncertainty of her situation in general. She refers to the economy, the state of Turkey overall and her new home-owner status, and the stress resulting from the financial pressure to keep up with her mortgage payments. Such feelings are not surprising, especially at the time this research study was carried out due to among other things, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Multiple studies, including a systematic review of 21 studies by Li and Yu (2022), have reported lower teacher satisfaction due to the pandemic as well as a sharp increase in intention to quit (Minihan, Adamis, Dunleavy, Martin, Gavin & McNicholas, 2022; Trinidad, 2021). Danielle is the only participant who did not even mention the possibility of leaving teaching as a profession. I believe this to be because she perceives herself to be too close to retirement and the possibility of changing careers at this point is not only far-fetched but also unthinkable to her.

When the participants discussed their definitions of job satisfaction, they also imagined the ideal work environment in which they would feel most satisfied. Since their imagined work environments are as different as can be from their actual workplaces, the participants' low levels of job satisfaction can be attributed to the discrepancy between the two. Additionally, these levels can also be explained by the discrepancy between the teachers' values and the values and ideologies of the institutions where they work. (Evans, 2001). Not only that, but all the participants, except Nora, have teaching experience in their own countries and as is common in phenomenology, they also made use of their past experiences to make sense of their

current ones. They compared what used to be with what is and found their current situation to be lacking.

4.2.3 Love for the Job and Community Overshadowed by the Context

Since the participants defined job satisfaction differently, it is natural that they named a myriad of aspects that contribute to it either in a positive or negative way. However, since the participants of the current study seemed to share similar values, they were affected by similar things. As appears to be the case for expatriate teachers in general, the teachers interviewed here also listed the environment of the school as one of the facets of their jobs that made the biggest difference (Halicioglu, 2015; Richardson, 2002; Roskell, 2013).

Additionally, the most common dissatisfiers identified here provide support for Herzberg's (1959) Two-Factor theory. Policy and administration were at the top of the list for all four participants. Supervision and interpersonal relationships also came up regularly as a source of dissatisfaction, however, in contrast to Herzberg's (1965) claim, when supervision was done well and when relationships were positive, the participants felt more satisfied with their jobs echoing thus the literature on teacher job satisfaction (Bogler, 2001; Juozaitiene & Simonaitiene, 2011; Pepe, Addimando & Veronese, 2017). Salary and workload were the next two hygiene factors that emerged. Just as Herzberg (1968) explains, salary revealed its fluid nature in the current study as well. While three participants spoke at length about their dissatisfaction with the salary to the point that they considered quitting or did quit, they still saw salary as a motivator. They shared stories of how salary was the primary motivator for them to take their jobs. Two of Herzberg's hygiene factors, namely status and security, did not appear at all in the present study.

Of Herzberg's (1965) six motivators, four came up as motivating factors for the participants, namely, work itself, achievement, recognition of achievement, and growth. While responsibility was not something participants mentioned explicitly, they spoke about taking on projects, starting new initiatives, or having the autonomy to create. This may be interpreted as a desire to have more responsibilities at work.

Finally, advancement was only briefly mentioned by one participant, and this can be explained by the fact that there are very few real opportunities for advancement for teachers (Sergiovanni, 19687) and even fewer for expatriate teachers. See *Table 4.1* for a full rendering of the top hygiene and motivator factors reported by the participants of this study.

Table 4.1

Top Hygiene and Motivator Factors

	Hygiene	Motivators
Nora	Policy and Administration	Achievement
	Workload	Recognition of achievement
	Salary	Positive relationships with colleagues
Danielle	Policy and Administration	Work itself (Students)
	Interpersonal relationships with parents	Positive relationships with colleagues
	Salary	
Frank	Policy and Administration	Work itself (Students)
	Salary	Positive relationships with colleagues & parents
Grace	Policy and Administration	Positive relationships with colleagues
	Workload	Work itself (Students)

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Presentation

This phenomenological study was conducted with four expatriate EFL teachers in the K-12 system in Ankara, Turkey to gauge their definitions of job satisfaction, measure their current levels of job satisfaction, and identify the aspects of their jobs that most affect these levels. The data were collected through a survey, a series of 3 interviews with each participant, and journal entries written over the course of one week with a grand total of 5958 words.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the current study in a holistic way by referring to the existing literature on the job satisfaction of expatriate teachers. The chapter begins with a detailed discussion of the findings and ends with the conclusions which provide recommendations for future research.

5.1 Discussion of the findings

Definitions and Levels of Job Satisfaction

In an attempt to answer the first research question, coming up with a definition for job satisfaction was not easy (Locke, 1969). The results of the first research question revealed that the expatriate EFL teachers who participated in this study had different yet alike definitions of job satisfaction since they share certain values. These values in turn are translated into needs that need to be met to feel satisfied with one's job. (Evans, 1997; Locke, 1969). The participants of this study, overall, value community, relationships, achievement, and recognition for achievement. This means that some of the needs that they expect their work environment to meet, like

what has been found in teacher job satisfaction literature, would be the fostering of positive relationships with multiple stakeholders (Aydın, 2012; Juozaitiene & Simonaitiene, 2011; Pepe et. al., 2017, Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2006), opportunities for collaboration (Skliar, 2014; Subaşı, 2021), and continuous positive and constructive feedback (Erkaya, 2013) to build a sense of accomplishment (Sergiovanni, 1967). These similarities in their expectations lead to comparable definitions.

When it came to the levels of job satisfaction, all four participants reported relatively low levels of job satisfaction despite upswings every so often. The findings of the study support the existing literature on low levels of satisfaction of teachers in general and expatriate EFL teachers specifically (Carson, 2013; Khan, 2016; Kidger et. al., 2016; Mullock, 2009; Sadeghi & Sa'adatpourvahid, 2016). At the time this research study was carried out, the socio-economic situation in Turkey was a big concern for the participants. The economy of Turkey was and is undergoing a deep economic crisis with an ever-increasing cost of living as evidenced by high inflation rates (Gall, 2021; Kantur & Özcan, 2021), a worrisome devaluation of the Turkish Lira against foreign currencies, at a rate of more than 40% between early 2020 and January 2021 (Çakmaklı, Demiralp, Yeşiltaş, & Yıldırım, 2021). This situation has directly affected their salaries as was the case for Danielle and Nora, as well as Frank before he changed jobs, and has created a sense of financial instability and uncertainty. The participants perceive their employer as unable to provide financial security thus engendering feelings of dissatisfaction. Similar conclusions were reached by Mullock (2009). These feelings were exacerbated by the aftermath of the COVID-19 global pandemic which led to teachers' job satisfaction plummeting and emotional exhaustion and depression rising (Li & Yu, 2022). Low levels of satisfaction and high levels of burnout also contribute to high turnover intention (Minihan et. al., 2022; Trinidad, 2021)

Based on how the concept of job satisfaction is defined for teachers, it is safe to say that the reason why the participants' experiences in their workplaces are negative, their needs are not being met and their job satisfaction levels leave to desire is

because the environments they work in are so very different from where they come from. In expatriate teacher literature the terms culture shock and cultural adjustment are often used to explain the phenomenon of low job satisfaction (Hofstede, 2001; Hui et. al., 1999; Özcan, 2021; Thanh, 2018). Three of the participants are from North America - two western countries that couldn't be more different from Turkey according to Hofstede Insights (2018). The fourth participant, Nora, comes from Albania which is more culturally close to Turkey and her higher levels of satisfaction as compared to the other participants could be explained by this closeness.

