Personality and Job Satisfaction as Predictors of Teachers' Mental Health: Evidence from Nadia District

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how personality factors and job satisfaction influence the mental health of secondary school teachers in Nadia District, West Bengal. Using a survey-based design with a representative sample of teachers, the research explores both direct and indirect effects of these factors. Results indicate that positive traits such as conscientiousness and emotional stability are linked to stronger mental health, while job satisfaction serves as an important pathway through which personality shapes well-being. Teachers reporting higher job satisfaction also experience lower stress and greater resilience, underscoring its role as both a predictor and mediator. The study highlights the need for school-level interventions that enhance supportive working conditions and address personality-related vulnerabilities. These findings have practical implications for improving teacher well-being and sustaining educational quality in the region.

Keywords: Personality Factors; Job Satisfaction; Teacher Mental Health; Secondary School Teachers; Nadia District

INTRODUCTION

Teacher mental health has emerged as a pressing issue in educational research and practice, with mounting evidence that stress, burnout, and psychological distress adversely affect both instructional quality and student learning outcomes **(Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011)**. In India, concerns about teacher well-being are particularly acute, as educators face systemic challenges such as high workloads, limited resources, and inadequate institutional support **(Mathew & Khakha, 2016)**. When left unaddressed, poor mental health among teachers not only undermines individual well-being but also contributes to attrition, absenteeism, and reduced classroom effectiveness **(Singh & Gautam, 2024).**

Among the many factors shaping teacher well-being, personality traits and job satisfaction have been identified as important predictors **(Judge, Heller, & Mount, 2002).** Teachers with higher emotional stability and conscientiousness often report greater resilience and lower stress levels, while job satisfaction has consistently been linked with enhanced psychological well-being and reduced burnout **(Benevene, Ittan, & Cortini, 2018).** However, the interplay of these factors has rarely been investigated in localised contexts such as Nadia District, West Bengal.

Nadia District presents a unique case for such an inquiry. As a largely rural and semi-urban region, its schools often operate under resource constraints and varying administrative conditions that may amplify stress among teachers. While limited surveys have examined teachers' mental health in the district, these studies have not adequately addressed how personality traits and job satisfaction jointly influence well-being. This leaves a

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critical gap in understanding how individual dispositions interact with workplace conditions to shape teacher outcomes in this context.

The present study, therefore, seeks to explore the predictive roles of personality factors and job satisfaction on the mental health of secondary school teachers in Nadia District. By focusing on this specific population, the research contributes both theoretically and practically: it extends the literature by situating established psychological constructs within a localised Indian context, and it provides actionable insights for policymakers and administrators aiming to strengthen teacher support systems.

Rationale of the study

Teacher mental health is a critical concern in educational psychology, given its strong implications for instructional quality, student learning, and overall school functioning (**Singh & Gautam, 2024).** Among the factors shaping mental health, personality traits and job satisfaction play central roles, with consistent evidence linking emotional stability, conscientiousness, and extraversion to positive psychological outcomes in teachers **(Almutairi & Ahmed, 2022; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018)**. Yet, the mechanisms underlying these associations remain underexplored in localised contexts such as Nadia District, West Bengal, where socio-cultural and institutional factors may uniquely influence teacher well-being.

The rationale for the present study rests on three justifications. First, the **psychological importance** of personality and job satisfaction lies in their predictive role for mental health and occupational well-being. Teachers with higher resilience and satisfaction report lower burnout, stress, and depressive symptoms, supporting the need for integrated inquiry into these constructs **(Collie et al., 2012; Benevene et al., 2018).**

Second, there is a **contextual need for local data**. Despite national and international research on teacher well-being, empirical studies in Nadia District remain sparse, with prior surveys failing to address how personality and job satisfaction interact to shape mental health outcomes **(Behera, 2014).** Given the region's blend of rural and semi-urban schools, this study fills a crucial knowledge gap by providing evidence grounded in the local educational environment.

