SCHOOL TEACHERS' CAUSALITY ORIENTATION OF MOTIVATION, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, AND JOB SATISFACTION: AN EXAMINATION OF MEDIATING AND MODERATING EFFECTS

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Abstract: Teachers are invaluable as they perform a professional role essential to the academic and life success of students. However, there are multiple stress-inducing challenges inherent to the profession of teaching that may contribute to lower job satisfaction and teacher attrition. In this research, I focused on job satisfaction as an indicator of teacher well-being with the aim that teachers experience greater professional fulfillment as they are adequately supported within the educational system. The purpose of this research was to investigate possible mediating and moderating effects amid Trait Emotional Intelligence and Self-determination's General Causality Orientation of Motivation (GCO) subscales of autonomy orientation, control orientation, and impersonal orientations of motivation for resultant levels of reported job satisfaction in Oklahoma school teachers. However, three COVID-19 related questions were asked due to the unprecedented nature of the pandemic. Analyses were run to test trait emotional intelligence as a mediator of the relationship between GCO subscales and job satisfaction, and to test autonomy orientation as a moderator of the relationships of control orientation and trait emotional intelligence, and control orientation and teacher job satisfaction. While autonomy orientation was not found to be a statistically significant moderator of the relationships of control orientation, trait emotional intelligence was notably found to mediate certain GCO subscales. Specifically, trait emotional intelligence fully mediates the relationship between autonomy orientation and teacher job satisfaction, and trait emotional intelligence partially mediates the relationship between impersonal orientation and teacher job satisfaction.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

School teachers are educational professionals who lay vital groundwork for student academic and life success. Research conveys that quality teachers are valuable as they provide a crucial service to their students who benefit socially and produce long-term economic gain as they live out their adulthood (Rockoff et al., 2011). Classroom teachers are essential facilitators of citizen and social growth, wielders of knowledge, and encouragers of critical thinking skills. However, the profession of teaching is commonly regarded as a highly stressful occupation (Newberry & Allsop, 2017) with a work environment that can be detrimental to well-being. Specifically, 78% of teachers report experiencing frequent job related stress compared to just 40% experienced by the general adult population (Steiner & Woo, 2021). Whereas a number of multifaceted emotional and social difficulties for teachers extend back to the 1920s when teachers expressed "feelings of isolation, brutal and unforgiving working conditions, inadequate facilities, insufficient guidance and support, and large classes with a broad mix of student abilities, interests, ages, and behavior problems" (Rousmaniere, 1994, p. 49). Recently, amid a backdrop of nationwide teacher protests, educators have called attention to difficult work conditions placed on teachers, including overwhelmingly large class sizes, low compensation as compared to similarly educated professionals in other fields, and teacher shortages (Allegretto & Mishel, 2018). Shortages of

qualified teachers pose a potentially far reaching detriment as students are in jeopardy of receiving subpar educational preparation for life after graduation. Hence, to ensure the well-being of an indispensable, qualified teacher workforce amid stress-inducing work circumstances, it is critical to understand and tend to the motivational and emotional mechanisms that contribute to indicators of teacher well-being such as job satisfaction.

In support of this goal, emotional intelligence (EI) has been conveyed as "the most important influencing factor in high levels of academic achievement and career satisfaction and is key to physical and mental health as it controls vital survival and stress management functions" (Nelson & Low, 2011, p. xxviii). Particularly, trait emotional intelligence (TEI) integrates emotional aspects, "non-cognitive" social capabilities, motivational, and personality dimensions into a single trait and influences one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Petrides et al., 2007; Schutte et al., 1998a).

Similarly, an understanding of teachers' motivational orientation (i.e., autonomous, controlling, amotivated) positioned within their work environment adjacent to the level of EI they possess is pivotal for interpreting indicators of teacher well-being like self-reported job satisfaction. Moreover, an individual's capacity to work and act with self-determination for autonomous reasons is integral for the support of their well-being. This occurs when one's choices and freedom to act are in alignment with one's authentic sense of self. Specifically, an autonomy orientation to motivation enables self-determination as it is associated with a tendency toward high levels of internalized self-regulation that involves making free and volitional choices in line with one's own values and beliefs (Deci & Ryan, 1985a; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Conversely, a control orientation to motivation relates to low levels of

internalized self-regulation that involve making choices pressured by dominating social norms and cultural values out of line with their authentic sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 1985a; Ryan & Deci, 2017). In this case, a person makes their choices as a response to external-based motivating sources arising from the environmental context rather than making proactive self-directed choices to drive changes in line with the self. This underscores how important the contexts of teacher work environments are to the way they identify and filter motivators through autonomous and controlled cognitive lenses.

Furthermore, the global COVID-19 pandemic has caused many Americans to experience increased stress in their lives involving health, work, and education (American Psychological Association, 2020). In general, the American Psychological Association (2020) warns that serious, negative mental health effects of the pandemic will be long lasting. The pandemic crisis stretched many educators beyond the brink in terms of what was expected of them professionally. For example, national and state pandemic safety responses added additional points of stress for teachers, as classrooms abruptly closed mid-semester and were immediately required to transition to an online teaching format. Hence, the current social, cultural, health, political, and economic challenges have added to the difficulties teachers face in the classroom as tough challenges facing teachers are not a new phenomenon. Whereby, these issues point to a need for school districts to support efforts that address a manageable workday in a work environment that enhances teacher well-being. School districts acquire and retain a quality workforce to meet the expanding educational needs of the American public. The anticipated United States teacher workforce shortages raise alarm amid continued shortages of qualified teachers (Sutcher et al., 2019).

Pointedly, highly stressful professional situations may take a mental toll on optimal levels of teacher motivation and emotional well-being as teachers may find it challenging to regulate emotion in educational settings. As teacher well-being envelopes satisfaction with their occupation, the Merrimack College Teacher Survey conducted in early 2022, found that the percentage of teachers who were very satisfied with their job plummeted 27% from the 2012 satisfaction levels reported in the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher (Will, 2022). Therefore, within emotionally demanding work contexts, decreases in teacher job satisfaction may serve as a red flag that points to the integral importance of teachers' personal well-being, interpersonal skills, and teaching capacities. It becomes increasingly important for school districts to invest in teacher's well-being through initiatives that envelope a fuller understanding of what motivational or emotion-based factors support teacher work satisfaction. To do so, school districts and educational leadership may be guided by research findings that account for the personal factors of teachers who report higher levels of job satisfaction amid extenuating professional circumstances, ongoing challenges, and stressors. Thus, there remains a need to uncover conceptual pathways that lead to positive outcomes such as enhanced teacher job satisfaction. A greater understanding of the role higher levels of teacher EI and self-determined functioning plays in teacher workspaces may provide teachers and administrators with useful insights into understanding how the construct of EI and motivation might predict teachers' satisfaction with their work.

Furthermore, the influence of EI as a variable in human psychology can be explained in part by Salovey and Mayer's (1990) conclusion that people with high levels of EI use more elaborate and creative methods in the pursuit of their goals. As a viable, quantifiable construct, scholars have revealed the practical applications of EI for educators and learners

alike. For instance, schools have begun to realize the importance of EI in education as they incorporate the subject of EI into their curriculum. Studies show EI has been employed for student social and emotional learning (Weare, 2007), for evaluating EI levels of pre-service teachers (Corcoran & Tormey, 2012), and for teachers through extended EI training initiatives (Dolev & Leshem, 2016).

Moreover, TEI is defined as an individual difference on the level of personality that is based on a person's perceptions of their utilization of emotions and emotional capabilities. Petrides and Furnham (2001) propose that TEI integrates the affective components of personality into a single trait to include emotional and social capabilities that are considered "non-cognitive," along with motivational and personality dimensions that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures (Petrides et al., 2007; Schutte et al., 1998a). As the nature of the teaching profession commonly involves high levels of stress and emotional exhaustion, it is imperative to investigate variables such as teachers' TEI to combat waning satisfaction and attrition. While multiple personal aspects influence a teacher's ability to create and lead an effective learning environment of diverse pupils, this study has focused on three individual-based aspects. Those aspects are TEI, self-determination theory's (SDT) general causality orientations of motivation (GCO), and job satisfaction. Given TEI is an individual difference on the level of personality that is based on a person's own perception of self, it may be captured via self-report measures (Petrides, 2011; Platsidou, 2010). Likewise, GCOs are individual differences that apply across time, domains, and situations and include autonomous, controlled, and impersonal causality orientations (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Contemplation of potential outcomes of a study that considers teacher TEI amid the inner mechanisms whereby a teacher interprets

motivationally initiating events in the workplace as filtered through a predominant GCO is beneficial to inform school structural reform and teacher well-being initiatives. However, there is a lack of research answering questions that involve the mechanisms underlying outcomes like teacher job satisfaction might be influenced by level of TEI and type of GCO.