Aspects Affecting Job Satisfaction

The findings of the current study support the existing literature in a critical way. They provide support for Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory in that what is intrinsic to teaching is part of the work itself and thus a motivator. Such aspects of their jobs are directly related to teaching, for instance, their relationships and interactions with their students and time spent in the classroom (Addison & Brundrett, 2008; Dinham and Scott, 1998; Karavas, 2010; Song, 2007; Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2006), however, it is the school environment that makes the biggest difference in how expatriate teachers feel about their job (Halicioglu, 2015; Richardson, 2002; Roskell, 2013). Per Herzberg's Two-Factor theory (1968) these environmental factors include supervision, coworkers and organizational policies, administrative practices, and pay, all of which came up in the results of this study. They are also known as hygiene factors which when unaddressed or mishandled lead to dissatisfaction. It is important to keep in mind that a country's culture affects the way companies and institutions are run and the job satisfaction of those who work in them. In a multi-level analysis of 33 countries and a total of 46,656 participants, Gu, Tan, Amin, Mostafiz and Yeoh (2021) maintain that what people value in a job does indeed differ from one culture to another as evidenced by Hofstede's (2001) NCM. Similarly, Spector, Cooper, Sanchez, O'Driscoll and Sparks (2001) summarize that the job satisfaction levels of the 5185 participants from 24 countries differed significantly among the different nations.

The teachers who participated in this study say that the greatest challenge for them is the *school policy and administration* which determines how the school is run. They expressed dissatisfaction with the leadership in their schools, be it the principal or leaders within departments or smaller teams. They expressed having feelings of mistrust towards the leaders and their intentions and not feeling supported or valued by them (Erman, 2016; Hoyland, 2021; Mehta, 2001; Yılmaz, 2014). The literature on teacher job satisfaction is full of studies that prove leadership plays a crucial role in increasing teacher satisfaction but to do that they must value and support their teachers, help with problem-solving, and aid them to grow as professionals (Buyukgoze-Kavas et. al., 2013; Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Ilgan, Parylo & Sungu, 2015; Kasimi & Hangişi, 2021).

The fact that it plays such an important role in the low levels of satisfaction of all four participants is very telling and echoes the findings of other research done in Turkey (Aydın, 2012; Aydın et. al., 2019; Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Han & Mahzoun, 2018; Hoyland, 2021; Kasimi & Hangişi, 2021). According to the NCM, Turkey is a High-Power Distance country which translates into people relying on those in power to make decisions and not challenging their authority. This is also reflected in the business world, as Pellegrini and Scandura (2006) point out in “inequality among members by stratification of individuals and groups with respect to power, prestige, status, wealth, and authority.” (p. 264). The fact that three of my participants come from Low Power Distance cultures leads naturally to a clash in values. With work experiences in America, Canada, and international schools in Asian countries where teachers experience higher levels of autonomy, these teachers struggle with the top-down approach to decision making and the multiple layers of hierarchy needed to negotiate to get answers. This is reminiscent of what Aydın et. al.’s (2019) participants refer to as centralist power structures. The Power Distance Dimension also affects communication and communication styles. In High Power Distance countries such as Turkey, it is socially acceptable to send out decisions as mandates, but this is not the case in the countries where the participants come from. As Keller (2015) reports, “it is not uncommon for [Turkish] teachers to visit the school leader’s

office only when invited. Among expatriate staff, often from Western cultures, many expect an ‘open door policy.’ (p. 910).

Additionally, all the participants in the study expressed dissatisfaction with the way decisions are made because it takes away their autonomy (Aydın et. al., 2019; Bogler, 2001, Dincer, 2019; Han & Mahzoun, 2018). Whether explicitly or implicitly, they all revealed an internal locus of control. They all try to control their environment and their day-to-day tasks and take the blame when things do not go as they should. This is important because expatriates from individualistic countries working in collectivistic host countries may struggle since, as Spector et. al. (2001) explained, they expect greater control over their work environment, take action and be more assertive in general. When this control or even the perception of control is taken away, it may have drastic consequences, such as quitting (Spector et. al., 2001). However, they felt like taking initiative or action to fix problems is not welcomed or tolerated in their workplaces, as is customary in collectivistic cultures. The Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension of the NCM could be used to explain what is happening here. According to the model, Turkey scores high on this dimension, and the evidence is seen in the workplace as well. For the participants of the current study, this was reflected in long and bureaucratic processes that require a lot of time to make significant changes or start new initiatives. This was a cause of frustration since three out of four, come from cultures that score low on this dimension. Even the fourth participant, Nora, whose country has a preference for uncertainty avoidance, is often frustrated by the school’s reluctance to initiate change. The experiences of my participants recall Erman’s (2016) study titled *Things Take Time Here*. With a culture deeply rooted in bureaucratic practices, even the smallest changes take forever. Despite this slow pace, the institutions where the participants work are still disorganized and make last-minute changes and announcements that interrupt the teachers’ day and get in the way of the planning (Hoyland, 202; Richardson, 2002).

The second most mentioned source of dissatisfaction was salary. The salary is part of what Herzberg (1974) refers to as a hygiene factor, but as previously found in

teacher satisfaction studies, when it is adequate, it serves as a motivator. (Iwu et. al., 2018; Juozaitiene & Simonaitiene, 2011). Three of the participants spoke at length about their dissatisfaction with their salaries at *School A* which was the cause of great financial stress and job dissatisfaction to the point where it drove two of them to quit. In this regard, the participants of this study are similar to LETs, as Turkish teachers also express dissatisfaction with salary and wages (Çoğaltay et. al., 2016; Demirtaş, 2015; Dincer, 2019). However, unlike the locals, salary is even more crucial for expatriates as oftentimes it serves as the main reason for self-initiated expatriation (Richardson, 2002; Sumalinog, 2021). Nonetheless, this was not the case for the participants of this study. Three of them moved to Turkey to follow their spouses while the other to escape air pollution in Shanghai. What the issue seems to be is that the salary was the main incentive for these teachers to enter the private school system in Turkey and now with the incentive gone, dissatisfaction has crept in. Literature on expatriate teacher satisfaction has made it abundantly clear that in addition to being a driver that instigates expatriation, salary is also what motivates them to stay in the country (Brown & Schulze, 2007; Iwu et. al., 2018; Mehtap, 2001; Mullock, 2009; Mulridge, 2009; Richardson et. al., 2006; Sharif et. al., 2016; Sharma, 2013).

Lastly, as seems to be the case in the existing literature, workload is one of the most common complaints of teachers worldwide (Hawes & Nelson, 2021; Sergiovanni, 1967; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015; Tran, 2018). The participants of this study also expressed low levels of satisfaction when it comes to unrealistic expectations and heavy workloads. Expatriate teachers teaching in Turkey complain about heavy workloads that oftentimes interfere with their personal lives. What astounds them more is the fact that a lot of the work assigned to them unnecessary and redundant (Aydın, 2019; Erman, 2016; Han & Mahzoun, 2018; Kasimi & Hangişi, 2021; Subaşı, 2021). Also, they mention having to attend lengthy meetings and handling a multitude of tasks with competing deadlines. Being assigned interesting work is especially important for employees from individualistic countries since their job satisfaction tends to increase when work is interesting (Gu et. al., 2021). Concerns of heavy workloads are not always the case with expatriates in Turkey (Han & Mahzoun, 2017). The discrepancy could be explained by the fact that the participants

in Han and Mahzoun's (2017) study lived in a small town with very limited options for socialization outside of work, as opposed to Ankara and other big cities that offer a livelier social life.

The results of the study provide support to the existing literature on teacher struggles with parents (Hawes & Nelson, 2021; Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2003; Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2006) and particularly those of expatriate teachers (Caravatti et. al., 2014; Carson, 2013). Danielle is the only participant who expressed higher dissatisfaction with her relationship with parents than her salary, though two other participants did mention it too. This seems to be a common complaint in Turkey where unwanted parental involvement is the norm (Aydın, 2012; Han & Mahzoun, 2018; Hoyland, 2021). Perhaps due to the cultural differences in child upbringing (Aydın, 2019; Hoyland, 2021; Keller, 2015;) or the nature of private schools (Hoyland, 2021), Turkish parents interfere a lot in their children's education and with their unreasonable expectations of the expatriate teachers (Han & Mahzoun, 2018) sometimes leading to a teachers' low self-efficacy (Han & Mahzoun, 2018; Kasimi & Hangişi) and in these cases, the administration takes the side of the parents (Hoyland, 2021). On the other end of the spectrum, the participants spoke of parents who are completely unsupportive or unappreciative (Han & Mahzoun, 2017, 2018). Despite the challenges with the parents, the teachers reported appreciating the cases when collaboration happens. As was the case with Frank, Turkish parents can be welcoming, friendly, and helpful in problem-solving (Aydın, 2019).

