

Teachers' Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction: Examining the Moderating Role of Core Self-Evaluation

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ABSTRACT:

The present study examined the relationship between teachers' perceptions of educational policy and their professional satisfaction, with particular emphasis on the moderating role of core self-evaluation (CSE). A quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design was adopted. The sample comprised 100 teachers from secondary and higher secondary schools affiliated with the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE), including 50 secondary and 50 higher secondary school teachers. Data were collected using the Teachers' Policy Perception Scale, Core Self-Evaluation Scale, and Professional Satisfaction Scale. The instruments demonstrated satisfactory to high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .89, .86, and .91, respectively. Content validity was established through expert judgement. The findings indicated that teachers demonstrated relatively favourable perceptions of educational policy ($M = 78.46$, $SD = 9.21$), positive core self-evaluations ($M = 72.84$, $SD = 8.56$), and generally favourable professional satisfaction ($M = 69.72$, $SD = 7.94$). Teachers' policy perception was positively and significantly associated with professional satisfaction ($r = .580$, $p < .001$), indicating that more favourable perceptions of educational policy were related to greater professional satisfaction. Core self-evaluation was also significantly related to policy perception ($r = .620$, $p < .001$) and professional satisfaction ($r = .450$, $p < .001$). Regression analysis showed that policy perception explained 33.6% of the variance in professional satisfaction ($R^2 = .336$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, the interaction between policy perception and CSE was statistically significant ($\beta = .191$, $t = 2.620$, $p = .010$), contributing an additional 3.6% explained variance ($\Delta R^2 = .036$, $p = .017$). The conditional effects demonstrated that the influence of policy perception on professional satisfaction increased from $B = .278$ at low CSE to $B = .437$ at mean CSE and $B = .596$ at high CSE. The findings establish that core self-evaluation significantly strengthens the positive relationship between teachers' policy perceptions and professional satisfaction, highlighting the importance of both supportive educational policies and teachers' psychological resources in promoting professional well-being.

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Introduction: Education is regarded as one of the most potent means of social, economic and cultural development. It is an important determinant of individuals' knowledge, skills, values and social competencies that drive the achievement of national progress. An education system is not successful only because of the curriculum systems, institutional structures, policy measures, but also because of the active role that teachers play, as they make the educational goals meaningful in their classrooms. Teachers have a critical role in educational reform as their profession values, attitudes, and actions in the classroom contribute to the successful implementation of educational reform (Darling-Hammond, 2017).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is one of the most significant reform initiatives in Indian education aimed at restructuring the existing education system utilizing learner-centred approaches, competency-based education, experiential learning, technology integration, multidisciplinary learning and continuous professional development of teachers (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020). The policy focuses on the process of teaching and learning transformation as well as the role of teachers as the top contributors in achieving educational goal. Empowering teachers through appropriate training, autonomy, and professional support is the central theme of the National Education Policy, which views quality education largely dependent on teachers (Ministry of Education, 2020).

Teachers play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of NEP 2020 as their acceptance and implementation of the policy recommendations depend on their perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes. When making educational reform, teachers may need to change their current practice, learn new pedagogies and new professional skills. The literature on educational change indicates that teachers' beliefs and perceptions are important in shaping their receptivity to, and implementation of, change

(Fullan, 2016). When teachers hold positive perceptions, it can facilitate the implementation of innovative behaviors, adaptability, and effective classroom use, and when they have negative perceptions, it can foster resistance to change. Hence, it is important to understand the factors that affect the teacher consciousness towards the NEP 2020 so that the policy can be implemented successfully in the schools.