Purpose

This study aims to gain greater understanding of the relationship between teacher TEI, GCO, and job satisfaction so that teacher well-being and professional flourishing may become more prevalent and easier to maintain. Furthermore, an important emphasis is placed on the contextual factors experienced by teachers in the work environment. That is, causality orientations have a theoretical connection to social-cognitive, motivational, and developmental adaptations of dispositional traits (McAdams & Pals, 2006). From this point, the purpose of this research is to investigate possible moderating and mediating effects of GCO subscales autonomy orientation (AO), control orientation (CO), impersonal orientation (IO) and TEI for resultant levels of reported job satisfaction in public school teachers.

Background to the Problem

As school teaching is a public-service job, teachers are involved with the emotions of self and others in a performance-based setting daily. For instance, while stress is a challenging problem among professionals who provide care for others, it is of a real and practical concern in the teaching profession (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979). Teachers work in an environment marked by emotional rules commonly present themselves in the form of professional norms or ethical codes (Yin et al., 2013). History reveals social-emotional complexity marked by highly unresolvable intrapersonal and interpersonal emotional tasks that teachers are expected to carry out. For example, there is the challenge of balancing

psychological and physical behaviors that can conflict with each other. That is, it can be a challenge to express the idealized characteristics such as those associated with an image of a "gentle, nurturing teacher and the realities of the cold and confusing working conditions of city schools" (Rousmaniere, 1994, p. 49). This reflects the high level of emotional labor the teaching profession involves (Hargreaves, 1998). Thus, teacher behavior requirements involve discordant social and performance expectations that in attempts to reconcile the discrepancy, may lead a teacher to enact emotional labor. The inner work to counterbalance authentic emotion with profession-based behavioral work represents part of the stress that can exist in the teaching arena.

Teacher work environments are marked by continual evaluation by superiors, great interpersonal interaction, time sensitive tasks, deadlines, and social and performance expectations that may induce educator stress. Teachers' professional and emotional experiences occur within an educational system that consists of watchful constituents who make personal judgments or formal evaluations about the performance and demeanor of teachers. Possible scrutiny may come from the vantage points of students, principals, coworkers, parents, boards of education, and legislators. Within this wide scope of potential judgment, it is no surprise that a teacher's sense of well-being may suffer amid personal efforts to regulate the emotions of self while dealing with the emotions of others in a professional setting.

Of concern, the 2022 Merrimack College Teacher Survey showed that 12% of K-12 teachers reported themselves as "very satisfied" with their job satisfaction, representing a 27% drop from the 2012 MetLife Survey of the American Teacher results of 39% (Will, 2022). Researchers contend that lower job satisfaction and subsequent teacher attrition is

facilitated, in part, by high levels of stressors and feelings of burnout that overload a teachers' ability to cope in the workplace (Curry & O'Brien, 2012). However, while the stress has been found to have a positive association with burnout among schoolteachers, EI is negatively associated with burnout (Zysberg et al., 2017). Thus, further investigation into the mechanisms and potential outcomes of EI in relation to other constructs such as motivation and job satisfaction in educational contexts is a worthy pursuit that can benefit teachers, students, and educational leadership.

Statement of the Problem

Although there are many public school districts and administrators who genuinely care about the teachers on their watch, a balanced pursuit and attainment of goals alongside the nurturance of teacher emotional health remains a challenging endeavor. To expound, teachers strive to educate and protect an increasingly diverse, general population of students within a bureaucratic system of expected social, emotional, and performance requirements in a profession associated with high stress (Newberry & Allsop, 2017). Due to the highly interpersonal-based nature of the teaching profession, high levels of work-associated stress affect teachers' psychological and physical well-being. For instance, studies on teacher stress report that teachers working in stressful conditions suffer from unhealthy effects of emotional labor including emotional disorientation and self-alienating behavior (Troman, 2000). The resulting emotional labor in teaching often leads to emotional exhaustion, which is a key component of burnout (Maslach et al., 2001) and teachers' personal well-being and subsequent satisfaction with teaching may suffer. Furthermore, research on teachers found that their suppression of unpleasant emotions decreases job satisfaction and, as a result, raises intentions to quit teaching. However, raising the level of pleasant emotions increases teacher

job satisfaction (Côté & Morgan, 2002). There is concern for the well-being of teachers who may become too stressed and impaired to meet the academic needs of their students in a quality manner (Curry & O'Brien, 2012).

Importantly, teaching has recently been affected by health-related protocols and practical concerns connected to unprecedented circumstances associated with the fallout of an ongoing global pandemic. Teachers reported experiencing an increase of negative effects connected to pandemic teaching conditions such as job-related stress and depression symptoms than the general population (Steiner & Woo, 2021). Thus, an outcome such as job satisfaction that is connected to teacher personal well-being, professional fulfillment, and instructional excellence is of utmost importance. As such, the teaching profession offers a field ripe for obtaining a greater understanding of teacher job satisfaction through a study involving autonomous and controlled forms of motivation and emotions via GCO and TEI.

Definition of Terms

Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI). An individual difference on the level of personality that includes a set of emotional and social capabilities considered "non-cognitive," along with motivational and personality dimensions that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures (Petrides et al., 2007; Schutte et al., 1998). TEI has been conceptualized as having four dimensions to include: emotional appraisal, positive regulation, empathic sensitivity, and positive utilization (Chan, 2004; 2006; Schutte et al., 1998). In brief, Petrides and Furnham (2001) have suggested that TEI integrates the affective components of personality into a single trait.

General Causality Orientations of Motivation (GCO). Global motivational approaches to how an individual meets their basic needs in their environment. GCOs are individual

differences in people's orientations toward the initiation and regulation of their behavior and the three causality orientations of autonomy, control, and impersonal being founded upon autonomous motivation, controlled motivation, and amotivation respectively (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Autonomy Orientation of Motivation (AO). Involves a perceived internal locus of control and internal locus of causality for the regulation of one's own behavior to meet the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. That is, the person sees I as the initiator of change in their environment. Autonomy is associated with a tendency toward high levels of internalized self-regulation to include greater self-initiation which involves seeking challenging activities that are interesting alongside making free and volitional choices in line with one's own values and beliefs. Persons high in this orientation also tend to take greater responsibility for their behavior (Deci & Ryan, 1985a; Ryan & Deci, 2017) and possess a mastery orientation to learning (Koestner & Zuckerman, 1994).

Control Orientation of Motivation (CO). Involves a perceived external locus of control for the regulation of one's own behavior that works to satisfy a person's basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. CO focuses on the degree to which a person is oriented toward being controlled by the directives of others, ego-involved choices, performance, and rewards. Conceptually, CO is also connected with low levels of internalized self-regulation that experiences choices as conflicted with the self and pressured by the dominating social norms and expectations of others (Deci & Ryan, 1985a; Ryan & Deci, 2017). CO individuals also possess a performance orientation to achievement (Koestner & Zuckerman, 1994).

Impersonal Orientation of Motivation (IO). Typified as amotivation, which is the absence of either internally or externally regulated motivation. For people with IO, amotivation is separate from motivated action that would stem from either an internal or external locus of control. As such, amotivation is considered a state in which people do not believe they could be successful in their efforts to meet desired goals or outcomes. This in turn, results in behaviors that are attributed to things perceived as outside of their control like happenstance, fate, or acted out for obscure reasons or not at all (Deci & Ryan, 1985a; Ryan & Deci, 2017) and possess a helpless response to failure in achievement settings (Koestner & Zuckerman, 1994).

Job Satisfaction. There are definitions of job satisfaction that reveal emotional connections to aspects of work. The first definition, put forth by Locke (1969), is the idea of a positive or pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. Another relevant conceptualization highlights job satisfaction as an employees' emotional orientation towards their job (Vroom, 1964). Together, job satisfaction is the experience of positive emotion within an occupational environment that arises from individual perception and cognitive valuation.

Emotional Labor. Emotional labor is defined as the effort, planning and control needed to express organizationally desired emotions during interpersonal transactions. Also, emotional labor is conceptualized as the degree of dissonance between emotions that are genuinely felt and those that the job requires to be expressed or suppressed (Zapf et al., 1999).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationships between general causality orientations of motivation (GCO), teacher's trait emotional intelligence (TEI), and levels of reported job satisfaction in Oklahoma school teachers. Attention will be given to TEI as a mediator of the relationship between GCO and job satisfaction as well as to autonomy orientation of motivation (AO) as a moderator of the relationships of control orientation of motivation (CO) with TEI and job satisfaction. It is hoped that knowledge generated from this study will be used to inform educational practice and further research. In this chapter, I begin with a theoretical overview of self-determination theory (SDT), followed by SDT subtheory Causality Orientation Theory's and GCO, emotional labor, TEI, and job satisfaction.