All four participants spoke at length about the positive role relationships with colleagues played in their day-to-day levels of satisfaction. Collaboration with colleagues or even simple socializing served as a motivator for all the participants and came up very often. This finding is supported by the literature on teacher satisfaction (Juozaitiene & Simonaitiene, 2011; Pepe et. al., 2017, Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2006). More importantly, similar results were reached by researchers looking at expatriates in Turkey (Aydın et. al., 2019; Aysan-Şahintaş, 2018; Hoyland, 2021). Relationships with colleagues are crucial to the job satisfaction of these teachers because of the collaboration that happens and the support that is so

much relied upon when problems with students or the administration arise. As Mehtap (2001) and Skliar (2014) reported, good relationships are particularly important for expatriates because they rely on LETs to help them, especially with translations, and guide them whenever difficulties arise. However, the relationships with colleagues are not always stimulating as there is often a lack of communication in Turkish schools as supported by Aydın (2012), Han and Mahzoun (2017, 2018), and Kasimi and Hangişi (2021) and Subaşı (2021). The lack of communication can be attributed to the heavy workload and bad leadership in the workplace. Mehtap (2001) speculates an orientation towards family in the Turkish culture might make it difficult to create friendships outside of work but this is something that never came up during the research study.

The second most common motivator or source of satisfaction for all teachers was the work itself, or as researchers refer to in literature, aspects intrinsic to teaching, thus providing support for the existing body of research (Addison & Brundrett 2008; Dinham and Scott, 1998; Song, 2007). The most important aspect of the job for teachers is undoubtedly their students and the results of the current study align with international research by Erkaya (2013), Karavas (2010), Mercer (2020) and Zembylas & Papanastasiou (2006) in that working with kids is one of the things teachers love most about their job. They talk about helping them learn and grow, connecting with them, listening to them, and just being there for them. Even Nora, who talks about achievement as her most important motivator, thus supporting both Herzberg's (1959) theory and Sergiovanni's (1967) findings, speaks of it primarily in terms of her students. She measures her sense of achievement through how much she can do in the classroom and how much she can motivate her students.

Unfortunately, two of the participants, namely Danielle and Frank, also talk about the challenges of working with their students and how when they misbehave or are unmotivated, they negatively affect their satisfaction. Sergiovanni (1967) found that when teachers fail to connect it can actually be a source of dissatisfaction. Although for them it was not as extreme, the results do match those of other studies done in Turkey with other EFL teachers, both local and expatriate (Aydın, 2012; Han &

Mahzoun, 2018; Kasimi and Hangişi, 2021; Subaşı, 2021). Reasons for these types of behavior have been explained by Han and Mahzoun (2018) through the leniency on the part of the administrator toward the students while Subaşı (2021) and Hoyland (2021) explained it through the expatriate teachers' lack of knowledge of the students' culture and mother tongue. Both of these interpretations can be used to make sense of the experiences of the participants of the current study.

5.2 Conclusions

The present interpretative phenomenological study aimed to address the research gap that exists in the literature on expatriate EFL teacher satisfaction in Turkish private K-12 institutions. Since only a handful of studies have been carried out investigating this topic and the vast majority said studies focus on instructors at the university level, this study chose to explore the lived experiences of expatriate EFL teachers working at the primary and secondary level in private Turkish schools. Making use of in-depth interpretative phenomenological analysis, the current study aimed to understand the expatriate EFL teachers' definition of job satisfaction, establish the levels of their job satisfaction, and identify the aspects of their jobs that positively or negatively affect their satisfaction.

Through careful analysis of the data, the researcher confirmed that defining job satisfaction is indeed not an easy task (Evans, 1997; Locke, 1969). Despite the challenges, it became evident the participants' definitions of job satisfaction were shaped by their values and expectations of teaching. Due to the participants' differences, experiences, backgrounds, characteristics, and perceptions, it was necessary to first present the findings in a case-by-case manner which allowed for thick descriptions and in-depth interpretations which led to the emergence of three themes. These themes allowed the researcher to find points of convergence and divergence between the participants which in turn led to the following conclusions.

First, the participants shared different answers in terms of how they define job satisfaction, which boil down to relationships and community. In general, the study's participants spoke about how for them job satisfaction depends on positive

connections in an environment that allows for growth, accomplishment, and acknowledgment of their achievements. The ideal workplace would promote good connections with many different stakeholders, offer chances for cooperation, and provide opportunities for both positive and constructive criticism to increase a feeling of fulfillment. Secondly, all four of the subjects reported relatively low levels of job satisfaction, despite occasional upswings, which can only suggest that job happiness is not constant. According to the experiences of my participants, the phenomenon of job satisfaction is incredibly dependent on a variety of external factors. Although the individuals' justifications varied, the reality remains that they all appear to be lacking in work satisfaction, if not outright unhappiness. The teachers began considering the prospect of changing occupations or quitting teaching as a career because these thoughts were so strong.

Finally, since the participants' definitions of work satisfaction varied, it is only logical that they listed a wide range of factors that either positively or negatively affect it. But because they appeared to have comparable values, they were impacted by the same things. The most frequent reasons for dissatisfaction listed here corroborate Herzberg's (1959) Two-Factor Theory. Policy and administration were ranked as the top source of dissatisfaction for all four participants. The participants' responses revealed the next two hygiene factors to be salary and workload. Salary in the current study also demonstrated its fluid character, as Herzberg (1968) describes. Even though three of the participants spoke at length about how their discontent with the pay led them to consider or really do quit their jobs, they continued to view the pay as a motivator as they related anecdotes about how it was the main reason why they accepted the jobs they did. Conversely, four of Herzberg's six motivators—work itself, achievement, acknowledgment of achievement, and growth—were cited by the participants as motivating elements. Regularly cited sources of job dissatisfaction included supervision and interpersonal interactions; yet, contrary to Herzberg's assertion, participants reported feeling more content with their work when supervision was carried out well and when relationships were pleasant. The need to rethink the hiring process for expatriate educators and the necessity to improve the orientation program and their ongoing development.

5.3. Implications of the Study

My research sheds light on the low levels of job satisfaction experienced by expatriate teachers in the private Turkish K-12 context and provides insights on the aspects of their job that affect their satisfaction either positively or negatively. Additionally, it has the potential to provide a roadmap to better working conditions and increased job satisfaction. The findings can be used by three different stakeholders, who by working in synchronicity, can create the best possible environment for the teachers to work in. First of all, human resources departments may utilize the data to more efficiently recruit and hire expatriate teachers in such a way that there is a match between them and the institution. Similarly, they can use it to develop initiatives to better support expatriate teachers in their schools. Three important initiatives to be considered would be offering opportunities for improving the expatriate teachers' Turkish language proficiency (Aydın et. al., 2019; Skliar, 2014) cultural training, (Halicioglu, 2015; Hoyland, 2021), and classroom- and relationship management training. According to PISA Insights and Interpretations (Schleicher, 2018), offering teachers such professional development opportunities will provide them with the tools needed to form stronger connections with their students, colleagues, and parents. Finally, HR departments should work on the expatriate teachers' behalf to ensure that they are not faced with any injustices, especially when it comes to salaries.

Secondly, school leaders can utilize it to make better decisions when it comes to the workload and the type of work given to expatriate teachers. What this means is that the workload should be fair so that there is no unnecessary pressure on the teachers to manage everything. Tasks should be better planned and done so in advance and deadlines should reflect the difficulty of the task. While it is impossible to completely plan for everything, more adequate preparation and collaboration between teachers would lower the chances of last-minute announcements, which causes a lot of stress to the teachers (Aydın et. al., 2019). Equally important, the work should be exciting and motivating and offer ample opportunities for professional growth and development rather than busy work which benefits no one. Perhaps a budget could be set in place to allow teachers to choose training

opportunities that would benefit their professional development (Hoyland, 2021). Also, planning the workload should include time set aside for the sole purpose of collaboration between teachers. This collaboration should happen within and between levels at a school as well as expand to teachers working in different institutions.