Third, the findings hold **practical utility for interventions**, particularly under India's **National Education Policy (NEP 2020)**, which underscores teacher development and well-being as prerequisites for quality education **(Ministry of Education, 2020)**. By clarifying how personality and job satisfaction affect mental health, the study can inform teacher-support strategies, administrative reforms, and policy initiatives tailored to improve both teacher well-being and student outcomes.

By condensing prior discussions into these three focal points, the study highlights its originality while aligning with theoretical, contextual, and practical priorities in Indian education.

Objective of the Study

The broad objective of the study was—

To explore the impacts of **Personality factors and Job Satisfaction** on the **Mental Health** of school teachers of Nadia District.

The **Hypotheses** were—

H_1: There remain statistically significant multiple regression coefficients to frame the equation to predict ***Mental Health*** with the help of different factors of ***Personality Factors*** and ***Job Satisfaction*** of the school teachers, considering both male and female as a whole.

H_2: There remain statistically significant multiple regression coefficients to frame the equation to predict ***Mental Health*** with the help of different factors of ***Personality Factors*** and ***Job Satisfaction*** of the male school teachers.

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H_3: There remain statistically significant multiple regression coefficients to frame the equation to predict ***Mental Health*** with the help of different factors of ***Personality Factors*** and ***Job Satisfaction*** of the female school teachers.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The relationship among personality factors, job satisfaction, and mental health has been widely studied in educational psychology. However, much of the scholarship has relied heavily on classical theories and Western contexts, limiting its applicability to South Asian educational settings. This review critically examines theoretical models, empirical findings, and contextual influences, while highlighting research gaps relevant to teachers' well-being in India.

Concept of Personality and Theoretical Models

Personality is generally conceptualised as stable individual differences in cognition, emotion, and behaviour that influence long-term adaptation (**McCrae & Costa, 2008).** The Five-Factor Model (FFM) remains the dominant paradigm, with robust evidence supporting the universality of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism across cultures **(Soto & John, 2017).** Recent studies, however, caution against uncritical generalisation, noting cultural variations in the salience of traits. For instance, research in India has found that conscientiousness and emotional stability are particularly predictive of occupational outcomes in collectivist teaching environments, while openness shows weaker effects compared to Western samples **(Chaudhary & Sharma, 2019; Kumar & Mondal, 2021**).

Contradictions also emerge in the literature. While **Judge et al. (2002)** argued that neuroticism consistently undermines well-being, South Asian studies have found mixed results, with some reporting that strong familial and institutional support buffers the negative effects of neuroticism among teachers **(Mishra & Sahoo, 2020).** These findings indicate the need for more nuanced, culturally embedded analyses of personality–well-being links.

Job Satisfaction: Definition, Determinants, and Debates

Job satisfaction has traditionally been defined as a pleasurable emotional state arising from appraisal of one's job **(Locke, 1976).** In the teaching profession, satisfaction is linked to recognition, autonomy, workload, and student outcomes **(Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).** Recent research highlights that job satisfaction functions not only as an outcome but also as a mediator between personality traits and well-being **(Benevene et al., 2018; Singh & Gautam, 2024a).**

Critical debates persist. Some scholars argue that structural conditions such as salary, workload, and policy reforms exert greater influence on teachers' satisfaction than personality traits **(Collie et al., 2016).** Indian studies corroborate this view, reporting that inadequate infrastructure, political interference, and resource inequities contribute to dissatisfaction regardless of personal dispositions (**Pradhan & Jena, 2019**). This suggests that personality-based explanations should be complemented with structural and policy analyses.

Teacher Mental Health: Models and Evidence

The **World Health Organisation (2004)** defines mental health as a state of well-being enabling individuals to cope with stress and contribute productively to their communities. Positive psychology frameworks, such as **Keyes's (2002)** dual-continua model, further emphasise that the absence of illness does not imply flourishing.

Recent scholarship underscores high rates of burnout, anxiety, and depression among teachers globally, with South Asian educators facing compounded challenges from overcrowded classrooms and socio-economic pressures **(Shukla & Trivedi, 2020).** Indian surveys show that female teachers often report greater emotional exhaustion, while rural teachers experience lower well-being due to limited institutional support (**Behera, 2014; Singh & Gautam, 2024a).** These findings suggest that contextual stressors intersect with individual dispositions in shaping mental health outcomes.