Theoretical Overview

Theoretical Considerations

Theoretical considerations underlying the data generated from teachers' self-report of their TEI, GCO, and job satisfaction, are explained by constructivism, whereby meaning is constructed by human beings as they interact with a world that they are constantly interpreting and is simultaneously objective and subjective. Although constructivism posits

there are no absolute interpretations, it provides useful and purposeful interpretations of meaning within society.

Self-determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), as proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985a), is a preeminent theory of motivation that encompasses a host of psychological and motivational applications, universal psychological needs, unconscious processes, life goals, and aspirations. Conceptually, self-determination is conceived as intrinsically motivated, autonomous action that is associated with higher levels of personal well-being (Deci & Ryan, 1985a). SDT includes three main ideas to include the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs, internalization may occur through *integration* or *introjection*, and the important influence social context has on which process of internalization is employed.

Innate Psychological Needs

SDT's first main idea considers the three psychological human needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness as foundational for optimal well-being and useful for explaining the nature and environmental dynamics of autonomous or controlled actions that involve intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. For instance, innate human striving to satisfy the basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness is required for the growth processes of intrinsically motivated behavior and integration of extrinsic motivations to occur. In particular, autonomy is conveyed as self-determination and consists of one accessing personal choice when acting with volition in line with one's values. Competence is a sense that one is capable of effectively performing a task or skill, similar to self-efficacy. Relatedness is described as a form of attachment and sense of security stemming from feelings of belongingness in caring for others and being cared for that supports the

development of intrinsic motivation over the lifespan (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017). However, of the three needs, autonomy is foundational to SDT as it is connected to intrinsic motivation, which is a type of autonomous motivation whereby people who take on activities they find interesting, do so with full volition, while extrinsic motivation is tapped when individuals do something because of external, contextual forces (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagne & Deci, 2005).

Cognitive Evaluation Theory

Cognitive Evaluation Theory is a subtheory of SDT that connects the basic needs to facilitation of intrinsic motivation. As such, it is based on the tenet that feelings of autonomy, or self-determination, and competence, are both precursors of and central to intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017). In addition, Cognitive Evaluation Theory suggests that relatedness is also important for facilitating intrinsic motivation because intrinsic motivation can be enhanced by a sense of belonging and connection for situations and contexts that have a social element (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Organismic Integration Theory

The second main idea relates to the Organismic Integration Theory subtheory of SDT and proposes a motivational dynamic between a person and their environment whereby extrinsic motivation can become internalized and autonomously regulated. Specifically, internalization may occur through either *integration* or *introjection.* They are two distinct processes that produce qualitatively different styles of motivational regulation; whereby *introjection* produces an internally controlling regulation of behavior (i.e., shame or guilt) and *integration* leads to self-determination, is internalized with one's self, and is an autonomous regulation of behavior. Organismic Integration Theory conceptually aligns

extrinsically motivated behaviors along a continuum of increasingly internalized autonomy into the self. These varying levels of autonomous functioning that individuals hold provide the underlying basis for SDT's Causality Orientations Theory that highlights GCO. In that, autonomous regulations of motivation are linked to AO, while the more controlled regulations of motivation are associated with CO, and amotivation is likened unto IO. Organismic Integration Theory helps clarify the different forms of extrinsic motivation and the contextual factors that positively or negatively affect the internalization and integration of the regulation for efforts to satisfy intrinsic or extrinsic based motivators (Deci & Ryan, 1985a). Lastly, *amotivation*, resides outside of external regulation as it is the lack of will to exert effort (Deci & Ryan, 1985a; Howard et al., 2016).

Notably, according to SDT, individuals might work towards certain goals for either autonomous or controlled reasons (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Extrinsic goal pursuits are not theoretically incompatible with an autonomous personality type in that extrinsic life goals do not always stem from a control-oriented disposition (Duriez, 2011). For example, in a study involving workers displaying a dually dominant autonomy and control GCO profile, researchers maintain that even in the presence of a high level of control orientation, being more self-determined and motivated with a high level of autonomy orientation is connected with favorable perceptions of the workplace, such as perceiving an enhanced job experience and experiencing greater satisfaction of basic needs (Moran et al., 2012). Hence, in the presence of a high level of autonomy orientation, a high level of controlled motivation does not necessarily deter an employee's psychological satisfaction of needs.

Role of Social Context

SDT's third main idea conveys that social context exerts an important influence on which process of internalization is employed (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Deci et al., 1994). Notably, socio-contextual aspects that promote senses of autonomy and competence increase intrinsic motivation, whereas aspects that lessen feelings of autonomy and competence decrease intrinsic motivation. For instance, events that promote more of an internal perceived locus of causality will nurture intrinsic motivation and events that direct one to more of an external perceived locus of causality will diminish intrinsic motivation. Likewise, external events that lend to increases in perceived competence will enhance intrinsic motivation, while events that lessen perceived competence will lower intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985a). Ultimately, a person's loss of intrinsic motivation results from a perceptual shift to that of being controlled by outwardly based causes from the environment, which in turn leads to feeling amotivated (Gagne & Deci, 2005).

Furthermore, the formation of SDT's GCOs are global motivational approaches and reflect social psychological theory as they occur and differentiate over time, being influenced by driving and opposing aspects of psychosocial environments (Deci & Ryan, 2000). For instance, the social context influences what process an individual, such as a teacher, might employ in meeting their basic psychological needs at work as motivators function within individuals and their surroundings for the purpose of meeting those needs. This is in accord with Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory, as Bandura's theory relates to meaning and actions that are generated within prevailing social and cultural environments. Foundationally, his theory details a framework of triadic reciprocity for human behavior "in which behavior, cognitive and other personal factors, and environmental events all operate as interacting

determinants of each other" (Bandura, 1986, p. 18). Aspects in this study reflect this framework and include a teacher's perceptions of their TEI (personal factors), GCO (behavior), and teacher job satisfaction (environment).

Causality Orientations Theory

Causality Orientations Theory, a subtheory of SDT, involves General Causality Orientations of Motivation (GCO). GCOs are motivational regulations that emerge as a result of social interaction. They are consistent individual differences formed cumulatively amid social contexts in relation to experiences thick with contextual determinants of psychological need satisfaction and emotions. Moreover, GCOs refer to individual differences in the way people orient to an environment and interpret the contextual information for the initiation and regulation of behavior so that the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness may be met (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Researchers depict causality orientations as reflective of people's inclinations to orient themselves to different motivationally instigating components of situations (McAdams & Pals, 2006) and assert that both social context and GCO contributes to the fulfillment of psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985a).

Conceptually, GCOs are founded upon varying, underlying levels of autonomous and controlled regulatory processes as underscored by organismic integration theory. Moreover, GCOs are considered individual differences in people's orientation toward the initiation and regulation of their behavior (Gagne & Deci, 2005) via the person's characterization of motivationally initiating events. These events fall within the following three orientations: (a) autonomy orientation, (b) control orientation, and (c) impersonal orientation (Gagne & Deci, 2005). The orientations reflect the three classes of initiating events as conveyed in Cognitive

Evaluation Theory, based on varying degrees of autonomous functioning that a person maintains respectively being informational (autonomy-inducing), controlling, and amotivational. Specifically, autonomy orientation is based on intrinsically motivated behavior and views environmental events as *informational*, whereas control orientation is based on extrinsic motivational factors and views environmental events as controlling. The impersonal orientation is equated with amotivation in that one holds a pervasive sense of being unable to effect change in themselves or their environment. These orientations affect people's situation-specific motivation, as well as the manner whereby they satisfy basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, behavior, and experience (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Notably, theorists contend that people are oriented to interpret all three types of initiating events in a contiguous fashion (informational or autonomy-inducing, controlling, and amotivating) to varying degrees. That is, varying levels all three types of causality orientations are present in any given social context. Of note, the process of an individual's interpretation of events generally relates to events in specific contexts as if they were only one of the three causality of orientation types (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Contextually, a school teachers' work environment involves a unique landscape rich with social, emotional, and personal determinants that may stand to reflect observable patterns in the teacher GCO profile. Importantly, causality orientations can be primed in contexts, thereby increasing the likelihood of enhancing one or more of the specific orientations; however, people will generally possess varying levels of all three causality orientations (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Therefore, as teachers with varying levels of each orientation apply their TEI within their work environment, resultant levels of reported job

satisfaction may reflect key motivational and emotional dynamics stemming from interaction in their professional environment.