Finally, the administration must put in an effort to increase and ultimately keep the levels of expatriate teachers' job satisfaction high by openly supporting them (Mullock, 2009). They should implement an open-door approach that will allow the teachers to reach out directly to the higher levels of hierarchy without jumping through the many hoops of Turkish bureaucracy (Aydın et. al., 2019, Han & Mahzoun, 2018). This will improve communication and give the teachers a voice within the school. Additionally, when teachers are involved in the decision-making process, they will be more autonomous and therefore, experience a stronger sense of belonging and ownership. For instance, teachers can be consulted on the grade level they would like to teach and clubs they would like to sponsor rather than having these assigned. More importantly, teachers should be given a say in the curriculum to be taught. As Schleicher (2018) warns:

Even the most efficient attempts to push a central curriculum into classroom practice will drag out over a decade because it takes so much time to communicate the goals and methods through the different layers of the system. In this age of accelerations, such a slow process inevitably leads to a widening gap between what students need to learn and what teachers teach (p.56).

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The current research benefited from the depth of data collected from 4 different participants coming from different nations and backgrounds. Nonetheless, their backgrounds were rather similar, representing only 2 Western countries, namely Canada and the United States of America, and 1 eastern European country. Thus, it is hard to tell whether expatriates from other countries would have similar experiences of job satisfaction. Additionally, their experience in the private Turkish K-12 system was confined to Ankara schools, both of which cater to a similar learner profile. As a result, it is unclear whether the levels of job satisfaction and the aspects affecting

them would have been different had participants lived in other big cities such as Istanbul and Izmir, or smaller cities around Turkey. It may have also made a difference if the participants taught in institutions with less advantaged students. Furthermore, although some sort of uniformity between the participants is ideal in phenomenological studies, the fact that they were chosen using convenience sampling processes implies that they ran in the same circles. This means that the areas of convergence and divergence may be more pronounced because of this.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Studies

In future studies, perhaps interviewing more participants would be optimal. Expatriate teachers from a wider range of origins and various locations around Turkey might be perfect research participants to help build a more accurate image of expatriate EFL teacher job satisfaction levels. Additionally, to support the interview results, future researchers could make use of observation-based data. Shadowing participants as they go about their day, teaching their lessons, and interacting with others would offer the perfect chance to learn more about how and why their satisfaction levels fluctuate and at times, plummet.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

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ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

Sayı: 28620816/

01 ARALIK 2021

Konu : Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi : İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Betil Eröz Tuğa

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Xhana Metaj'ın "Perceptions of Job Satisfaction of Expatriate EFL Teachers in Turkish Private K-12 Schools: A Phenomenological Inquiry" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve **494-ODTU-2021** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.


Prof. Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY
İAEK Başkanı

B. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear participant,

Thank you for your participation in this study. As an expatriate EFL teacher teaching in the private Turkish K-12 system in Turkey, you are the perfect participant for this study, which aims to understand the experiences and perceptions of foreign teachers regarding job satisfaction. Through your participation, it is hoped that a better understanding will be reached on whether expatriate EFL teachers are satisfied with their jobs as well as what aspects might increase or decrease their satisfaction. Hopefully, through this study, you might achieve a deeper understanding of your own experiences and perceptions of the construct of job satisfaction.

During the duration of data collection, you will be kindly asked to fill out a brief survey containing 16 questions which will help the researcher better understand your background. Additionally, there will be a series of two to three interviews lasting approximately one hour each. The interviews will be scheduled within a couple of weeks of each other. Finally, before your second interview, you will be asked by the researcher to keep a reflective journal writing about specific incidents or events that are directly related to job satisfaction. Your participation in the study, from the survey to the last interview will take place between February 1st - March 31st.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and evaluated only by the researcher; the obtained data will be used only for scientific purposes. The findings will be reported using pseudonyms and in such a manner that your identity remains anonymous. Additionally, neither the survey nor the interview contains any questions that may cause discomfort to you. However, during participation, if for any reason you feel uncomfortable, you are free to withdraw at any time.

Again, I would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this study. For further information or if you have any questions, you can contact the researcher, Xhana

Metaj (xhana.metaj@metu.edu.tr), studying at the English Language Teaching MA program at Middle East Technical University, Ankara/Turkey.

I, _____, have been informed about the research study and its aims and agree to voluntarily participate in it.

C. DEBRIEFING FORM

This study is conducted by Xhana Metaj, a graduate student in the department of Foreign Language Education- English Language Teaching at METU. This study examines how expatriate EFL teachers in Turkey define job satisfaction, whether they are satisfied with their jobs or not, and the aspects of the job that increase or decrease their satisfaction.

Job satisfaction, defined by Spector (2008) as “an attitudinal variable that reflects how people feel about their jobs overall as well as about various aspects of the jobs.” (p. 223), has been extensively researched in management and education literature. Multiple frameworks have been used to study it, among which Herzberg’s (1959) Two-Factor Theory tops the list. According to this theory, there exist two types of factors that affect job satisfaction based on the needs they fulfill. Job aspects relevant to the basic, lower-level needs such as pay, supervision, coworkers, and organizational policies are called *hygiene factors*. These factors, no matter how favorable, do not increase job satisfaction. However, a lack of them may lead to job dissatisfaction. On the other hand, aspects that address higher-order needs such as growth, achievement, recognition, and responsibility are referred to as *motivator factors*. If an organization fails to provide its employees with these aspects the result will be a lack of job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1965).

Teacher job satisfaction, defined by Evans (1997) as “a state of mind determined by the extent to which the individual perceives his/her job-related needs to be being met” (p. 833), has also been widely studied because research has proven time and again that it affects important educational outcomes. Such outcomes include student academic performance, organizational commitment, retention, and turnover among other things. Unfortunately, across academic circles “teaching has become a profession characterized by high levels of stress and low professional wellbeing” (Kidger et al., 2016). Keeping in mind the importance of a teacher’s job and the society-wide implications it has; one can reasonably conclude that schools’ primary

objective should be to keep their teachers satisfied and motivated. This noble goal is hard to achieve under normal circumstances, but it is even more difficult for teachers who teach English as a foreign language as expatriates. This is partly because there exist cultural differences between the expat EFL teachers and the local EFL teachers they work with as well as the work environment in general.

Based on the literature, it is expected that expat EFL teachers in Turkey will not be satisfied with their jobs, and this will be determined, although not generalized, in our study through the following questions:

- How do foreign EFL teachers in Turkey define job satisfaction?
- How satisfied with their jobs are foreign EFL teachers working in private K-12 schools in Turkey?
 - What aspects of their job increase their satisfaction?
 - What aspects of their job decrease their satisfaction?

It is aimed that the preliminary data from this study will be obtained by the end of March 2022. These data will be utilized only for research purposes. For further information, about the study and its results, you can refer to the following names. We would like to thank you for participating in this study.

Xhana Metaj (Tel: 0530-552-3183; E-mail: xhana.metaj@metu.edu.tr)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Betil Eröz Tuğa (Tel: 210-6497; E-mail: beroz@metu.edu.tr)

D. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SURVEY

(Adapted from Mercer, 2020)

Biographical information

Thank you for taking the time to complete the following questionnaire. The biographical information will be used to support your interview and will not compromise your anonymity. It should take you no longer than 10 minutes to complete it. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to respond to. If you have any questions, please do contact me via email.

1. Gender:

- Female
- Male
- Other: _____

2. Age: _____

3. Marital Status:

- Single
- In a relationship
- Cohabiting
- Engaged
- Married
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Other: _____

4. Do you have any dependent children living with you currently?

- Yes
- No

If yes, how many? _____

5. Please list all the languages that you consider to be your L1s:

6. Please list any other languages you can hold a conversation in (B2 above):

7. What teaching qualifications do you have? (You may select as many boxes as apply to you)

Bachelor

Master

PhD

DELTA

CELTA

PGCE

None

Other: _____

8. How many years of English language teaching experience in formalized teaching contexts do you have? (Please mark only one box.)