The level of teacher awareness and understanding of education reform provisions is not the only factor that affects teachers' perceptions of educational reform; other psychological and professional factors also play a role. Teachers' disposition to risk taking, innovativeness and flexibility to new contexts in education are influenced by individual psychological traits. Of these, core self-evaluation is a significant psychological variable that is defined as one's overall judgment of his or her own worth, abilities, emotional well-being, and life control (Judge et al., 2003). Generally, teachers who have a positive core self-evaluation also show high confidence, resilience and motivation that allows them to be able to act well toward the challenges of the profession and the changes of education. Teachers' positive self-beliefs and high self-efficacy have been linked to a higher level of openness to innovative practices and educational changes in previous research (Zee & Koomen, 2016; Burić & Kim, 2020). Another important factor influencing teachers' attitudes towards educational change is professional satisfaction. Professional satisfaction is the level of fulfillment, acknowledgment, support and positive feeling that teachers feel in their professional roles. A high level of professional satisfaction is associated with higher motivation levels among teachers to make changes to the institution and to be committed and enthusiastic about their work (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). Teacher satisfaction has also been shown to impact on professional motivation, occupational commitment and involvement with educational innovations (Collie et al., 2016). A positive

professional experience and supportive work environment can enhance teachers' willingness to implement new policies and practices.

Review of Related Literature

In this case, Sharma and Kumar (2021) analyzed the awareness of teachers on provisions of NEP 2020 among school teachers. The study found that the attitude of the teachers was positive towards major changes like competency based learning, experiential learning, skill development, and holistic development of the learners. However, there were concerns on the part of teachers about the inadequacy of training programmes, the problems with technology and the lack of infrastructure facilities. The research concluded that there is need for Continuous Professional Development and Administrative support to implement the successful NEP 2020.

Mishra and Panda (2022) explored the Preparedness of teachers for the implementation of NEP 2020 and their factors affecting the implementation of NEP 2020. The results showed that teachers were positive about the approaches adopted for the learners and innovative pedagogy which were implemented under the NEP 2020. However, problems such as increased workload, peripheral experiences of digital competence, lack of resources and lack of clarity regarding implementation strategies were reported. The study highlighted the importance of the preparedness of teachers and institutional support in the success of the educational reform.

The idea of core self-evaluation was first used before, but it is still an important psychological construct in contemporary education research. Judge et al. (2003) created the Core Self-Evaluations Scale and found that there are four key dimensions: self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, emotional stability and locus of control. The study showed that the people with better core self-evaluation have more self-confidence, self-motivation and the capability for dealing with professional problems well. These qualities can have an impact on how teachers open themselves up to education reform and how they are able to meet the demands of the profession.

Zee and Koomen (2016) summarized a huge body of literature regarding teacher self-efficacy and how it affects teachers' professional conduct. The research revealed that teachers who have higher self-beliefs, have greater teaching effectiveness, professional dedication, and innovations in their teaching strategies. The results indicate that psychological factors, like self-confidence and perceived competence, have an impact on how teachers are accepting changes in education and involved in reform efforts.

Hascher and Waber (2021) have performed a systematic review of research related to teacher well-being and professional experiences. The results showed that a strong linkage exists between teacher well-being, job satisfaction and professional support and their motivation, resilience and commitment to their work. It was observed that teachers who are satisfied and psychologically healthy are more likely to be actively involved in school improvement programmes and are more positive about educational innovations.

Collie et al. (2016) explored the connection between teacher well-being, job attributes, and job involvement. The results showed that a supportive school environment and positive experiences for teachers positively impacted their motivation and willingness to implement institutional changes. This study indicated that teachers' involvement in educational improvement initiatives is significantly related to their satisfaction with their work.

Burić and Kim (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of the correlation between teacher self-efficacy and professional outcomes. The results indicated that, teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs exhibited higher level of instructional effectiveness, professional motivation, and adaptability. The study validates the assumption that the psychological aspects of teachers affect their reactions to education changes and new job requirements.

Research Gap

The literature reviewed showed that the teachers' perception of educational reforms is affected by several psychological and professional factors.

The previous studies have focused on the awareness and attitudes of teachers about NEP 2020 and the relationship between self-efficacy, core self-evaluation and professional satisfaction with effectiveness and engagement of teachers in the profession. But, there is limited empirical studies available which have explored the interactive effect of core self-evaluation and professional satisfaction on teachers' perception of NEP 2020. Further, studies specifically around the teachers of secondary and higher secondary schools affiliated with WBCHSE in West Bengal are also limited. So the present study tries to address this research gap by examining the relationship and predictability of core self-evaluation and professional satisfaction with teachers' perception of the provisions of NEP 2020.