Autonomy Orientation

Autonomy orientation (AO) involves a high level of intrinsically motivated behavior with the individual making free and volitional choices based on awareness of one's own needs and goals that are integrated with one's own values and beliefs. AO results from the consistent satisfaction of all three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2008) and depicts the tendency of one's behavior to be initiated and regulated by events that are internal to their sense of self. That is, they hold an internal locus of control. Autonomously oriented persons complement an internal locus of control with the maintenance of highly autonomous, internalized self-regulation signifying interpretation of environmental events as informational rather than controlling (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Moreover, AO individuals tend to display a mastery goal orientation (Koestner & Zuckerman, 1994). Whereas a perceived internal locus of causality and internal locus of control is indicative of autonomy, an autonomy *orientation* of motivation is connected to confidence in one's ability to affect change in their environment, thus contributing to basic need satisfaction at work and subsequently higher levels of job satisfaction.

Control Orientation

Control orientation (CO) results from a lack of satisfaction of autonomy and partial satisfaction of the basic psychological needs of competence and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2008). This orientation's perceived locus of causality is external to their sense of integrated self and involves events in the environment that are interpreted as controlling and behaviors that are derived from and reactive to environmental events. That is, CO involves controls in

the environment and internally controlling prerogatives signifying how the self is obligated to behave. People high in CO tend to hold lower levels of intrinsic motivation than those high in AO (Ryan & Deci, 2017). However, like AO, the CO is connected to an internal locus of control for affecting change in their environment. Conversely, CO is linked with low levels of internalized self-regulation with choices that are pressured by the dominating social norms and cultural values and conflict with the self. The CO response toward motivating events is in congruence with a performance-orientation of achievement, as the CO person's response to failure is similar to reactive, ego-involved persons. (Koestner & Zuckerman, 1994).

Impersonal Orientation

Impersonal orientation (IO) describes "the degree to which people orient toward obstacles to goal attainment" (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 218) and results from an extended lack of satisfaction of all three basic psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985a). Moreover, this orientation is founded upon a belief that actions and outcomes are uncontrollable which leads to a perceived lack of competence to affect change amid challenging circumstances. When people are high in IO, they experience anxiety and feel a sense of incompetence or lack of control to change the outcomes of situations. Moreover, they feel a lack of control in regard to both internal and external regulations of behavior. The amotivation associated with IO bears certain similarity to Dweck and Leggett's (1988) description of individuals who display a "helpless" response to failure in achievement settings and commonly produces a passive tendency toward amotivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Amotivation is the ultimate result of a person's impersonal orientation as their experience with choice is deficient as it is enacted without intentional control (Deci & Ryan, 1985a). As amotivation reflects a lack of both

autonomous motivation and controlled motivation from an individual it is reasonable to expect low TEI levels in association with the IO.

Autonomous and Controlled Motivation in Context

Although social contexts and individual differences such as GCOs contribute to the fulfillment or satisfaction of the three psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985a), situations and factors that impede any of the basic needs are associated with weaker motivation, well-being, and performance. Per Hagger and colleagues (2015) autonomy can affect people in two ways, being individually based AO and environmentally based via autonomy-supportive contingencies such as competence-enhancing feedback. The authors further convey that while AO and CO participants are receptive to need-satisfying provisions in the environment, the absence of external provisions for CO participants taps their interpretational bias in a way that appears to deprive them of basic need fulfillment.

Additionally, in a study of Korean school teachers who were measured as autonomy supportive or controlling motivating style of teaching, Reeve et al. (2018) report that teachers who were most likely to make teaching style changes in response to an autonomy-supportive intervention program were those that possessed an AO along with personal growth initiative. Meanwhile, the teachers most likely to resist the autonomy-supportive intervention program and maintain a controlling motivational style were those that had a high level of CO. The authors suggest that a controlling motivating style is relatively stable and is not as open to change through professional development initiatives in the way that autonomy supportive motivating styles are. This study illustrates an enduring expression of controlling behavior and underscores causality orientations as discrete, identifiable, behaviors in the teacher workspace.

In a separate study involving French undergraduate students, autonomous and controlled reasons underlying the pursuit of the six achievement goals found three important things: (a) the underlying level of autonomous motivation moderated the relation of achievement goals to positive outcomes, (b) that their well-being was higher than when these goals are pursued for controlled reasons and (c) controlled reasons driving achievement goals significantly predicted anxiety (Gillet et al., 2015). These results suggest that people with higher levels of EI may score high on both AO and CO for resultantly high levels of reported job satisfaction. Similarly, researchers contend that extrinsic goal pursuits are not theoretically incompatible with an autonomous personality type, and that extrinsic life goals do not always stem from a control-oriented disposition and may be pursued for an autonomous reason (Duriez, 2011).

However, while being more autonomously motivated is connected with favorable perceptions of the workplace, the presence of controlled motivation does not necessarily thwart an employee's fulfillment of psychological needs (Moran et al., 2012). It may be reasoned that while teachers with both high AO and high CO may produce similar reported job satisfaction levels, high CO is associated with increased anxiety and much lower levels of intrinsic motivation. Likewise, research specifies that people with high levels of AO demonstrate a negligible loss of intrinsic motivation following externally controlled contingent rewards. This suggests that AO is protective of intrinsic motivation amid exposure to environment based rewards, while CO individuals are less protected against potential undermining effects of rewards (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2011).

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been generally defined as a "generic competence in perceiving emotions, both in oneself and in others, in regulating emotions, and in coping effectively with emotive situations" (Zeidner et al., 2009, p. 33). This contemporary thought in EI began taking root during the 1980s as psychologists began contemplating the concept of multiple intelligences (see Gardner, 1983). Then, in the 1990s amid Goleman's (1995) cultural popularization of EI for business leadership and job productivity, interest in learning more about the actual nature and applicability of the idea grew. Consequently, the concept of EI became more conceptually defined and operational as it branched into two main schools of thought, that of ability versus trait EI. In 1993, Mayer and Salovey set a theoretical foundation that views EI as an ability. Later, the conceptualization of ability EI was further developed by Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (1999) as a constellation of related abilities including the identification and regulation of emotions, the ability to understand the causes of emotions and the transitions among them, and the ability to integrate emotional information into decisions and actions that facilitate thinking. Their ability model requires the use of tests with responses viewed as correct or incorrect and as such, an argument exists for greater validity of ability test measures over self-report measures. Research positioned ability EI as a standard intelligence like that of intellectual quotient (IQ) insofar that having a higher EI is better than having a lower EI (Mayer et al., 2000). Trait emotional intelligence (TEI) is also known as perceived EI and stands in conceptual contrast to ability EI, as TEI is proposed to integrate the effective components of personality into a single trait (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). TEI is perceived by the individual with measures that generally rely on self-report surveys.

In brief, there is support for a practical view of EI that includes both TEI and ability EI conceptualizations, as Ciarrochi and colleagues (2000) contend that the two approaches are complementary in defining the nature, components, application fields and research goals of EI. Moreover, Schutte et al. (2009) contend that both TEI and ability EI are valid conceptualizations but measures of TEI are favored when the goal is to assess adaptive emotional functioning in everyday life.

Trait Emotional Intelligence

For the purposes of this study, EI is conceptualized as a trait rather than an ability for several reasons. Foremost in this study, a teacher's perception is central to understanding the intersection of motivation and emotion in a teachers' world. TEI utilizes self-reported, perceptions of emotion, whereas ability EI deals with emotion-related cognitive abilities requiring a measurement lens common to standardized IQ measures. Notably, the ability model as a skill is conceived of as being a constellation of related abilities that requires the use of tests with responses viewed as correct or incorrect (Mayer et al., 1999). While this type of scoring is associated with research that deems ability EI as a standard intelligence like that of IQ (Mayer et al., 2000), this method of scoring dismisses the teacher's perception. Moreover, Petrides' explanation for TEI measures based on self-perception and self-report are consistent with Platsidou's (2010) contention that TEI models are associated with personality dimensions as they encompass behavioral dispositions and self-perceived abilities measured with self-report tests.

Next, this study seeks a better understanding of what relationships may exist between self-reported teacher motivational orientations and TEI levels as reflected by levels of reported job satisfaction. To support this aim, researchers convey that TEI includes a set of

non-cognitive emotional and social capabilities alongside motivational and personality dimensions that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures TEI (Petrides et al., 2007; Schutte et al., 1998a). Research has likened TEI to that of "trait emotional self-efficacy" (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). With a person's beliefs as a theoretical underpinning, Petrides (2011) conveys a conceptual distinction between ability and TEI, in that, TEI is described as "trait emotional self-efficacy" or "trait social self-efficacy." Additional theoretical support for TEI as emotional self-efficacy provided by Ziedner and colleagues (2015) regard TEI as an overarching factor of personality that symbolizes an individual's emotional self-confidence so that TEI is situated as a personality trait that can be adapted to some situations, but not others.