0–3

4–7

8–15

16–23

24–30

31+

10. On average, how many contact teaching hours do you have in a typical week? (Please mark only one box.)

0–10

10–20

21–28

More than 28 hours

11. Apart from teaching hours, how many hours per week do you typically spend on doing things related to your teaching? (Preparation, correcting, organizing trips, etc.) (Please mark only one box.)

- 0–5
- 6–10
- 11–15
- 16–20
- More than 20 hours

12. Do you currently have any other jobs in addition to your teaching?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please specify: _____

13. If so, do you have to do this job in order to supplement your teacher income, or do you do it voluntarily? (Please mark only one box)

- I do it voluntarily
- I need to do it in order to supplement my teacher income
- Other: _____

Thank you – I am looking forward to talking some more with you!

E. INTERVIEW 1 SCHEDULE

1. Can you describe a typical day at work?
2. What are the differences between a good day and a bad day?
3. How do you feel after a good/bad day at work?
4. What are some aspects of your job that make you feel more positive/negative towards your work?
5. How would you describe the relationship between what you expect teaching to be and what it really is?
6. Based on our discussion so far, how would you define job satisfaction?
7. Based on your own definition of job satisfaction, how satisfied would you say you are with your job?

F. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

GİRİŞ

Hem iş dünyasında hem de eğitimde küresel etkileşimlerin katlanarak artması, ortak bir dil ihtiyacını doğurmuş ve İngilizce öne çıkmıştır. Bu durum uluslararası ve özel okulların dünya genelinde hızla çoğalmasına sebep oldu (Halıcıoğlu, 2015). Bu nedenle, Yabancı Dil İngilizce (EFL) öğretmenleri sadece Türkiye’de değil dünya çapında en çok aranan profesyoneller arasında yer almaya başladı. Bütün bu durumlar göz önüne alındığında bu eğitimciler hakkında yapılan araştırmalar ve bu eğitimciler hakkında bilinenler yetersiz kaldı (Caravatti, Lederer, Lupico & Van Meter, 2014; Richardson, Kirchenheim & Richardson, 2006)ç

Türkiye’de İngilizce öğretimi 1944 yılında Gazi Enstitüsü’nde ilk İngilizce bölümünün açılmasıyla başlamıştır (Nergis, 2011). O zamandan beri, hükümet organları tarafından İngilizce eğitiminin kalitesini artırmak amacıyla Amerika Birleşik Devletleri’nden Fulbright bursiyerlerinin İngilizce Öğretim Asistanı (ETA) olarak istihdam edilmesi (Yılmaz, 2014) ve K-12 kurumlarında çalışmak üzere anadili İngilizce olan öğretmenlerin (NEST’ler) işe alınması da dahil olmak üzere çok sayıda program uygulanmıştır (Coşkun, 2013). Bu çabalar, 2013 ve 2017 yılları arasında Yabancı uyruklu İngilizce öğretmenlerinin sayısını önemli ölçüde arttığı için istenen etki sağlandı (Aydın ve diğ., 2019). Ancak, bu popülasyona yönelik çok az sayıda çalışma yapıldı ve neredeyse tüm eğitimciler oybirliğiyle düşük düzeyde iş tatmini bildirdi (Aydın ve diğ. al., 2019; Han ve Mahzoun, 2017; Kasım & Hangişi, 2021).

Türk öğretmenler genel olarak işlerinden memnun olsalar da (Aslan, 2015; Büyükgöze ve Gün, 2017; Çoğaltay, Yalcın ve Karadağ, 2016; Demirtaş, 2015; Türkoglu, Cansoy ve Parlar, 2017), Türk ve özellikle yabancı İngilizce öğretmenleri için durum aynı değil, bunun sebebi öğrencilerin konuya ilgi duymaması (Han ve Mahzoun, 2017; Hoyland, 2021), yönetim ve meslektaşları ile iletişim eksikliği ve

anlaşılma zorluğu yaşamalarıdır (Han ve Mahzoun, 2018; Kasimi ve Hangişi, 2021; Subaşı, 2021). Hali hazırda yabancı uyruklu İngilizce öğretmenlerin iş tatmini üzerine yapılan çalışmaların çoğu üniversite bağlamında veya nicel yöntemlerle yapıldığından, araştırmacı literatürde bir boşluk gördü ve aşağıdaki araştırma sorularıyla bu boşluğu ele almayı amaçladı:

- Türkiye'deki yabancı uyruklu İngilizce öğretmenleri iş tatminini nasıl tanımlıyor?
- Türkiye'deki özel K-12 okullarında çalışan yabancı uyruklu İngilizce öğretmenleri işlerinden ne kadar memnunlar?
 - İşlerinin hangi yönleri memnuniyetlerini artırıyor?
 - İşlerinin hangi yönleri memnuniyetlerini azaltıyor?

Mevcut çalışmanın, yabancı uyruklu öğretmenlerin işe alım kanunlarını düzenleyen ve uygulayanlara yeni kanun ve düzenlemelerin oluşturulmasında, okul yöneticilerine yabancı uyruklu öğretmen işe alırken daha bilinçli seçimler yapılmasına ve sonuç olarak yabancı uyruklu öğretmenlerin daha yüksek iş tatmini hissetmesine yardımcı olacağı umulmaktadır.

KAVRAMSAL ÇERÇEVE

İş tatmini kavramının tanımı araştırmacılar için kolay bir iş olmamıştır. En basit haliyle, insanların işlerini sevmeye derecesidir. Spector (2008), bunu “insanların genel olarak işleri ve işin çeşitli yönleri hakkında nasıl hissettiklerini yansıtan tutumsal bir değişken” olarak tanımlamaktadır (s. 223). Locke (1969), memnuniyeti, kişinin iş değerlerine ulaşmasına yol açan işinin değerlendirilmesine yönelik duygusal tepkiler olarak görür. “İş tatmini ve tatminsizliği, kişinin işinden ne istediği ile işin kendisine ne sunduğunu veya getireceğini düşündüğü arasındaki algılanan ilişkinin bir fonksiyonudur” der (Locke, 1969, s. 316). Öğretmenlerin iş doyumunu özel olarak inceleyen Evans (1997), bunu “bireyin işiyle ilgili ihtiyaçlarının ne ölçüde karşılanıyor olduğunu düşündüğüyle belirlenen bir ruh hali” olarak tanımlamaktadır (s. 833).

İş tatminini incelemek için iki ana yaklaşım vardır: küresel ve yön yaklaşımları (Spector, 2008). Birincisi, hatalı bir şekilde, iş tatminini kişinin işine karşı tek bir duygu olarak görür. İkincisi, ücret, sosyal haklar, denetim, iş arkadaşları, iş koşulları,

güvenlik vb. gibi bu bileşenlerin her biri ile farklı memnuniyet seviyelerine izin veren iş tatmininin farklı yönlerinin varlığını kabul eder. İş tatmini mutlaka tatminsizlik değildir. İki kavram arasındaki fark en iyi 1959'da tanıtılan Herzberg'in İki Faktör Teorisi ile açıklanır. Bu, iş tatmini ve iş tatminsizliğinin aynı madalyonun iki farklı yüzü değil, iki ayrı deneyim olduğunu öne sürer. Teori, yerine getirdikleri veya yerine getiremedikleri ihtiyaçlara göre sırasıyla iş tatminini veya iş tatminsizliğini etkileyen iki tür faktör olduğunu öne sürmektedir.

Denetim, iş arkadaşları ve kurumsal politikalar, idari uygulamalar ve genellikle ücret gibi alt düzey ihtiyaçları karşılayan çevresel iş yönlerine hijyen faktörleri denir. Bunlar, ne kadar olumlu olursa olsun, iş memnuniyetini artırmaz, ancak olumsuz olduğunda iş memnuniyetsizliğine yol açar. Amaçları öncelikle önleyicidir. Motive ediciler olarak da bilinen olumlu yönler ise doğrudan işin içeriği ile ilgili olanlardır. Bu motive ediciler, büyüme, başarı, tanınma başarısı, sorumluluk gibi üst düzey ihtiyaçları ele alır. Bir kuruluş bu yönleri ele alamazsa, sonuç iş tatmini eksikliği olacaktır. Akışkan yapısı nedeniyle motive edicilere dökülebilecek bir hijyen faktörü maaştır. Bunun nedeni belki de çalışanların maaşlarından nadiren %100 memnun olmaları ve daha yüksek ücrete bağlı memnuniyet artışının kısa ömürlü olması olabilir (Smith, 2014).