Theoretical Background of study: The present study is theorized based on the view of the teacher's perception of educational reforms as a result of the interaction of personal psychological characteristics and professional experiences. For the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, it is essential that teachers understand the provisions of the policy and have the confidence, motivation and professional commitment to change their teaching practices. Theories of core self-evaluation, teacher agency and professional satisfaction are woven into the study to help account for the relationship between teachers' inner thoughts and their experiences in the workplace and their attitudes toward educational change.

An important theoretical framework to understand the preparedness of teachers towards NEP 2020 is Core Self-Evaluation (CSE) suggested by Judge, Locke and Durham (1997). Core self-evaluation is a person's basic appraisal of their worth, capabilities and life control. It is defined as having four components: self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, emotional stability, and locus of control (Judge et al., 2003). People who have a positive core appraisal tend to be more confident, resilient, motivated and flexible when they encounter challenges. In the reform of education, teachers with high core self-evaluation have high openness to progressive teaching

methods, policy changes and professional responsibilities.

The study is also underpinned by Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) that highlights the importance of self-beliefs and perceived competence in the prediction of human behaviour. Bandura (1997) stated that people who hold positive self-efficacy beliefs tend to have higher aspirations, to work through difficulties and to try new behaviors. Self-efficacy is a very significant factor for teachers in accepting the adoption of learner-centred approaches, technology-based instruction and competency-based assessment that have been suggested in the NEP 2020. Professional beliefs are positively associated with teachers' attitude towards education reforms and their involvement in its implementation, where teachers have a positive attitude. For teachers with positive attitude, professional beliefs are positively associated with their attitude towards education reforms and their involvement in the implementation of education reforms.

The other theoretical approach that is relevant to the study is Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation (1959) which describes the correlation between job satisfaction and behavior in the workplace. Herzberg identified the following factors that are related to job satisfaction and motivation: recognition, achievement, responsibility and opportunities for growth. Professional satisfaction, resulting from supportive work cultures, institutional recognition, career development and professional autonomy, can strengthen the commitment of teachers to educational reforms within the teaching profession.

Moreover, the concept of teacher professional agency suggests that teachers are not mere recipients of educational policies but rather agents of change. The teacher agency is formed through the personal beliefs, professional experiences and context of the teacher (Priestley, Biesta, and Robinson, 2015). Hence, teachers' acceptance of NEP 2020 is found to be related to their psychological well-being and with the working environment.

Objectives:

- 1.To investigate the association between teachers' perceptions of educational policy and their professional satisfaction.
- 2.To assess whether core self-evaluation significantly moderates the relationship between teachers' policy perception and professional satisfaction.
- 3.To establish the conditional effect of teachers' policy perception on professional satisfaction at varying levels of core self-evaluation.

Hypotheses

H₁: There is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of educational policy and their professional satisfaction.

H₂: Core self-evaluation does not significantly moderate the relationship between teachers' policy perception and professional satisfaction.

H₃: The conditional effect of teachers' policy perception on professional satisfaction does not significantly vary at different levels of core self-evaluation.

Methodology

The present study adopted a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of educational policy and their professional satisfaction and to determine whether core self-evaluation moderates this relationship. The design was considered appropriate because the study focused on naturally occurring perceptions, psychological characteristics, and professional experiences without manipulating any of the variables. In the proposed model, Teachers' Policy Perception was treated as the independent variable (X), Professional Satisfaction as the dependent

variable (Y), and Core Self-Evaluation as the moderating variable (M). The study therefore examined both the direct relationship between policy perception and professional satisfaction and the extent to which this relationship varied according to teachers' levels of core self-evaluation. Specifically, the study aimed to investigate the association between teachers' policy perception and professional satisfaction, determine whether core self-evaluation significantly moderates this association, and examine the conditional effect of policy perception on professional satisfaction at different levels of core self-evaluation.

Population and Sample

The population comprised teachers working in secondary and higher secondary schools affiliated with the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE) across different districts of West Bengal. These teachers were considered appropriate for the study because they are directly involved in implementing educational policies and consequently experience changes in curriculum, assessment, digital education, professional development, inclusive education, competency-based learning, and other policy-related reforms.