However, although some research conveys that TEI involves perceptions of one's own emotional functioning (Petrides & Furnham, 2003), other studies contend that TEI is not equivalent to emotional self-efficacy but subsumes emotional self-efficacy along with other self-perception based aspects and predilections (Kirk et al., 2011). TEI has been conceptualized as having four dimensions to include: emotional appraisal, positive regulation, empathic sensitivity, and positive utilization (Chan, 2004; 2006; Schutte et al., 1998a). Notably, Schutte (2014) suggests that assessment of EI as a trait is most useful when the purpose is for the understanding of emotional functioning. Hence, this study seeks to tap teacher emotional capability amid their motivational orientation as engaged at work via TEI to garner insight into teacher job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction

Conceptually, job satisfaction is the idea of a positive or pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1969). Another relevant conceptualization highlights job satisfaction as an employees' emotional orientation towards their job (Vroom, 1964). In other words, job satisfaction is the experience of positive emotion within an occupational environment that arises from individual perception and cognitive valuation.

Job Satisfaction and Emotional Labor

Emotional labor is conveyed as the effort, planning and control involved with displaying organizationally desired emotions during interpersonal transactions and the degree of dissonance between actual felt emotions and expressions of emotion related to required job expectations (Zapf et al., 1999). Emotional labor is further theorized to be underscored by the emotional regulation processes in humans that are the unconscious and conscious processes whereby individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they express them (Gross, 1998).

Early research into emotional labor mainly focused on non-educational, service-oriented professions such as receptionists, restaurant wait staff, and cashiers who were expected to conform to management norms for displays of emotion known as display rules (Steinberg & Figart, 1999). However, the profession of teaching is known to involve high levels of emotional labor (Hargreaves, 1998; Zapf et al., 1999) that requires effort and may produce negative outcomes that result in stress and burnout (Hochschild, 1983). At work, it is common for emotional experiences and emotional expression to be influenced by external-based directives (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Hochschild, 1990) that have a tendency

toward adverse emotional labor outcomes in the form of emotional exhaustion and emotional dissonance. These unhealthy outcomes can lead to low job satisfaction (Morris & Feldman, 1996) and point to the intensive nature of work-related stress and emotional labor experienced within the teaching profession. Emotional labor stands in contrast to the desired well-being that has been described by Acton and Glasgow (2015) as "feelings of happiness, satisfaction, competence and enacted purpose" (p. 104).

As it is necessary for teachers to regulate their emotions, especially negative emotions, to achieve their instructional goals (Sutton, 2004), teachers often conceal true emotions and fake the emotional response that is expected professionally. This emotional and situational negotiation is exemplified when they suppress or cover anxiety, anger, and frustration. Hence, effective use of emotions is of great importance for overall teacher well-being and happiness, character modeling, instructional effectiveness, and ultimately, student achievement. From this point, there are two forms of surface acting arising from efforts to hide felt emotions that teachers may enact as they adhere to teacher display rules. The first form of surface acting is suppression and involves constraining authentic felt emotions and emotional expression, whereas simulation involves the displaying of an emotion that is not genuinely felt (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Glomb & Tews, 2004). This characterizes surface acting as the practice of inauthentic displays of emotion. Prior research provides that surface acting in response to display rules represents the repressing of experienced emotion and is viewed as a maladaptive emotion regulation strategy (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011).

Conversely, emotional labor may produce increased job satisfaction helping to avert embarrassing or problematic social interactions by providing more predictability within professional interpersonal situations, or to allow employees to psychologically distance

themselves from negative situations (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Thus, it may be plausible that extended exposure to work environments that facilitate surface acting lead to varying levels of behavioral internalization. Insofar as Ryan and Deci (2000) defined internalization as, "the process of taking in a value or regulation, and integration is the process by which individuals more fully transform the regulation into their own so that it will emanate from their sense of self" (p. 60).

Job Satisfaction and Teacher Emotional Intelligence

Previous research has linked EI to job satisfaction (Platsidou, 2010). EI was found to function as a predictor of job satisfaction, burnout, growth, leadership potential, and resilience as evidenced by the following studies. For instance, elevated levels of TEI are related to higher levels of job satisfaction and lower feelings of burnout in special education teachers (Platsidou, 2010). Additional studies investigating EI and teacher job satisfaction show a significant positive relationship between EI and job satisfaction (Anari, 2012; Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). Moreover, Chan's (2006) research involving teacher EI and components of burnout found that while positive utilization of emotions raised teachers' sense of accomplishment, empathic sensitivity lowered teachers' sense of depersonalization, it also lowered teachers' emotional exhaustion, whereas increases in emotional appraisal was associated with increases in emotional exhaustion. Thus, EI was found to have a negative association with burnout, while professional stress endured by school teachers provided a positive association with burnout (Zysberg et al., 2017). Together, these findings illustrate a positive relationship between higher levels of TEI and levels of job satisfaction, alongside a negative relationship between high levels of TEI and levels of burnout reported by teachers. In brief, in the presence of higher levels of TEI, levels of job satisfaction show an inverse

relationship to levels of reported burnout by teachers. An inverse relationship implies that job satisfaction and burnout are two sides of the same coin, whereas a rise in one lowers the other.

Furthermore, there are known mediation links between teacher well-being and beneficial outcomes via EI studies showing that the more people take up daily activities with a sense of volition and autonomy, the better they are in utilizing emotions and responding to emotion-laden information for use in daily decision-making processes which, in turn, produces greater personal well-being (Perreault et al., 2014). For example, a separate study revealed that trait EI mediates the relationship between Big Five personality traits and self-reported mental health and well-being (Johnson et al., 2009), while other studies showed that EI significantly mediated the relationship between mindfulness and higher positive affect, lower negative affect, and greater life satisfaction (Schutte & Malouff, 2011), another looking at the relationship between pleasure (hedonic) and engagement (eudaimonia) actions or well-being and processes and outcomes for well-being, found that EI fully mediated the relationship (Bhullar et al., 2013).

Additionally, a study consisting of educational leaders concluded that EI was a predictor of growth and leadership potential, with a significant relationship between leadership ability, EI, and resilience (Maulding et al., 2012). These outcomes relate to a teacher's ability to lead effective classroom teaching activities, manage groups of learners, and interact with parents in appropriate, dignifying, equitable, and empowering ways. Conversely, there are mixed results for relationships between EI and job satisfaction studies for which EI did not predict positive outcomes for educators' performance. For instance, one study did not show positive outcomes based on EI; but it is important to note that this study

conceptualized EI as an ability, utilizing a performance-based test of EI, specifically the MSCEIT (Corcoran & Tormey, 2013). Another study involving EI as a moderator of burnout in the workplace and workplace misbehavior produced an unexpected and potentially negative result in that EI not only moderated the two but amplified the relationship between burnout and misbehavior in the workplace. Researchers proposed that conscientiousness connected to higher EI may make one's perception more sensitive to burnout in a manner that can lead to misbehavior (Shkoler & Tziner, 2017).

Conclusion

This study focuses on teachers' individual differences pertaining to GCO and TEI for subsequent reports of job satisfaction. Lawler (1973) proposed that job satisfaction is determined by the discrepancy between an employee's perceptions of conditions that should exist and the conditions that actually exist. Prior research (Acton & Glasgow, 2015) conveys that, "teachers with higher reported rates of well-being demonstrate an EI that allows them to think positively about the demands of the job and apply realistic coping strategies to effectively manage demanding emotional situations" (p. 104).

Teaching is a public service-oriented profession that requires adept EI skills for maintaining appropriate external-based, social displays of emotion. Further, the teaching profession is filled with individuals holding varying levels of autonomy orientation, control orientation, and impersonal orientations within a challenging, emotion-laden field of work. Ideally, this study provides a focus on how the predominant motivational orientations of teachers may contribute to higher job satisfaction as explained by TEI. It is plausible that the adaptive emotional capability associated with higher TEI may play an important role in teacher awareness of the professional environment and associated relationships that teachers

engage with daily. In that it may be reasoned that in particularly challenging work circumstances such as teaching, that higher TEI may function in a manner that allows teachers to access either an autonomy orientation or a control orientation by choice or demand to meet personal and professional needs resulting in higher levels of job satisfaction. Yet, it may also be possible that an ability to shift between causality orientations may allow teachers to function and carry out the intensified demands of teaching the best they can in the moment.