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Empirical Evidence on Personality, Job Satisfaction, and Mental Health

Meta-analyses consistently link conscientiousness and low neuroticism with positive occupational outcomes **(Anglim et al., 2020).** In educational contexts, job satisfaction has been shown to mediate the relationship between personality and mental health, particularly in collectivist settings where institutional support is pivotal **(Benevene et al., 2018).**

Indian evidence, though limited, supports these findings. For example, **Mathew and Khakha (2016a)** observed that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between self-esteem and psychological health among teachers in Kerala. Similarly, recent studies in West Bengal and Odisha highlight that rural teachers' mental health is strongly shaped by both personality dispositions and satisfaction with administrative support (**Chatterjee & Saha, 2022).**

However, inconsistencies remain. Some research reports stronger predictive power of structural factors (salary, workload) over personality, raising questions about the extent to which personality-based frameworks adequately capture teacher well-being in South Asia **(Pradhan & Jena, 2019).**

Contextual Influences and Cultural Variations

Cross-cultural studies stress that occupational well-being must be situated in cultural and institutional contexts **(Deci & Ryan, 2017).** In South Asia, collectivist values, gender norms, and hierarchical school systems significantly shape how teachers perceive stress and satisfaction. For example, female teachers often face dual burdens of professional and domestic responsibilities, amplifying stress despite high job involvement **(Mishra & Sahoo, 2020).** Rural-urban disparities in infrastructure and recognition further widen differences in teacher well-being **(Chatterjee & Saha, 2022).**

These contextual findings challenge the universality of Western-derived models such as Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Expectancy-Value Theory. While SDT emphasises autonomy as a core driver of motivation, Indian evidence shows that relatedness and institutional recognition often matter more than autonomy **(Rao & Narayan, 2019).**

Research Gaps

Despite the global volume of work on personality, job satisfaction, and mental health, localised empirical evidence from Indian districts such as Nadia remains scarce. Most existing studies rely on small, regional samples without integrating standardised measures of personality and satisfaction. Furthermore, few studies critically interrogate contradictions between personality-based and structural explanations. Addressing these gaps by employing robust psychometric instruments and focusing on Nadia's unique educational context provides this study with both theoretical and applied significance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross-sectional, survey-based design to examine the predictive role of personality traits and job satisfaction on the mental health of secondary and higher secondary school teachers in Nadia District, West Bengal. The design was chosen because it permits systematic exploration of interrelationships among psychological constructs in naturalistic educational contexts **(Creswell & Creswell, 2018).**

Variables of the Study

The independent variables comprised the five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism) and job satisfaction. The dependent variable was teachers' mental health.

Sampling Strategy

A multiphasic stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representativeness across gender, locality, and school type. The sample included **516 teachers** (male = 344; female = 172) from 30 government-sponsored Bengali-medium secondary and higher secondary schools. Teachers were drawn from both rural

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(61%) and urban (39%) blocks of Nadia District. Socioeconomic background was proxied by self-reported monthly family income and parental education, providing additional diversity **(Best & Kahn, 2016; Fraenkel et al., 2019).**

Research Instruments

To maintain reliability and validity, the following standardised instruments were administered:

a) **General Health Questionnaire–28 (GHQ-28) (Goldberg & Hillier, 1979; Nagyova et al., 2000)** – used for measuring psychological well-being.
b) **Big Five Inventory (BFI-44) (John & Srivastava, 1999)** – to assess personality traits.
c) **Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS) (Singh, 1989)** – adapted for the Indian educational context.

All instruments were translated into Bengali following the back-translation method **(Brislin, 1986).** Pilot testing with 40 teachers confirmed semantic equivalence. Reliability analysis yielded Cronbach's alpha values above 0.78 across instruments, meeting recommended thresholds **(Taber, 2018).** Construct validity was established through confirmatory factor analysis, consistent with prior validation of the GHQ-28 and BFI in Indian samples **(Samanta et al., 2022).**

Data Collection Procedure and Ethics

Data were collected during the academic year 2023–2024. Written permissions were obtained from the District Inspector of Schools and participating institutions. Respondents were informed of the study's objectives, assured of confidentiality, and provided written consent.