YÖNTEM

Bu çalışmanın amacı, yabancı öğretmenlerin özel Türk K-12 sisteminde iş tatminine ilişkin deneyimlerini daha derinlemesine incelemek olduğundan, seçilen yaklaşım, bireylerin bir fenomeni nasıl deneyimlediğini ve nasıl deneyimlediğini ortaya çıkarmaya çalışan bilimsel bir yaklaşım olan fenomenoloji olmuştur. Onlar için ne anlama geliyor. Creswell (2013) bireylerin yaşadıkları deneyimlerin aynı anda fenomene ilişkin öznel deneyimler ve diğer insanlarla paylaştıklarına ilişkin nesnel deneyimler olduğunu ifade etmektedir. Bu çalışma, katılımcıların deneyimlerinin yorumlanmasına odaklanan bir fenomenoloji türü olan hermeneutik teoriye uygun olarak, katılımcıların deneyimlerini nasıl anladığını ve anlamlandırıldığını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Odak noktasının deneyim üzerinde olmasını sağlamak için araştırmacılar, basamaklama veya epoche adı verilen bir süreçle kendilerini

çalışmadan çıkarmalıdır. Amaç, araştırmacı, katılımcıların deneyimlerini belirlemeye çalışırken geçmiş deneyimlerin bir etki yaratmasına izin vermemektir. Ancak, bu çalışmanın takip ettiği Yorumlayıcı Fenomenolojik Analiz (IPA), yalnızca katılımcının deneyimine odaklanmanın değil, aynı zamanda araştırmacının araştırma sürecinde aktif bir rol oynamasına izin verdiğini kabul eder (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Smith, Flowers ve Larkin (2009), IPA'nın “araştırmacı ve araştırılmış ortak bir ürün” olarak düşünülmesini tavsiye etmektedir. (s.105). Araştırmacı, aynı zamanda araştırmacının da denklemin bir parçası olduğunu bilerek, katılımcıların deneyimlerini tam olarak kavramak ister. Amaç, okuyucuların katılımcılarla özdeşleşebilmeleri için onları yalnızca nesnel gerçekler olarak almak değil, bu deneyimlerin anlamını müzakere etmektir.

Smith et. al. (2009), lisans veya yüksek lisans öğrencilerinin çalışmaları için varsayılan boyut olan üç ila altı katılımcının araştırılmasını önerir. Buna göre, mevcut çalışma 4 katılımcıya dayanıyordu: Nora (Arnavutluk), Danielle (Kanada), Frank (Amerika) ve Grace (Amerika) (takma adlar). Veriler öncelikle, katılımcıların ve deneyimlerinin daha iyi anlaşılmasına ve veri doygunluğuna yol açan üç yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme dizisinden toplanmıştır. İlk görüşme, görüşmeyi yönlendirmek ve araştırmacının Smith ve diğerleri tarafından önerildiği gibi basitçe araştırmak yerine katılımcının dünyasına girmesine izin vermek amacıyla seçilen 7 temel sorudan oluşuyordu (2009). İkinci görüşmeden önce, katılımcılara aşağıdaki komut kullanılarak bir hafta boyunca günlük tutma görevi verildi: *Her gün, iş tatmininizi olumlu ya da olumsuz etkileyen belirli olayların kısa notlarını yazın.* İkinci görüşme sırasında sorulan sorular, günlük girişlerine göre her katılımcıya uygun düzenlenmiştir. Üçüncü görüşme, ilk iki görüşmenin devamı niteliğindedi ve çözülmemiş sorunları ele almayı amaçladı.

Veri analizi, görüşmelerin deşifre edilmesiyle başladı. Görüşmelerden özel önem taşıyan bazı bölümler kelimesi kelimesine yazıya dökülmüştür. Araştırmacı, görüşmeler gerçekleşirken her bir transkript analiz etme sürecine aktif olarak dahil olmuştur. Araştırmacı, süreci kolaylaştırmak için MAXQDA Plus 2022'yi (Sürüm 22.1.1) kullandı. İlk olarak, katılımcıların yaşadıkları deneyimlere yükledikleri

anlamaları tam olarak kavramak için tanımlayıcı kodlar ve duygu kodları geliştirildi. Ayrıca, araştırmacı, doğrudan katılımcıların belirttiklerinden alınan ve tırnak içine alınan in-vivo kodlar kullandı. Bu aşama sırasında, araştırmacı transkriptlere ilgi duyduğu her şeyi not etti ve Ahern'in (1999) önerdiği gibi, yansıtıcı günlüğünde kişisel notlar tuttu ve gerektiğinde yorumlar ekledi. Daha sonraki bir aşamada, birlikte gruplanabilecek tüm kodlar temalar, bir veri biriminin ne hakkında olduğunu açıklayan ve/veya tanımlayan bir ifade veya ifadeler halinde düzenlenmiştir (Saldana, 2009). Temalar doğal olarak ortaya çıktı ve her bir katılımcının yanıtları içinde ve katılımcılar arasında kalıpların belirlenmesine ve bağlantıların kurulmasına izin verdi, bu da daha sonra aralarında benzer ve farklı olanın veya başka bir deyişle yakınlaşan ve ayrılan temaların belirlenmesine yardımcı oldu. Veri analizinin son aşamasında, araştırmacı, kalan temaların araştırma sorularına cevap verecek şekilde düzenlenebilmesi için temaları daha fazla birleştirerek veya bazılarını eleyerek rafine etti.

BULGULAR

IPA, bu çalışma için seçilen yöntem olduğundan, analiz süreci her bir vaka için ayrı ayrı yapıldı ve her vakanın tamamlanmasıyla, araştırmacı katılımcılar arasında yakınlaşmaları ve farklılıkları araştırdı. Bu, tüm katılımcıların birleşik deneyimlerinin bir yansıması olan nihai temalara yol açtı. Sonunda araştırmacı, ilişkiler, topluluk, başarı ve başarının tanınması, düşük iş tatmini seviyeleri ve bağlamsal yönlerin gölgelediği işe ve topluma duyulan sevgi gibi ortaya çıkan temaları çalışmanın teorik temelleri ve araştırma hedefleri ile tutarlı bir derinlik sağlamak için yorumlayıcı yöntemler kullandı.

İlişkiler, Topluluk, Başarı ve Başarının Tanınması

Doğrudan iş tatmininin kendileri için ne anlama geldiğini tanımlamaları istendiğinde, katılımcıların hepsi, farklılıklara rağmen, birkaç kritik yönden birleşiyor gibi görünen ilginç cevaplar verdiler. Hepsi, farklı paydaşlarla güçlü ilişkiler sağlayan, başarıyı tanıyan ve değer veren kişisel ve profesyonel gelişim sağlayan güçlü bir topluluğa ait olmaya değer verdiklerini ifade ettiler. İş tatmininin kendileri için ne

anlama geldiğini doğrudan tanımlamaları istendiğinde, katılımcılar aşağıdaki tanımları sundular:

Nora: *Öğrenciler, öğretmenler ve öğretmenlerin kendi arasında, ilgili herkesin gelişmesine yol açan karşılıklı bilgi paylaşımı*

Danielle: *İşyerinde akranlar, üstler ve öğrencilerle tümü karşılıklı güvene dayanan olumlu ilişkilerin varlığı*

Frank: *Değerli bir şey yapmış olmanın kişisel doyumunun yanı sıra, yöneticilerin güvenine ve onun çabasını tanımalarına neden olacak şekilde iş yerinde emek harcanması*

Grace: *Her üyenin becerileri ver ortaya koydukları uzmanlık için taktir gördüğü ve topluluğun gelişimine katkıda bulunurken, başarısızlık korkusu olmadan kendi kararlarını özerk olarak verebileceğini hissettiği güçlü bir topluluğun varlığı*

Katılımcıların tüm yanıtlarına incelikleriyle ve karşılaştırmalı bir mercekle altında bakıldığında aşağıdaki tanım ortaya çıkmaktadır: *İş tatmini, öğrenmeyi, mesleki ve kişisel gelişimi sağlayan ve başarının görüldüğü ve taktir edildiği etkin bir topluluk içinde karşılıklı güvene dayalı güçlü ilişkilerin çiçek açması gibidir.*

Düşük İş Memnuniyeti Düzeyleri

Bu çalışmanın katılımcıları da nispeten düşük iş tatmini seviyelerinde birleşiyor gibi görünüyor. Tüm katılımcıların zaman zaman etraflarında olup bitenlere bağlı olarak daha yüksek düzeyde iş tatmini yaşadıklarını belirtmek önemlidir. Bu gözlem, iş doyumunun statik olmadığı gerçeğine ışık tutması açısından önemlidir.