Therefore, while teaching is a historically challenging profession, this study offers a unique opportunity to gain further insight and potent knowledge that may only be accessible during times of extended crisis and work environment duress such has occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To capture applicable data, this study utilized the Schutte's (1998a; 1998b) well-known Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) for TEI, Deci and Ryan's (1985b; 1985c) widely-used General Causality Orientation of Motivation Scale (GCOS) for causality orientation, along with Ho and Au's (2006a; 2006b) more recent Teaching Satisfaction Survey (TSS) for teacher job satisfaction. The TSS employed a global measure of teaching satisfaction that involves an integrated response stemming from an overall subjective evaluation of well-being within the various aspects of work. Notably, a global measure is a top-down theory that maintains individuals are predisposed to experience and react to events in positive or negative ways (Ho & Au, 2006b). New knowledge produced may allow educational professionals to not merely identify, but also to understand and facilitate the adaptive, person-based motivational and EI capacities that provide educators with the best chance to work and thrive amid a rapidly evolving teaching environment.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to identify potential relationships between a teacher's level of trait emotional intelligence (TEI), general causality orientation of motivation (GCO), and job satisfaction. Specifically, I examined the relationship between TEI and subscales of the GCO (autonomy, control, and impersonal orientations) as predictor variables for the criterion variable of teacher job satisfaction.

Overview of Research

While teaching has historically been considered a high emotional labor and task laden job, teachers working in schools during the pandemic have dealt with increased stressors within the education system and classroom (Steiner & Woo, 2021). Hence, to assure and maintain a qualified, vibrant, and productive teaching workforce, it is imperative that scholars and educational leadership understand the relationships between a teacher's motivational and emotional traits that contribute to their sense of well-being as reflected by job satisfaction.

Research Questions

This study examined four research questions. The four research questions guiding the investigation in this study are identified below, along with their hypotheses and supporting rationale. The first involves TEI as a predictor of teacher job satisfaction, the second involves

GCO as a predictor of job satisfaction, the third involves TEI as a mediator of the relationship between GCO and job satisfaction, and the fourth involves autonomy orientation of motivation (AO) as a moderator of the relationships between control orientation of motivation (CO) and EI, and also the relationship between CO and job satisfaction. I provide a rationale and anticipated results for each of these research questions.

Research Question 1

Does trait emotional intelligence (TEI) predict teachers' reported job satisfaction?

Hypothesis 1

Higher scores for TEI will predict higher scores for job satisfaction.

Rationale

Research has concluded that adaptive emotional capacities are associated with a greater sense of well-being that encompasses satisfaction and that "teachers with higher reported rates of well-being demonstrate an emotional intelligence that allows them to think positively about the demands of the job and apply realistic coping strategies to effectively manage demanding emotional situations" (Acton & Glasgow, 2015, p. 104). Additional research studies show that there is a significant positive relationship between EI and job satisfaction among samples of Greek teachers (Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008; Platsidou, 2010).

Research Question 2

Does motivational orientation (autonomy, control, impersonal) have a predictive relationship with teachers' reported job satisfaction?

Hypothesis 2

An autonomy orientation (AO) predicts higher scores for teacher job satisfaction.

Rationale

Researchers contend that AO is positively related with psychological health and effective behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 2008). For instance, a study involving French undergraduate students and workers examined autonomous and controlled reasons underlying the pursuit of the achievement goals found that motivations underlying their achievement goals were stronger predictors of subjective well-being than the endorsement of goals themselves. In particular, the authors found the underlying level of autonomous motivation moderated the relation of achievement goals to positive outcomes and that their well-being was higher with autonomous motivation than when the goals are pursued for controlled reasons (Gillet et al., 2015). Separately, a study involving a person-centered analysis of self-determined motivation in an organizational setting found that being more self-determined and motivated relates to favorable perceptions of the workplace such as perceiving an enhanced job experience and experiencing greater satisfaction of basic needs (Moran et al., 2012). To expound, while being more self-determined and motivated is linked with favorable perceptions of the workplace, as long as employees are autonomously motivated, the presence of controlled motivation does not deter an employee's psychological need satisfaction (Moran et al., 2012). Similarly, researchers contend that extrinsic goal pursuits are not theoretically incompatible with an autonomous personality type, and that extrinsic life goals do not always stem from a control-oriented disposition, so that extrinsic goals may be pursued for an autonomous reason (Duriez, 2011).

Hypothesis 3

A control orientation (CO) predicts lower scores for teacher job satisfaction.

Rationale

Researchers contend that CO is related to diminished well-being (Gillet et al., 2015) and is reflective of environments that produce fewer creative products than those that facilitate intrinsic motivation as they undermine intrinsic motivation via imposed deadlines, surveillance, and evaluations (Eisenberger & Cameron, 1996). Likewise, CO involves controls in the environment and internally controlling prerogatives signifying how the self is obligated to behave. The CO perspective on motivating events is indicative of a performance orientation of achievement with those high in performance orientation and high in self-efficacy to effect change (Koestner & Zuckerman, 1994). Consequently, it makes sense that the extrinsic motivation that may lead to the erosion of intrinsic motivation may be reflected by a teacher who is situated within a school work environment that involves deadlines, surveillance, and evaluations. Thus, lower teacher job satisfaction may be reported if intrinsic motivation is systematically undermined in a work environment. However, there are studies that suggest that while being more autonomously motivated is connected with favorable perceptions of the workplace, the presence of controlled motivation does not necessarily thwart an employee's satisfaction of psychological needs, thus obscuring a clear-cut view of the interactive nature of CO and motivational work environment influences. (Moran et al., 2012).

Hypothesis 4

An impersonal orientation (IO) will predict lower scores for teacher job satisfaction.

Rationale

IO is founded upon an individual's belief that their actions and outcomes are uncontrollable, which leads to a sense of incompetence for changing one's circumstances

amid challenges. That is, the person believes they are not able to succeed in affecting desired changes in their environment from either an internal or external locus of causality. Ultimately, amotivation is the result of IO and experiences of choice as deficient and without intentional control (Deci & Ryan, 1985). As teaching has been commonly known to involve a high level of accountability, with a high number of tasks and people-related stressors, it is unlikely that a teacher with a predominant impersonal orientation of motivation will report high levels of job satisfaction.

Research Question 3

Does trait emotional intelligence (TEI) mediate the relationship between GCOs and teacher job satisfaction?

Hypotheses 5

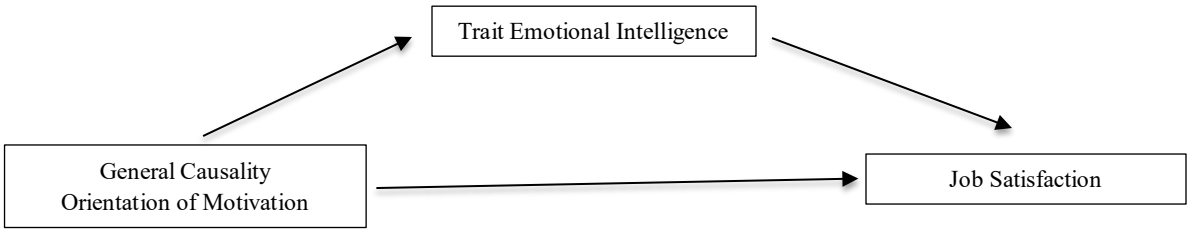
TEI partially mediates the relationship between AO and teacher job satisfaction, the relationship between CO and teacher job satisfaction, and the relationship between IO and teacher job satisfaction.

Rationale

Research studies have provided support for a mediating role of EI in the relationship between general self-determination (GSD) and personal well-being (Perreault et al., 2014). Additionally, EI has been found to mediate the relationship between mindfulness and greater life satisfaction (Schutte & Malouff, 2011), and to mediate the relationship between Big Five personality traits, and self-reported well-being and mental health (Johnson et al., 2009). In sum, because EI has been found to mediate general self-determination and personal well-being, mindfulness and life satisfaction, and personality traits and well-being, it stands to

reason that TEI will help explain the relationship between GCO and reported job satisfaction as an indicator of well-being (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 *Conceptual Model for TEI as a Mediator*



Research Question 4

Does autonomy orientation of motivation (AO) moderate the relationship between control orientation of motivation (CO) and trait emotional intelligence, and the relationship between control orientation of motivation and job satisfaction?

Hypotheses 6

AO will moderate the relationship between CO and TEI, as well as the relationship between CO and teacher job satisfaction.

Rationale

Although tangible rewards have been shown to undermine intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 1999), research has found that people with high levels of AO showed an insignificant loss of intrinsic motivation following externally controlled contingent rewards. This suggests an effect that shields them against potential undermining effects of rewards (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2011). Such an effect may be explained in part, by AO's association with greater openness to new experiences and change as exemplified in a study of Korean school teachers. In the study, teachers' style of teaching was measured as being either autonomy supportive or controlling motivating style (Reeve et al., 2018). The authors concluded that teachers who were most likely to make changes in response to an autonomy-supportive

intervention program, were those that possessed an AO along with personal growth initiative. This group of teachers were more open to change through professional development, whereas the teachers most likely to resist the autonomy-supportive intervention program and maintain a controlling motivating style, were those that had a high level of control causality orientation. Thus, it may be the open-mindedness and adaptability to environmental input as a source of information inherent in AO that changes the relationships between CO and TEI and CO and teacher job satisfaction.