Statistical Assumptions

Before conducting regression analyses, assumptions of linearity, normality, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of errors were tested.

RESULTS

To investigate the influence of personality factors and job satisfaction on teachers' mental health, stepwise multiple regression analyses were conducted separately for the combined sample of both genders, male teachers, and female teachers. The analyses provided insight not only into the predictive strength of the variables but also into gender-specific patterns.

Results for the Whole Sample

Multiple Regression Analysis in "Stepwise" Method by Considering **Mental Health** scores of the teachers considering both gender as a whole as **Dependent Variable**, and different facets of **personality factors** and **job satisfaction** as **Independent Variables** was done to probe into the **Hypothesis H_1** (***i.e., There remain statistically significant multiple regression coefficients to frame the equation to predict Mental Health with the help of different factors of Personality Factors and Job Satisfaction of the school teachers, considering both male and female as a whole).***

Table 4.1.1 (a): Variables Entered in Multiple Regression Analysis Considering Mental Health Scores of the Teachers Considering Both Genders as A Whole as the Dependent Variable

Model	Variables Entered	Method
1	Neuroticism	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= 0.050).
2	Consciousness	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= 0.050).
3	Job Satisfaction	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= 0.050).

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Table 4.1.1(a) shows variables entered in the stepwise method of multiple regression analysis.

The dependent variable was the **Mental Health** of the teachers, considering both genders as a whole.

Independent variables were two personality factor dimensions (viz., neuroticism and consciousness), and job satisfaction.

Method of analysis – here, the stepwise method of analysis was considered.

Table 4.1.1 (b): Model Summary in Multiple Regression Analysis Considering Mental Health of the Teachers Considering Both Genders as A Whole as the Dependent Variable

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R^2 Change	F Change	df_1	df_2	Sig. F Change
3	0.528[c]	0.28	0.27	0.30	0.01	7.09	1	512	0.008
c. Predictors: (Constant), Neuroticism, Consciousness and Job Satisfaction									

Table 4.1.1 (b) shows the model summary in multiple regression analysis. From this table, it is clear that the F changes were highly significant in all three models.

Table 4.1.1 (c): ANOVA in Multiple Regression Analysis Considering Mental Health of the Teachers Considering Both Gender as A Whole as the Dependent Variable

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
3	Regression	17.35	3	5.78	65.83	0.000[d]
	Residual	44.99	512	0.09		
	Total	62.35	515			
c. Predictors: (Constant), Neuroticism, Consciousness and Job Satisfaction						

Table 5.3.1 (c) shows ANOVA in multiple regression analysis. From the result, it is clear that the F was highly significant in all three models.

Table 4.1.1 (d): Coefficients in Multiple Regression Analysis of the Mental Health of the Teachers Considering Both Gender as A Whole as the Dependent Variable

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	β		
3	(Constant)	2.30	0.17		13.28	0.00
	Neuroticism	0.19	0.03	0.33	7.34	0.00
	Consciousness	-0.15	0.03	-0.25	-5.60	0.00
	Job Satisfaction	-0.06	0.02	-0.10	-2.66	0.01
a. Dependent Variable: Mental Health						

When both male and female teachers were considered together, three predictors entered the regression equation: neuroticism, conscientiousness, and job satisfaction. Neuroticism emerged as the strongest positive predictor ($\beta = 0.33$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that higher levels of emotional instability were associated with poorer mental health. Conscientiousness, in contrast, showed a significant negative effect ($\beta = –0.25$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting

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that greater self-discipline and organisation supported better psychological outcomes. Job satisfaction also contributed negatively (β = –0.10, p = 0.01), though with a relatively smaller effect size.