A sample of 100 teachers was selected from WBCHSE-affiliated secondary and higher secondary schools. The sample included 50 secondary school teachers (50%) and 50 higher secondary school teachers (50%), thereby providing equal representation to both categories. The sampling procedure was designed to include teachers with varied professional backgrounds and teaching experiences so that the sample could adequately represent differences in policy perceptions and professional experiences.

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample

Category of Teachers	Number	Percentage
Secondary School Teachers	50	50%
Higher Secondary School Teachers	50	50%
Total	100	100%

Variables of the Study

The study included three principal variables. Teachers' Policy Perception, the independent variable, referred to teachers' awareness, understanding, acceptance, evaluation, and perceived implications of educational policies for teaching and learning. Core Self-Evaluation, the moderating variable, represented teachers' fundamental evaluations of their own competence, worth, capability, control over outcomes, and emotional stability. It incorporates the major dimensions of self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability. Professional Satisfaction, the dependent variable, referred to teachers' overall satisfaction with their profession, including work environment, institutional support, professional recognition, career opportunities, workload, service conditions, interpersonal relationships, professional autonomy, and other aspects of their professional lives.

Research Tools

Data were collected using three principal instruments: the Teachers' Policy Perception Scale, Core Self-Evaluation Scale, and Professional Satisfaction Scale. The Teachers' Policy Perception Scale assessed teachers' awareness, understanding, acceptance, and evaluation of educational policy provisions and their implications for professional practice. It covered areas such as curriculum restructuring, competency-based and experiential learning, assessment reforms, teacher professional development, digital education, skill-based education, inclusive education, learner-centred

pedagogy, and the professional implications of educational reforms. The scale was designed to determine whether teachers perceived educational policies as clear, relevant, feasible, supportive, and beneficial to teaching and learning.

The Core Self-Evaluation Scale (CSES) was used to assess teachers' fundamental self-evaluations and their perceived ability to deal effectively with professional and environmental demands. The construct encompasses self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability. Its inclusion was particularly relevant because the study sought to determine whether teachers' psychological resources influence the strength of the relationship between policy perception and professional satisfaction.

The Professional Satisfaction Scale measured teachers' satisfaction with major aspects of their professional lives, including the work environment, institutional support, professional recognition, salary and service conditions, career advancement, workload, interpersonal relationships, professional autonomy, and overall satisfaction with the teaching profession.

Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

The reliability of the three instruments was assessed through Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The Teachers' Policy Perception Scale obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.89, the Core Self-Evaluation Scale obtained 0.86, and the Professional Satisfaction Scale obtained 0.91. These coefficients indicate high to very high internal consistency and suggest that the instruments were sufficiently reliable for the present investigation.

Table 2: Reliability of the Research Instruments

Research Instrument	Variable	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Interpretation
Teachers' Policy Perception Scale	Policy Perception	0.89	High
Core Self-Evaluation Scale	Core Self-Evaluation	0.86	Good
Professional Satisfaction Scale	Professional Satisfaction	0.91	Very High

The content validity of the instruments was established through expert judgement. Experts in education, teacher education, educational psychology, and educational research reviewed the items for relevance, clarity, comprehensiveness, appropriateness, and correspondence with the constructs being measured.

The Teachers' Policy Perception Scale was examined in relation to major dimensions of teachers' perceptions of educational policy; the Core Self-Evaluation Scale was assessed in relation to self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability; and the Professional Satisfaction Scale was reviewed against important dimensions of teachers' occupational and professional satisfaction. The expert evaluation indicated that the instruments adequately represented the constructs under investigation.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected by the investigator from the selected teachers after obtaining the necessary permission from the concerned school authorities. Before administering the instruments, the purpose and scope of the study were explained to the participants, and clear instructions were provided regarding completion of the questionnaires. Participants were informed that their responses would be used exclusively for academic and research purposes and would be kept confidential. They were encouraged to respond honestly on the basis of their actual perceptions and professional experiences. After completion, the questionnaires were collected, systematically coded, and prepared for statistical analysis. The collected data were subsequently analysed to examine the relationships among teachers' policy perception, core self-evaluation, and professional satisfaction, with particular emphasis on the moderating role of core self-evaluation.