Participants

The Oklahoma State Department of Education educator public listserv was used to acquire potential survey participants (i.e., all K-12 Oklahoma certified schoolteachers). A link to a Qualtrics survey was emailed at random to 9000 certified teachers on this list, with approximately 1100 emails returned as "undeliverable." The total number of completed surveys was 267.

As shown in Table 3.1, most participants identified as women (82%), White (79%), and were between the ages 40 and 59 (51%). Notably, 35% of respondents indicated they had less than 10 years of teaching experience, with another 30% indicating 10-19 years of experience.

Table 3.1 *Descriptive Statistics of Participant Demographics (N = 205)*

Variable	Frequency (*n*)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Woman	169	82.4
Man	34	16.6
Non-binary/third gender/Prefer not to answer	2	1.0
Race/Ethnicity		
African American/Black	5	2.4
Asian American	1	.5
Native American	12	5.9
White (Hispanic origin)	18	8.8
White (non-Hispanic origin)	162	79.0
Multi-racial	2	1.0
Other/Prefer not to answer	2	1.0
Age (M = 44.91; SD = 12.175)		
21-29	29	14.2
30-39	43	20.7
40-49	48	23.5
50-59	56	27.4
60-69	25	12.3
70-79	2	1.0
Prefer not to answer	3	1.5
Subject Matter		
Elementary	47	22.9
Language Arts	41	20.0
Math	30	14.6
Science	25	12.2
Social Studies	24	11.7
Non-core (e.g., Art, Music, PE, Athletics)	38	18.5
Years of Teaching Experience (M = 15.59; SD = 10.349)		
1-9	71	34.6
10-19	62	30.3
20-29	43	21.0
30-39	19	9.4
40-49	4	2.0
50-59	1	.5
Prefer not to answer	5	2.4

Setting/Context

Data collection occurred from June to December 2021 amid the unprecedented ongoing global pandemic crisis relating to the COVID-19 virus and subsequent viral variants, Delta and Omicron, which began in March 2020. A cross-sectional survey of nearly 2900 Oklahoma public school employees conducted by the Oklahoma Education Association (2020) found that 81% of respondents reported concern for their personal health working in the school environment while 31% reported the belief that they were at high-risk to contract the COVID-19 virus. Teachers in Oklahoma began the 2021-2022 school year with newly formed administrative, school board, and parental expectations for teaching that included distance learning, virtual learning, face-to-face courses, and hybrid schedules, all while expected to deal with varying levels of COVID-19 safety protocols.

As shown in Table 3.2, most participants (56%) reported working in small/rural school districts. Public school teachers comprised 96% of this sample and 44% reported teaching at the high school level.

Table 3.2 *Descriptive Statistics of Participant School Demographics*

Variable	Frequency (*n*)	Percent (%)
School District Size		
Small/Rural: < 6000 students	115	56.1
Mid-size/Suburban: 6000-24,000 students	59	28.8
Large/Urban: > 24,000 students	31	15.1
Type of School		
Public	197	96.1
Private	1	.5
Charter (public or private)	7	3.4
School Level		
Elementary	70	34.1
Middle School/Junior High	37	18.0
High School	90	43.9
Other	8	3.9

Procedure

Data was collected from June – December 2021 from 267 certified schoolteachers from across the state of Oklahoma.

Data Collection

Upon approval from the IRB (Appendix), I used the Oklahoma State Department of Education educator public listserv to acquire potential survey participants (i.e., all K-12 Oklahoma certified schoolteachers). A Qualtrics survey was emailed at random to 9000 certified teachers on this list, with approximately 7920 viable emails (i.e., emails were not returned as “undeliverable"), resulting in 267 submitted surveys. Surveys that were started but incomplete were removed from the data set, resulting in 205 completed surveys.

The overall survey consisted of three scales, demographic items, and questions regarding attitudes about the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on the educational climate and on personal survey responses for a total of 56 questions. Survey scales include the 12-vignette version of the General Causality Orientations Scale (GCOS) developed by Deci and Ryan (1985b; 1985c), the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) consisting of 33 items developed by Schutte et al. (1998a; 1998b), and the Teaching Satisfactions Scale (TSS) consisting of 5 items developed by Ho and Au (2006a; 2006b). Instruments for this study are theoretically related to trait emotional intelligence, general causality orientation of motivation, and teacher job satisfaction. Each of the following measures have suitable reliability and validity and are prevalent in the literature. The use of the instruments provided for the successful collection of data necessary to examine the current research problem. Participants were provided with the option to enter a drawing for one of five $20.00 Amazon

gift cards through a separate survey link with an email of their choice. Winning emails were drawn at random and gift cards were sent in late December 2021.

Instruments

General Causality Orientations of Motivation Scale (GCOS)

Teacher's GCO was assessed with Deci and Ryan's (1985c) original 12 item General Causality Orientations Scale. The scale consists of three subscale categories: autonomy (α = .74), control (α = .69), and impersonal (α = .74). Each of the 12 questions have three answer responses that individually receive a Likert scale response set to a seven-point range from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely). This scale provides scores for each category of GCO which, according to instrument developers, can be used collectively or separately to predict theoretically related behaviors, cognitions, and affects (Deci & Ryan, 1985b)**.** In this study, the separate subscales were used as predictors.

A sample GCOS question with answer choice structure is as follows.

1. You have been offered a new position in a company where you have worked for some time. The first question that is likely to come to mind is:
    a) What if I can't live up to the new responsibility?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very unlikely			moderately likely			very likely

    b) Will I make more at this position?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very unlikely			moderately likely			very likely

    c) I wonder if the new work will be interesting?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very unlikely			moderately likely			very likely

While there is some common variance between control and impersonal orientation subscales, and autonomy and impersonal are contrary to one another, there is a relative

independence of each orientation subscale per the following correlation results. Prior research has shown that the autonomy orientation was not statistically to the control orientation (r = .03) but was marginally negatively related to the impersonal orientation (r = -.20; p < .00l) and the control orientation was marginally positively related to the impersonal orientation (r = .27; p < .00l) (Deci & Ryan, 1985b). Studies have shown the subscales to have good reliability and strong external validity (Deci & Ryan, 1985b; Koestner & Zuckerman, 1994).

To support concurrent validity, the GCOS autonomy subscale showed a significant positive correlation (r = 0.40) with the autonomy subscale of the Exercise Causality Orientations Scale (ECOS), and GCOS control subscale showed a significant positive correlation with both the control (r = 0.27) and impersonal (r = 0.34) ECOS subscales. The GCOS impersonal subscale showed significant positive correlations with ECOS' impersonal (r = 0.47) and the GCOS impersonal subscale was significantly positively correlated with both the ECOS impersonal (r = 0.47) and control (r = 0.32) subscales (Vallerand et al., 1987). Further studies validating the GCOS include a study by Cooper et al. (2015) that built on the original 12 vignettes in a 17 vignette adapted version of the GCOS for use with people with severe mental disorders (GCPS-clinical populations; GCOS-CP). Their study found that the GCOS-CP to be psychometrically similar to the original 12 vignette GCOS version and provided good convergent and discriminant validity.

Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS)

Teacher's trait emotional intelligence was assessed using Schutte and colleagues' (1998b) Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS). This inventory consists of 33 items (α = .90) whereby participants rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with each of the

statements on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Three items out of 33 are reverse scored so that higher numbers reflect higher TEI. The 33 items responses were added in a unidimensional fashion for one overall score representing the TEI construct. Schutte et al., (1998a) connected EI to abilities to appraise and express emotions (*I am aware of non-verbal messages I send to others)*, regulate emotions (*I am aware of my emotions as I experience them)*, and utilize emotions in problem solving (*when I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me).*

Schutte et al. (1998a) demonstrated test-retest reliability of .78 over a two week interval. They also supported construct validity by demonstrating EIS scores were significantly positively correlated with variables presumed related to EI such as optimism, clarity of feelings, attention to feelings, openness to experience, and nonverbal expressiveness of emotion, while being significantly negatively correlated with depression, pessimism, and impulsiveness. Finally, construct validity has also been supported with significantly different scores on the EIS for expected outcomes involving diverse groups like psychotherapists who scored higher than prisoner and substance abusers (Schutte et al., 1998a). A separate study further provided for construct validity by showing significant connections in expected directions with multiple ααinterpersonal variables including social skills, self-monitoring, cooperativeness, and marital satisfaction (Schutte et al., 2001). Discriminant validity has also been shown by a lack of statistical relationship between EIS scores and those of the SAT which represent cognitive-based abilities (Schutte et al., 1998a).