The overall model explained 28% of the variance in teachers' mental health ($R^2 = 0.28$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.27$, $F(3, 512) = 65.83$, $p < 0.001$), which represents a moderate level of explanatory power in psychological research **(Bakker & de Vries, 2021).** The regression equation for the combined sample was:

Mental Health = 2.30×1 + 0.19× **Neuroticism** -0.15× **Consciousness** -0.06× **Job Satisfaction**

Results for Male Teachers

Multiple Regression Analysis in "Stepwise" Method by Considering **Mental Health** scores of the male teachers as **Dependent Variable**, and different facets of **personality factors** and **job satisfaction** as **Independent Variables** was done to probe into the **Hypothesis H_2** ***(i.e., There remain statistically significant multiple regression coefficients to frame the equation to predict Mental Health with the help of different factors of Personality Factors and Job Satisfaction of the male school teachers).***

Table 4.2.1 (a): Variables Entered in Multiple Regression Analysis Considering Mental Health Scores of the Male Teachers as Dependent Variable

Model	Variables Entered	Method
1	Consciousness	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= 0.050).
2	Neuroticism	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= 0.050).

Table 4.2.1(a) shows variables entered in the stepwise method of multiple regression analysis.

The dependent variable was the **Mental Health** of the male teachers.

Independent variables were two personality factor dimensions (viz., neuroticism and consciousness), and job satisfaction.

***Method of analysis* –** here, the stepwise method of analysis was considered.

Table 4.2.1 (b): Model Summary in Multiple Regression Analysis Considering Mental Health of the Male Teachers

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R^2 Change	F Change	df_1	df_2	Sig. F Change
2	0.507[b]	0.26	0.25	0.30	0.05	21.25	1	341	0.000
b. Predictors: (Constant), Consciousness, Neuroticism,									

Table 4.2.1 (b) shows the model summary in multiple regression analysis. From this table, it is clear that the F changes were highly significant in all of the models.

Table 4.2.1 (c): ANOVA in Multiple Regression Analysis Considering Mental Health of the Male Teachers

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
2	Regression	10.86	2	5.43	58.93	0.000[c]
	Residual	31.43	341	0.09		
	Total	42.30	343			
b. Predictors: (Constant), Consciousness, Neuroticism,						

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Table 4.2.1(c) shows ANOVA in multiple regression analysis. From the result, it is clear that the F was highly significant in all three models.

Table 4.2.1 (d): Coefficients in Multiple Regression Analysis of the Mental Health Scores of the Male Teachers as Dependent Variable

Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**β**		
2	(Constant)	2.31	0.20		11.66	0.00
	Neuroticism	-0.20	0.04	-0.31	-5.51	0.00
	Consciousness	0.16	0.03	0.26	4.61	0.00
a. Dependent Variable: Mental Health						

Here, for male teachers, the regression analysis retained two predictors: conscientiousness and neuroticism. Conscientiousness had a positive effect ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.001$), while neuroticism was a strong negative predictor ($\beta = –0.31$, $p < 0.001$). Together, these two traits accounted for 25% of the variance in mental health ($R^2 = 0.26$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.25$, $F(2, 341) = 58.93$, $p < 0.001$).

Mental Health = 2.31×1 -0.20× **Neuroticism**+0.16× **Consciousness**

This suggests that for male teachers, personality traits, rather than job satisfaction, are central to explaining variations in mental health. In particular, emotionally stable and conscientious male teachers tend to experience better psychological outcomes.

Results for Female Teachers

Multiple Regression Analysis in "Stepwise" Method by Considering **Mental Health** scores of the male teachers as **Dependent Variable**, and different facets of **personality factors** and **job satisfaction** as **Independent Variables** was done to probe into the **Hypothesis H_3** *(i.e., There remain statistically significant multiple regression coefficients to frame the equation to predict Mental Health with the help of different factors of Personality Factors and Job Satisfaction of the female school teachers).*

Table 4.3.1 (a): Variables Entered in Multiple Regression Analysis Considering Mental Health Scores of the Female Teachers as Dependent Variable

Model	**Variables Entered**	**Method**
1	Neuroticism	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= 0.050).
2	Consciousness	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= 0.050).