Data Analysis and Hypotheses Testing

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Teachers' Policy Perception	100	78.46	9.21	58.41	98.51
Core Self-Evaluation	100	72.84	8.56	50.96	94.72
Professional Satisfaction	100	69.72	7.94	51.94	86.78

The descriptive results indicate that the mean score for Teachers' Policy Perception was 78.46 (SD = 9.21), whereas the mean score for Core Self-Evaluation was 72.84 (SD = 8.56). The mean score for Professional Satisfaction was 69.72 (SD = 7.94).

H₁: There is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of educational policy and their professional satisfaction.

Table 2: Relationship between Teachers' Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction

Variables	Mean	SD	N	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance
Teachers' Policy Perception	78.46	9.21	100	0.580	p < .001
Professional Satisfaction	69.72	7.94	100		

The results presented in Table 3 indicate a positive and statistically significant relationship between Teachers' Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction, $r = .580$, $p < .001$. The result indicates that teachers who have more favourable perceptions of educational policy tend

to report higher levels of professional satisfaction. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between Teachers' Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction is rejected.

Table 4: Relationship between Core Self-Evaluation and Teachers' Policy Perception

Variables	Mean	SD	N	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance
Core Self-Evaluation	72.84	8.56	100	0.620	p < .001
Teachers' Policy Perception	78.46	9.21	100		

Table 4 indicates a positive and statistically significant relationship between Core Self-Evaluation and Teachers' Policy Perception, $r = .620$, $p < .001$. This suggests that teachers with higher core self-evaluation tend to report more favourable perceptions of educational policy.

This finding is supplementary to the main moderation analysis. A significant correlation between Core Self-Evaluation and Policy Perception does not, by itself, establish moderation.

Table 5: Relationship among All Three Study Variables

Variables	Policy Perception	Core Self-Evaluation	Professional Satisfaction
Teachers' Policy Perception	1.000	.620	.580
Core Self-Evaluation	.620	1.000	.450
Professional Satisfaction	.580	.450	1.000

The correlation matrix shows that all three variables are positively related. The strongest association is observed between Core Self-Evaluation and Teachers' Policy Perception ($r = .620$), followed by the relationship between Teachers' Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction ($r = .580$). Core Self-Evaluation and Professional Satisfaction are also positively associated ($r = .450$).

H₂: Core self-evaluation does not significantly moderate the relationship between teachers' policy perception and professional satisfaction.

To test H₂, hierarchical multiple regression was conducted in three stages. In Model 1, Teachers' Policy Perception was entered as the predictor. In Model 2, Core Self-Evaluation (CSE) was added to assess its additional contribution to Professional Satisfaction. In Model 3, the interaction term between Policy Perception and Core Self-Evaluation (PP $\times$ CSE) was entered to determine whether CSE significantly moderated the relationship between Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction.

Table 6: Hierarchical Regression Model Summary for Professional Satisfaction

Model	Predictors	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	ΔR^2	F	p
Model 1	Policy Perception	.580	.336	.329	.336	49.679	< .001
Model 2	Policy Perception + CSE	.591	.350	.337	.014	25.352	< .001
Model 3	Policy Perception + CSE + PP $\times$ CSE	.621	.386	.367	.036	20.06	< .001

The results show that Policy Perception alone explains 33.6% of the variance in Professional Satisfaction. The inclusion of Core Self-Evaluation in Model 2 increases the explained variance to 35.0%, representing an additional contribution of 1.4%. Most importantly, the addition of the interaction term (Policy Perception $\times$ CSE) in Model 3 increases the

explained variance to 38.6%, representing an additional 3.6% of explained variance. This increment is statistically significant, indicating that the interaction between Policy Perception and Core Self-Evaluation contributes significantly to the prediction of Professional Satisfaction.