Katılımcıların deneyimlerine göre, iş tatmini olgusu, onu çevreleyen çeşitli olaylara derinden bağlıdır. Yine de, daha yüksek seviyelerde iş tatmini anları çok azdı.

Katılımcıların belirttiği nedenler farklıydı, ancak sonuçta hepsinin iş tatmini eksikliği ve hatta tatminsizlik yaşadıkları görülüyor. Bu duygular o kadar belirgindi ki, öğretmenlerin başka bir iş bulma ihtimalini düşünmeye başlamalarına, istifa edip yeni iş bulmalarına yada öğretmenlik mesleğini tamamen bırakmayı düşünmelerine yol açtı. Kısa da olsa öğretmenliği tamamen bırakmayı düşünen öğretmenlerden ikisi için bunun nedeni, kendilerine daha fazla zevk verecek, sanat ya da yazarlık

mesleklerinde kariyer yapmaktı. Diğer bir katılımcı da ise genel olarak ülkenin ekonomik durumunun belirsizliği nedeniyle öğretmenliği bırakma ile ilgili düşünceler ortaya çıkmıştır. Sadece bir katılımcı belki de emekliliğe çok yakın olduğunu düşündüğü ve bu noktada kariyer değiştirme olasılığının kendisi için imkansız olduğuna inandığı için öğretmenliği meslek olarak bırakma ihtimalinden bahsetmemiştir. Katılımcıların düşük iş tatmini seviyeleri, görüşmeler sırasında kısaca tartışılan hayali çalışma ortamları ile gerçek işyerleri, ikisi arasındaki tutarsızlığa bağlanabilir. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin değer verdikleri şeyler ile çalıştıkları kurumların ideolojileri ve değer verdikleri arasındaki uyumsuzlukla da açıklanabilir.

İşe ve topluluğa duyulan sevgi, çevresel etkenlerin gölgesinde kalıyor

Katılımcılar, iş tatminlerine olumlu ya da olumsuz bir şekilde katkıda bulunan sayısız nedeni belirtmişlerdir. İşte bireysel yanıtları:

Nora: Nora'nın işinden memnun olmasını sağlayan nedenlere ilişkin yanıtları, Herzberg'in motive edici olarak adlandırdığı şeylerin ders kitabın da görülebilecek örneklerdir. Bu başarının elde edilmesi ve takdir edilmesi, memnuniyetin ana nedeni olarak başı çeker. Buna karşılık, en çok konuşulan ikinci konu yönetim ve okul politikası; Nora'nın zamanı geldiğinde hoşgörülü olabilecek kadar adil olmasına rağmen, çoğunlukla bir memnuniyetsizlik kaynağıydı. Benzer şekilde, iş yükü, Nora'nın bir memnuniyetsizlik kaynağı olarak bahsettiği bir sonraki en yaygın konuydu. Son olarak, meslektaşlarıyla ilişkiler ve işbirliği olması bir memnuniyet kaynağıydı.

Danielle: Danielle için işinin öğrencilerle olan ilişkisi günlük yaşamına keyif katan en önemli kısmıydı. Ancak bazı durumlarda, bu ilişki veya ilişkinin eksikliği, memnuniyet eksikliğine yol açmıştır. Benzer şekilde, meslektaşlarla iyi ilişkiler ve devam eden işbirliği, ideal olarak Danielle için bir memnuniyet kaynağıdır. Fakat görüşmelerimiz sırasında bazen onların kendisini ters yöne ittiğinden bahsetti. Danielle, öncelik sırasına göre, okul politikası ve yönetimi ve onlarla iletişimindeki dil engeli, iş yükü ve velilerle ilişkiler de dahil olmak üzere, işinin olumsuz duygular yaratan ek yönleri hakkında daha fazla bilgi verdi.

Frank: Frank'in cevapları bizi tek bir kelimeye götürüyordu: ilişkiler. Yönetim ve amirleri ile olan etkileşimlerini, öğrencilerle, meslektaşlarıyla ve velilerle olan ilişkilerini anlattı. Bu ilişkiler içinde yer alan etkileşim türleri, memnuniyetini farklı yönlerde etkiler ve başarı duygusu ile görülme ve tanınma algıları üzerinde etkisi vardır. Son olarak, Frank'in bahsettiği son husus maaştır.

Grace: En yaygın tema, etkisiz iletişim ve genel bir güvensizlik duygusuyla iç içe geçmiş yönetimdi. Yönetim ve iktidardakilerden olumlu bir şekilde bahsettiği durumlar da oldu, ancak bunlar nadirdi, bu da bu yönün öncelikle bir memnuniyetsizlik kaynağı olduğu anlamına geliyor. Bir sonraki önemli husus, meslektaşları ile olan ilişkisi ve içinde yer aldıkları ekip çalışmasıdır. Herzberg'in beklentisinin aksine, Grace için pozitif ilişkilerin oluşması bir memnuniyet kaynağıydı. Üçüncü en yaygın konu iş yüküdür. Nasıl bir demotivatör olarak hizmet ettiğinden bahsediyor. İşinin özünü oluşturan öğrencileriyle olan ilişkileri, açıkça memnuniyet getiren bir yönüdür.

Katılımcıların hepsi, okul ortamını, işlerin de en büyük farkı yaratan yönlerden biri olarak sıraladılar. Burada tanımlanan en yaygın memnuniyetsizlikler, Herzberg'in İki Faktör teorisine destek sağlar. Aşağıda detaylandırılacağı gibi, politika ve yönetim, dört katılımcının tümü için listenin başında yer aldı. İdare ve kişilerarası ilişkiler de düzenli olarak bir memnuniyetsizlik kaynağı olarak ortaya çıktı, ancak Herzberg'in iddiasının aksine, yönetim iyi yapıldığında ve ilişkiler olumlu olduğunda, katılımcılar işlerinden daha fazla tatmin hissettiklerini bildirdiler. Katılımcıların cevaplarından ortaya çıkan sonraki iki hijyen faktörü maaş ve iş yükü oldu. Tıpkı Herzberg'in (1968) açıkladığı gibi, maaş, mevcut çalışmada da değişken bir etken olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Katılımcıların üçü maaşla ilgili memnuniyetsizliklerinden dolayı uzun uzadıya istifa etmeyi düşündükleri ya da istifa ettiklerini söylerken, maaşı hala bir motive edici olarak gördüler. Hatta, maaşın kendileri için nasıl işlerini seçmede birincil motive edici olduğuna dair hikayeler paylaştılar. Öte yandan Herzberg'in altı motive edicisinden dördü katılımcılar için motive edici faktörler olarak ortaya çıktı, yani işin kendisi, başarı, başarının takdir edilmesi ve gelişme. Sorumluluk, her iki katılımcının da açıkça belirttiği bir şey olmasa da, proje

üstlenmekten, yeni girişimler başlatmaktan veya yaratma özerkliğine sahip olmaktan bahsettikleri gerçeği, işte daha fazla sorumluluk alma arzusu olarak yorumlanabilir. Son olarak, ilerlemeden yalnızca bir katılımcı tarafından kısaca bahsedilmiş olması, öğretmenler için çok az gerçek ilerleme fırsatı olduğu (Sergiovanni, 1967) ve yabancı uyruklu öğretmenler için daha da az olduğu gerçeğiyle açıklanabilir.

TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

İlk araştırma sorusunun sonuçları, bu çalışmaya katılan yabancı uyruklu İngilizce öğretmenlerinin belirli değerleri paylaştıkları için benzer iş tatmini tanımlarına sahip olduklarını ortaya koydu. Bu değerler, kişinin işinden memnun hissetmesi için karşılanması gereken ihtiyaçlara dönüşür (Evans, 1997; Locke, 1969). Katılımcılar, genel olarak, topluluğa, ilişkilere, başarı ve başarının taktirine değer veriyorlar. Bu, öğretmen iş tatmini literatüründe bulunanlara benzer şekilde, çalışma ortamlarının şu ihtiyaçları karşılamasını beklerler: birden fazla paydaşla olumlu ilişkiler (Aydın, 2012; Zembylas ve Papanastasiou, 2006), işbirliği fırsatları (Skliar, 2014; Subaşı, 2021) ve bir başarı duygusu oluşturmak için (Sergiovanni, 1967) gelecek olumlu ve yapıcı geri bildirimler (Erkaya, 2013). Beklentilerindeki bu benzerlikler, karşılaştırılabilir tanımlara yol açar.

Tüm katılımcılar, ara sıra artışlara rağmen düşük düzeyde iş tatmini bildirdiler. Bulgular, genel olarak öğretmenler ve özel olarak yabancı uyruklu İngilizce öğretmenleri hakkında mevcut literatürü desteklemektedir (Carson, 2013; Khan, 2016; Kidger ve diğerleri, 2016; Mullock, 2009). Bu araştırma çalışmasının gerçekleştirildiği sırada, küresel COVID-19 pandemisinin ardından Türkiye'deki sosyo-ekonomik durum katılımcılar için büyük bir endişe kaynağıydı. Yüksek enflasyon oranları (Kantur & Özcan, 2021), Türk Lirası'nın yabancı para birimleri karşısında değer kaybetmesi (Çakmaklı ve diğerleri, 2021) ve sürekli artan hayat pahalılığı katılımcılarda finansal istikrarsızlık ve belirsizlik duygusu yarattı. Bu duygular öğretmenlerin iş doyumunun düşmesine, duygusal tükenme ve depresyonun artmasına (Li & Yu, 2022), tükenmişlik ve işten ayrılma niyeti düzeylerinin yükselmesine (Minihan ve diğerleri, 2022; Trinidad, 2021) yol açmıştır.

Katılımcılar en büyük zorluklarını okul politikası ve yönetimi olarak adlandırmışlardır. Müdürler, departmanlardaki liderler veya daha küçük ekip liderleri dahil hakkında memnuniyetsizliklerini dile getirdiler. Hofstede'nin (2001) Ulusal Kültürler Modeli'ne (NCM) göre Türkiye, karar vermek için iktidardakilere güvenen ve iktidardakilerin yetkilerine meydan okumayan insanlardan oluşan bir Yüksek Güç Mesafesi ülkesidir. Bulgular, Aydın ve diğerlerinin (2019) katılımcılarının merkeziyetçi güç yapıları olarak adlandırdıkları şeyi desteklemektedir. Ek olarak, katılımcılar özerkliklerini ortadan kaldırdığı için kararların alınma şeklinden memnuniyetsizliklerini dile getirdiler. Türkiye gibi kolektivist ülkelerde çalışan bireyci ülkelerden gelen yabancı uyruklu çalışanlar, genel olarak çalışma ortamları üzerinde daha fazla kontrol sahibi olmayı umdukları için zorluklar yaşayabilirler (Spector ve diğerleri, 2001). Alışılmış kolektivist kültürlerde olduğu gibi, katılımcılar işyerlerinde inisiyatif almak veya sorunları çözmek için harekete geçmelerinin hoş karşılanmadığını hissederler. Onların bu deneyimleri Erman'ın (2016) bulgularını yansıtıyor. Bürokratik uygulamaların derinden kök saldığı bir kültürde, değişiklikler zaman alır.

Memnuniyetsizliğin en çok bahsedilen ikinci kaynağı, Herzberg'in (1974) hijyen faktörü olarak adlandırdığı maaştı. Ancak, daha önce öğretmen memnuniyeti çalışmalarında tespit edildiği gibi, yeterli olduğunda motive edicidir (Iwu vd., 2018; Juozaitiene ve Simonaitiene, 2011). Katılımcılardan üçü maaşlarından memnuniyetsizliklerini dile getirdi. Bu, büyük mali strese ve iş tatminsizliğine neden oldu ve ikisini istifaya zorladı. Maaş, bu öğretmenlerin Türkiye'deki özel okul sistemine girmeleri için ana teşvikti ve şimdi teşvikin ortadan kalkmasıyla memnuniyetsizlik baş gösterdi. Maaş yabancı uyruklu öğretmenlerin ülkeye gelme motivasyonu olmasının yanında ülkede kalma sebeplerinden de biridir (Brown & Schulze, 2007; Mehtap, 2001; Mulridge, 2009; Richardson & diğerleri, 2006; Sharif & diğerleri, 2016; Sharma, 2013). Ayrıca gerçekçi olmayan beklentiler ve ağır iş yükü konusunda düşük düzeyde iş tatmini ifade ettiler. Türkiye'deki yabancı uyruklu öğretmenler, iş yükünün gereksiz düzeyde fazla olmasından ve genellikle kişisel yaşamlarına müdahale etmesinden şikayet ediyorlar (Aydın, 2019; Erman, 2016; Han & Mahzoun, 2018; Kasım & Hangişi, 2021; Subaşı, 2021). Son olarak, Türk

ebeveynler çocuklarının eğitimine çok fazla müdahale ettiği için ve yabancı uyruklu öğretmenlerden makul olmayan beklentileri sebebi ile, bir katılımcının iş tatminizliğine neden olmuştur (Han & Mahzoun, 2018).

Dört katılımcının tamamı, Türkiye'deki yabancı uyruklu öğretmenleri araştıran diğer araştırmacılarda görüldüğü gibi, meslektaşları ile ilişkilerinin günlük memnuniyet seviyelerinde oynadığı olumlu rol hakkında konuştu (Aydın ve diğerleri, 2019; Aysan-Şahintaş, 2018; Hoyland, 2021). Mehtap (2001) ve Skliar'ın (2014) bildirdiği gibi, yabancılar için iyi ilişkiler özellikle önemlidir, çünkü LET'lere yardım etmeleri ve zorluklar ortaya çıktığında onlara rehberlik etmeleri için güvenirliler. İkinci en yaygın motivasyon kaynağı şüphesiz öğrencileridir ve sonuçlar Erkaya (2013), Mercer (2020) ve Zembylas ve Papanastasiou (2006) tarafından yapılan uluslararası araştırmalarla uyumludur. Katılımcılardan ikisi ayrıca öğrencilerle çalışmanın zorluklarından ve öğrenciler yaramazlık yaptıklarında motivasyonlarının ve iş tatminlerinin düştüğünden bahsettiler. Bu tür davranışların nedenleri Han ve Mahzoun (2018) tarafından yöneticinin öğrencilere karşı hoşgörülü olmasıyla açıklanırken, Subaşı (2021) ve Hoyland (2021), yabancı uyruklu öğretmenlerin öğrencilerin kültürü ve ana dili üzerine olan bilgi eksikliği ile açıklamıştır.

Sonuç olarak, araştırmam yabancı uyruklu öğretmenlerin özel Türk K-12 okulları bağlamında deneyimledikleri düşük iş doyumu seviyelerine ışık tutuyor ve işlerinin onların memnuniyetini olumlu ya da olumsuz yönde etkileyen yönleri hakkında fikir veriyor. Ayrıca, daha iyi çalışma koşulları ve artan iş tatmini için bir yol haritası sunma potansiyeline sahiptir. Bulgular, öğretmenlerin çalışmasına yönelik mümkün olan en iyi ortamı yaratmak için, insan kaynakları departmanları, yöneticiler ve departman liderleri olmak üzere, üç farklı paydaş tarafından kullanılabilir.

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