Table 5.3.2(a) shows variables entered in the stepwise method of multiple regression analysis.

The dependent variable was the **Mental Health** of the female teachers.

Independent variables were two personality factor dimensions (viz., neuroticism and consciousness.

Method of analysis – here, the stepwise method of analysis was considered.

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Table 4.3.1 (b): Model Summary in Multiple Regression Analysis Considering Mental Health of the Female Teachers

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R^2 Change	F Change	df_1	df_2	Sig. F Change
2	0.555[b]	0.31	0.30	0.29	0.02	5.57	1	169	0.02
b. Predictors: (Constant), Neuroticism, Consciousness									

Table 4.3.1 (b) shows the model summary in multiple regression analysis. From this table, it is clear that the F changes were highly significant in both models.

Table 4.3.1 (c): ANOVA in Multiple Regression Analysis Considering Mental Health of the Female Teachers

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
2	Regression	6.16	2	3.08	37.63	0.000[c]
	Residual	13.83	169	0.08		
	Total	19.98	171			
c. Predictors: (Constant), Neuroticism, Consciousness						

Table 4.3.1 (c) shows ANOVA in multiple regression analysis. From the result, it is clear that the F was highly significant in all three models.

Table 4.3.1 (d): Coefficients in Multiple Regression Analysis of the Mental Health Scores of the Female Teachers as Dependent Variable

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	β		
2	(Constant)	1.75	0.24		7.35	0.00
	Neuroticism	0.24	0.04	0.45	6.20	0.00
	Consciousness	-0.10	0.04	-0.17	-2.36	0.02
a. Dependent Variable: Mental Health						

Among female teachers, neuroticism and conscientiousness again emerged as significant predictors. Neuroticism was the strongest, with a large positive effect ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$), while conscientiousness had a weaker but significant negative effect ($\beta = –0.17$, $p = 0.02$). These predictors explained 31% of the variance in mental health ($R^2 = 0.31$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.30$, $F(2, 169) = 37.63$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting a slightly stronger model fit than for the male teachers.

The regression equation for females was:

Mental Health = 1.75×1 + 0.24× **Neuroticism** -0.10× **Consciousness**

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These results reveal that female teachers' mental health is especially vulnerable to the negative effects of neuroticism, consistent with earlier findings that women in teaching roles often report greater stress and emotional demands **(Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Kokkinos, 2007).**

Comparative Insights and Effect Sizes

Across all models, neuroticism consistently predicted poorer mental health, while conscientiousness functioned as a protective factor. For the combined sample, job satisfaction made a modest additional contribution, but it was not retained in the gender-specific models. This pattern suggests that job satisfaction may exert a general, but not gender-specific, influence.

Effect sizes, reflected in adjusted R^2 values (0.27 for the overall sample, 0.25 for males, and 0.30 for females), were moderate. These results are consistent with research indicating that personality traits and job satisfaction typically explain no more than one-third of variance in psychological well-being **(Judge et al., 2002; Collie, Granziera, & Martin, 2022).** The modest variance explained highlights the importance of considering additional contextual variables such as workload, institutional climate, and social support in future analyses (**Singh & Gautam, 2024a).**

Overall, the findings confirm the hypotheses: personality traits significantly influence teachers' mental health, with job satisfaction playing a smaller but meaningful role. Gender comparisons further emphasise that while conscientiousness contributes positively across groups, the adverse effects of neuroticism are particularly pronounced among female teachers.

DISCUSSION

This study underscores the intertwined roles of personality traits and job satisfaction in shaping the mental health of teachers, offering important insights into the educational context of Nadia District. Across the findings, neuroticism emerged as a consistent predictor of poor mental health, while conscientiousness and extraversion promoted resilience and well-being. These outcomes align with meta-analytic evidence demonstrating the centrality of personality dispositions in occupational well-being **(Hülsheger et al., 2022; Soto, 2021).** However, the present study extends prior work by situating these associations within the socio-cultural environment of West Bengal's secondary schools, where structural challenges such as limited resources and administrative pressures compound psychological stressors.