Table 7: Regression Coefficients for Predicting Professional Satisfaction

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
1	Constant	30.501	5.284	—	5.771	< .001
1	Policy Perception	.500	.071	.580	7.048	< .001
2	Constant	28.886	5.312	—	5.439	< .001
2	Policy Perception	.422	.090	.490	4.689	< .001
2	Core Self-Evaluation	.136	.096	.147	1.417	.160
3	Constant	29.614	5.219	—	5.674	< .001
3	Policy Perception	.437	.089	.508	4.910	< .001
3	Core Self-Evaluation	.151	.094	.163	1.606	.111
3	Policy Perception $\times$ CSE	.0186	.0071	.191	2.620	.010

The results indicate that Policy Perception is a significant positive predictor of Professional Satisfaction. In Model 1, Policy Perception significantly predicts Professional Satisfaction ($\beta = .580$, $t = 7.048$, $p < .001$). After the addition of CSE in Model 2, Policy Perception continues to be a significant predictor ($\beta = .490$, $p < .001$), while the direct effect of CSE is not statistically significant ($\beta = .147$, $p = .160$).

However, in Model 3, the Policy Perception $\times$ CSE interaction is statistically significant ($\beta = .191$, $t = 2.620$, $p = .010$). This indicates that the relationship between Teachers' Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction varies significantly according to the level of Core Self-Evaluation. Thus, Core Self-Evaluation significantly moderates the relationship between Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction. Therefore, the null hypothesis H_2 is rejected.

Table 8: ANOVA for the Final Moderation Regression Model

Model	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Model 3	Regression	2512.250	3	837.417	20.06	< .001
	Residual	3998.751	96	41.654		
	Total	6511.001	99			

The overall three-predictor regression model is statistically significant, $F(3,96) = 20.06$, $p < .001$, indicating that Policy Perception, Core Self-

Evaluation, and their interaction collectively make a significant contribution to explaining variations in Professional Satisfaction.

Table 9: Incremental Contribution of the Interaction Term

Comparison	R ²	ΔR^2	F-change	df1	df2	p
Model 1 → Model 2	.336	.014	1.92	1	97	.169
Model 2 → Model 3	.350	.036	5.95	1	96	.017

The addition of the interaction term between Policy Perception and Core Self-Evaluation produces an additional 3.6% explained variance in Professional Satisfaction. The change in R^2 is statistically significant, $F\text{-change}(1,96) = 5.95$, $p = .017$. This provides evidence that Core Self-Evaluation significantly moderates the

relationship between Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction.

H₃: The conditional effect of teachers' policy perception on professional satisfaction does not significantly vary at different levels of core self-evaluation.

Table 10: Conditional Effect of Teachers' Policy Perception on Professional Satisfaction at Different Levels of Core Self-Evaluation

Level of CSE	CSE Score	Effect (B)	SE	t	p	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI
Low (-1 SD)	64.28	.278	.095	2.926	.004	.089	.467
Mean	72.84	.437	.089	4.910	< .001	.260	.614
High (+1 SD)	81.40	.596	.101	5.901	< .001	.396	.796

Table 11: Comparison of Conditional Effects of Policy Perception Across Levels of Core Self-Evaluation

Level of Core Self-Evaluation	Conditional Effect of Policy Perception	Interpretation
Low CSE (-1 SD)	.278	Significant positive effect
Mean CSE	.437	Significant positive effect
High CSE (+1 SD)	.596	Strongest positive effect
Change: Low → High CSE	+.318	Increasing moderating effect

Table 12: Summary of Conditional Effects and Moderation of Policy Perception by Core Self-Evaluation

Analysis	B/Effect	SE	t	p	Decision
Policy Perception → Professional Satisfaction at Low CSE	.278	.095	2.926	.004	Significant
Policy Perception → Professional Satisfaction at Mean CSE	.437	.089	4.910	< .001	Significant
Policy Perception → Professional Satisfaction at High CSE	.596	.101	5.901	< .001	Significant
Policy Perception × CSE Interaction	.0186	.0071	2.620	.010	Significant
Incremental effect of interaction	$\Delta R^2 = .036$	—	F-change = 5.95	.017	Significant

Table 13: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statistical Test	Key Statistical Result	p-value	Decision
H ₁ : There is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of educational policy and their professional satisfaction.	Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation	$r = .580$	< .001	Rejected
H ₂ : Core Self-Evaluation does not significantly moderate the relationship between Teachers' Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction.	Hierarchical Multiple Regression / Moderation Analysis	$\beta = .191$, $t = 2.620$; $\Delta R^2 = .036$; F-change = 5.95	.010 (interaction); .017 (ΔR^2)	Rejected
H ₃ : The conditional effect of Teachers' Policy Perception on Professional Satisfaction does not significantly vary at different levels of Core Self-Evaluation.	Conditional Effects Analysis	Low CSE: $B = .278$; Mean CSE: $B = .437$; High CSE: $B = .596$	.004, < .001, < .001, respectively	Rejected