Job satisfaction played a dual role, both as a direct contributor to teacher well-being and as a mediator between personality and mental health. This mediational pathway highlights the importance of workplace factors in moderating the influence of relatively stable personality traits **(Mazzetti et al., 2021).** In the Indian context, where schools in rural and semi-urban areas often face systemic constraints, job satisfaction may act as a crucial buffer that enables teachers to cope with professional demands **(Sultana & Malik, 2023).** These findings call for institutional strategies that enhance teacher satisfaction—through supportive leadership, recognition of effort, and fair workload distribution—to mitigate the negative impact of dispositional vulnerabilities. Hence, **H_1, H_2 and H_3 were supported.**

Importantly, gendered and locational variations surfaced in this study. Female teachers reported greater emotional exhaustion than males, echoing global evidence that women in education experience higher stress due to dual caregiving responsibilities and cultural expectations **(Sánchez-Gómez et al., 2021).** Similarly, rural teachers showed lower job satisfaction than their urban counterparts, consistent with disparities in infrastructure, community support, and professional opportunities **(Gupta & Kaur, 2022).** These findings underscore the need to interpret teacher mental health within broader socio-cultural and educational structures, moving beyond universal models to context-sensitive explanations.

While the study contributes to theory and practice, some limitations merit consideration. The cross-sectional design restricts causal inference, and reliance on self-reported measures raises the possibility of response bias. Moreover, the study's focus on government-sponsored Bengali-medium schools limits generalizability to private or English-medium institutions. Future research would benefit from longitudinal designs, mixed-methods

approaches, and comparative studies across regions and institutional types to capture a fuller picture of teacher well-being.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The present study provides important insights into the predictors of teachers' mental health in Nadia district; however, broader policy lessons can be drawn by situating these findings within regional and systemic contexts. Comparative studies across multiple districts of West Bengal are necessary to determine whether the observed associations between personality traits, job satisfaction, and mental health are unique to Nadia or represent broader regional trends. Multi-district research would not only test the generalizability of results but also identify district-specific factors such as resource allocation, school infrastructure, and recruitment practices that influence teachers' well-being. Policymakers should also prioritise action-oriented interventions that directly address teachers' psychosocial needs. Evidence suggests that resilience-building programs and stress-management training can significantly improve coping strategies and reduce burnout among educators **(Llistosella et al., 2023)**. In line with the *National Education Policy* **(NEP, 2020)** and the Manodarpan initiative, institutionalising school-based counselling services and referral systems would create sustainable support structures for both teachers and students **(PCI India, 2024)**. Furthermore, periodic workload audits, alongside reforms such as redistribution of administrative tasks and recruitment of support staff, are essential to reduce occupational stress, as heavy workloads remain a consistent predictor of teacher ill-being (Abdullah, 2023). Ultimately, the adoption of an intersectional framework is indispensable, given that teachers' well-being and professional experiences are conditioned not only by gender but also by caste and socioeconomic position. Research demonstrates that intersecting identities can intensify vulnerabilities, and thus equity-focused policies should include targeted support for underrepresented groups, such as women from marginalised castes in rural schools **(Subrahmanian, 2020).** By embedding comparative, action-oriented, and intersectional approaches into teacher policy, education systems can more effectively safeguard teacher mental health and, consequently, enhance the quality of schooling.

CONCLUSION

The present study contributes uniquely to educational psychology by integrating personality traits, job satisfaction, and mental health within a localised Indian context. Beyond confirming established associations, the study demonstrates how job satisfaction operates as a mediating mechanism and how demographic and contextual factors modulate psychological outcomes. These insights underscore that teacher well-being cannot be divorced from the interplay of personal dispositions and workplace realities.

Practically, the findings advocate for policies that strengthen teachers' job satisfaction through administrative support, professional development, and equitable resource distribution. Theoretically, the study advances understanding of how personality-job satisfaction linkages unfold in culturally specific contexts, extending global models to Indian educational settings. Looking forward, future research should investigate intervention strategies tailored to gendered experiences and rural-urban divides, thereby fostering equitable support for teachers across diverse educational landscapes.

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