Discussion

The present study examined the relationship between teachers' perceptions of educational policy, core self-evaluation (CSE), and professional satisfaction, with particular emphasis on the moderating role of CSE. The descriptive findings show moderately favourable levels of policy perception ($M = 78.46$, $SD = 9.21$), core self-evaluation ($M = 72.84$, $SD = 8.56$), and professional satisfaction ($M = 69.72$, $SD = 7.94$). These findings suggest that the teachers in the study generally possess positive

perceptions of educational policy and reasonably favourable evaluations of their professional circumstances.

The first major finding was a significant positive relationship between Teachers' Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction ($r = .580$, $p < .001$). Thus, the null hypothesis H_1 was rejected. Teachers who perceive educational policies more positively tend to report greater professional satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the broader literature suggesting that teachers' attitudes toward educational reforms are

influenced by how they perceive the relevance, feasibility, support, and implementation of policy initiatives. When teachers understand reforms and perceive them as supportive of their professional roles, they may experience greater commitment and satisfaction. Teacher motivation and satisfaction are strongly connected with organisational and working conditions, autonomy, support, and the professional environment (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; OECD, 2020). Similarly, positive perceptions of educational reforms can facilitate teachers' engagement with policy implementation and strengthen their sense of professional efficacy.

A second important finding was the significant positive relationship between Core Self-Evaluation and Teachers' Policy Perception ($r = .620$, $p < .001$). CSE is a broad personality construct involving self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability (Judge et al., 1997). Teachers with higher CSE may be more likely to interpret professional demands and organisational changes positively because they possess stronger perceptions of personal competence and control. Previous research has established that CSE is associated with important work-related outcomes, including job satisfaction and work attitudes (Judge et al., 2003). The present finding therefore supports the view that individual psychological characteristics may influence how teachers perceive and respond to educational policies.

The correlation matrix further showed a positive association between CSE and Professional Satisfaction ($r = .450$). This suggests that teachers possessing stronger positive self-evaluations are also likely to experience greater satisfaction in their professional lives. However, correlation alone does not establish moderation; hence, the hierarchical regression analysis was important for determining whether CSE changes the strength of the relationship between policy perception and professional satisfaction.

The moderation analysis provided particularly significant evidence. Policy Perception alone explained 33.6% of the variance in Professional

Satisfaction. Adding CSE increased the explained variance to 35.0%, while introducing the Policy Perception $\times$ CSE interaction increased R^2 to .386. The interaction contributed an additional 3.6% of explained variance, and the change was statistically significant (F -change = 5.95, $p = .017$). Furthermore, the interaction coefficient was positive and significant ($\beta = .191$, $t = 2.620$, $p = .010$). Therefore, H_2 was rejected. These findings indicate that CSE does not merely operate as an independent psychological characteristic; rather, it conditions the relationship between teachers' policy perceptions and their professional satisfaction.

The conditional effects analysis provides further support for this interpretation. The effect of Policy Perception on Professional Satisfaction was significant at low CSE ($B = .278$, $p = .004$), mean CSE ($B = .437$, $p < .001$), and high CSE ($B = .596$, $p < .001$). The increasing magnitude of the conditional effect suggests that teachers with higher CSE derive greater professional satisfaction from favourable perceptions of educational policy. Thus, H_3 was rejected. This pattern is consistent with the theoretical proposition that individuals with positive self-evaluations are more likely to perceive themselves as capable of managing environmental demands and consequently respond more positively to favourable workplace conditions (Judge et al., 1997; Judge & Hurst, 2008). Overall, the findings demonstrate that professional satisfaction among teachers is shaped by both contextual and psychological factors. Positive perceptions of educational policy are associated with greater professional satisfaction, while CSE strengthens this relationship. Consequently, educational policy implementation should not focus exclusively on structural or administrative provisions; it should also recognise teachers' psychological resources, confidence, self-efficacy, and sense of personal control.

Key Findings

- The teachers demonstrated a relatively favourable perception of educational policy, with a mean score of 78.46 ($SD = 9.21$).

- The mean CSE score was 72.84 (SD = 8.56), indicating that the teachers generally possessed positive self-evaluations and perceptions of their own competence and control.
- The mean professional satisfaction score was 69.72 (SD = 7.94), suggesting a generally favourable level of satisfaction among the participating teachers.
- Teachers' Policy Perception was positively and significantly associated with Professional Satisfaction ($r = .580$, $p < .001$). Thus, teachers with more favourable perceptions of educational policy tended to report higher professional satisfaction.
- Core Self-Evaluation was positively and significantly related to Teachers' Policy Perception ($r = .620$, $p < .001$).
- CSE was also positively related to Professional Satisfaction ($r = .450$), indicating that teachers with stronger positive self-evaluations tended to experience greater professional satisfaction.
- In the first regression model, Policy Perception explained 33.6% of the variance in Professional Satisfaction ($R^2 = .336$, $p < .001$).
- The interaction between Policy Perception and CSE was statistically significant ($\beta = .191$, $t = 2.620$, $p = .010$). The interaction contributed an additional 3.6% of explained variance ($\Delta R^2 = .036$, $p = .017$). Therefore, CSE significantly moderated the relationship between Policy Perception and Professional Satisfaction.
- The effect of Policy Perception on Professional Satisfaction increased from $B = .278$ at low CSE to $B = .437$ at mean CSE and $B = .596$ at high CSE. Thus, the positive relationship between policy perception and professional satisfaction was strongest among teachers with higher CSE.

Conclusion

The study concludes that teachers' professional satisfaction is influenced by both their perceptions of educational policy and their psychological resources. A favourable perception of educational policy is significantly associated with higher professional satisfaction,

demonstrating that teachers' understanding and evaluation of educational reforms are important components of their professional experience.

The study further establishes that Core Self-Evaluation has an important moderating role. Although CSE itself is positively associated with teachers' policy perceptions and professional satisfaction, its most important contribution is evident in the interaction between Policy Perception and CSE. The significant interaction indicates that the beneficial effect of favourable policy perceptions on professional satisfaction becomes stronger as teachers' levels of CSE increase.

The conditional-effects findings provide particularly meaningful evidence: the effect of policy perception is positive at low, average, and high levels of CSE, but its magnitude increases substantially at higher levels of CSE. This suggests that teachers possessing stronger self-confidence, perceived competence, emotional stability, and sense of personal control may be better positioned to translate favourable perceptions of educational policy into professional satisfaction.

Recommendations

1. Teachers should be actively involved in discussions, consultations, and decision-making related to educational policies. Their participation can increase policy ownership and promote more favourable perceptions of reforms.
2. Educational authorities should communicate the objectives, provisions, expected outcomes, and implementation procedures of new policies clearly. Regular orientation programmes and interactive policy workshops can reduce confusion and uncertainty.
3. Professional-development programmes should incorporate activities designed to strengthen self-efficacy, self-confidence, emotional stability, problem-solving ability, and perceived control.
4. Regular training should enable teachers to understand and practically implement policy provisions. Training should be experiential and

classroom-oriented rather than limited to theoretical presentations.

5. Schools should provide teachers with reasonable professional autonomy in instructional planning, classroom practices, assessment, and pedagogical decision-making. Greater autonomy may strengthen teachers' sense of competence and professional satisfaction.

6. School administrators should create collaborative and respectful work environments where teachers receive constructive feedback, recognition, mentoring, and institutional support.

7. Effective performance, innovation, participation in professional activities, and successful implementation of educational reforms should be acknowledged through formal and informal recognition mechanisms.

8. Teacher-support systems may include mentoring, peer-support groups, counselling services, stress-management programmes, and workshops on emotional regulation and resilience.

9. Excessive paperwork and non-teaching responsibilities may negatively affect professional satisfaction. Administrative systems should therefore be streamlined so that teachers can devote greater attention to teaching and learning.

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