Teaching Satisfaction Scale (TSS)

Teachers' job satisfaction was measured by the 5 item (α =.77) Teaching Satisfaction Scale (TSS) developed by Ho and Au (2006a). The TSS was originally written in Chinese

(Ho & Au, 2006b), but has been translated into English as found on the PsycTESTS database. All of the scales with an original source in English that were used for validation of the TSS were reverse-translated and then compared with the original Chinese TSS scale to ensure equivalent language (Ho & Au, 2006b).

I amended two of the 5 items with minor grammatical changes to ensure fluidity and clarity among questions in English. For instance, the first question, "In most ways, being a teacher is close to my ideal," was amended to, "In most ways, being a teacher is close to my ideal *career*" so that the participant would clearly understand that "ideal" referred to the profession of teaching. To ensure a clear grammatical phrasing, the fourth question, "So far I have gotten the important things I want *to be* a teacher," was amended to, "So far I have gotten the important things I want *from being* a teacher." Teachers responded on a 5-point Likert scale with the endpoints 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher marks of 4 and 5 on the TSS related to higher levels of reported teacher job satisfaction.

The TSS is based on Locke's (1969) description of job satisfaction as a "pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating one's job values" (p. 316). Furthermore, Ho and Au (2006b) state teaching satisfaction as "a function of the perceived relation between what one wants from one's job and what one perceives teaching as offering or entailing…that results from attitudinal and affective responses of teachers" (p. 172). The TSS employs a global measure of teaching satisfaction that involves an integrated response stemming from an overall subjective evaluation of well-being within the various aspects of work. This instrument is based on the global measure of Diener's Life Satisfaction Scale (Diener et al., 1985), which significantly correlates with the Positive Affect Scale and the Negative Affect Scale of Bradburn's Affect Balance Scale (Bradburn,

1969; Ho & Au, 2006b). Moreover, the 5-item TSS is a unifactorial scale evidenced by factor analysis and eigenvalue scree plot that produced a single factor representing 53.3% of the variance (Ho & Au, 2006b). A two-week test-retest reliability coefficient was α = .76.

Ho and Au (2006b) report the convergent validity is founded on the facet-based Warr's Job Satisfaction Scale (Warr et al., 1979) and global measure, Brayfield-Rothe Job Satisfaction Scale (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951). Previous researchers have used the TSS in their studies on teacher work satisfaction (Duffy & Lent, 2009; Yin et al., 2016). Duffy and Lent's (2009) study found the TSS to have an internal consistency reliability estimate of α = .81. A separate study found strong internal consistency for the TSS of α = .89 and α = .88 (Yin et al., 2016).

Covid-related Questions

The following three Covid-related questions were asked to garner insight into teachers' perceptions of work during the unprecedented conditions associated with the pandemic. The first two questions used a likert-type scale (1=very little, 2, 3, 4=moderately affected, 5, 6, 7=very much).

1. To what degree do you feel your answers to this survey were affected by the social and educational climate caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?

2. To what degree do you think your views on the current educational climate are shared by other teachers in general?

The final question was open-ended:

3. Do you feel your responses on this survey would be different if the COVID-19 pandemic had not occurred? If so, please explain how they would be different.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this study, I examined the relationship of trait emotional intelligence (TEI) and general causality orientation of motivation (GCO) subscales autonomy orientation (AO), control orientation (CO), and impersonal orientation (IO) to teacher job satisfaction. The research questions investigated were as follows:

1. Does TEI predict teacher job satisfaction?
2. Does motivational orientation (AO, CO, IO) have a predictive relationship with teacher job satisfaction?
3. Does TEI mediate the relationship between GCO and teacher job satisfaction?
4. Does AO moderate the relationship between CO and TEI, and the relationship between CO and teacher job satisfaction?

Quantitative Analyses

Correlational and regression analyses were run to examine the relationship between AO, TEI, and job satisfaction, between CO, TEI, and job satisfaction, and between IO, TEI, and job satisfaction. In addition, interaction effects were tested with AO as a moderator between CO and TEI, and as moderator between CO and job satisfaction. Each analysis is discussed in further detail below.

Correlational Analyses

Preliminary Pearson correlational analyses were conducted to identify relationships between variables. As indicated in Table 4.1, job satisfaction was significantly related to TEI *(*r = .22, p = .001) and AO (r = .15, p =.033), but negatively related to IO (r = -.24, p < .001). Furthermore, TEI was positively related to AO (r = .45, p < .001) and negatively related to IO (r = -.30, p < .001). AO was negatively correlated with IO *(*r = -.21, p = .002) while CO was correlated with IO (r = .25, p < .001). However, there was not a significant correlation found between CO and AO (r = .12, p = .10).

Table 4.1 *Descriptive Statistics and Correlations*

	EIS	GCO_A	GCO_C	GCO_I	TSS
EIS	-				
GCO_A	.45**	-			
GCO_C	.09	.12	-		
GCO_I	-.30**	-.21**	.25**	-	
TSS	.22**	.15*	-.10	-.24**	-
M	3.85	5.51	3.95	3.45	3.47
SD	.42	.67	.73	.97	.92
Scale Reliabilities	.85	.69	.65	.80	.84

*p < .05. **p < .01.
Note. EIS measure of TEI; GCO_A/C/I measure of AO/CO/IO respectively; TSS measure of job satisfaction.

Regression Analyses

The first two research questions sought to understand whether TEI (RQ1) and GCO (RQ2) predicted job satisfaction, which required a multiple regression analysis. Preliminary analyses revealed all multiple linear regression assumptions were met. The standardized

residuals show a roughly fitting linear pattern of plotted points providing a linear relationship between each predictor variable and teacher job satisfaction. A histogram additionally provides an overall normal fitting bell shaped curve.

The assumption for non-multicollinearity was satisfied by predictor VIF statistics ranging between 1.115 – 1.341, well below the threshold of 3.0. Furthermore, there were no collinearity dimension rows with more than a single predictor greater than .90. Durbin-Watson Test of independence of observations via residuals provided a *d* statistic of 2.16 falling between 1.5 and 2.5 and further confirmed by the Durbin-Watson table of critical values at alpha .01 producing a value higher than both lower and upper table range values (d_l= 1.63, d_u=1.71).

The assumption of homoscedasticity was indicated via visual inspection of the scatter plot of standardized predicted values versus standardized residuals with plotted points providing no defined pattern. Scholars Berry and Feldman (1985) report that slight heteroscedasticity has little effect on significance tests. Multivariate normality was satisfied for each predictor by inspection of residual normality Q-Q plots for each predictor. With the satisfaction of assumptions, multiple regression analysis was used to test if TEI and GCO significantly predict teachers' reported levels of job satisfaction. As previously explained in chapter 3, I hypothesized the following:

H1: Higher scores for TEI predicts higher scores for teacher job satisfaction.
H2: An AO predicts higher scores for teacher job satisfaction.
H3: A CO will predict lower scores for teacher job satisfaction.
H4: An IO will predict lower scores for teacher job satisfaction.

As shown in Table 4.2, the results of the regression analysis indicated the four predictors (TEI, AO, CO, IO) explained 9% of the total variance of job satisfaction (R^2= .09, F (4,200) = 4.976, p < .001). Further, it was found that TEI predicts job satisfaction (β =

.345, $t = 2.020$, $p = .045$), as does IO ($\beta = -.158$, $t = -2.233$, $p = .027$). Neither AO nor CO served as a significant predictor. Thus, hypotheses H1 and H4 were supported, but H2 and H3 were rejected, and the null was maintained.

Table 4.2 *Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Teacher Job Satisfaction*

Predictors	Trait Emotional Intelligence		Autonomy Orientation of Motivation		Control Orientation of Motivation		Impersonal Orientation of Motivation	
	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	t
Job Satisfaction	.345	2.020*	.071	.677	-.094	-1.050	-.158	-2.233*

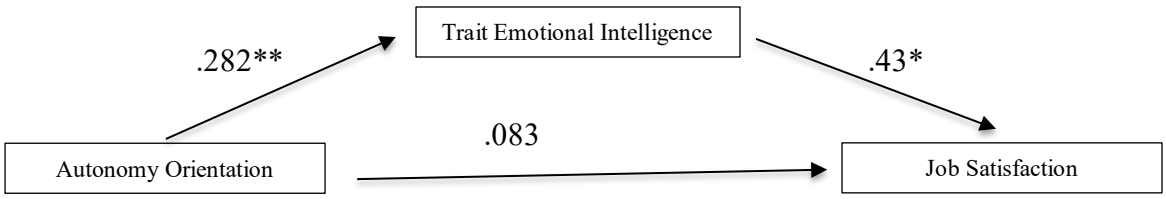
*$p < .05$

Mediation Analyses

Research question 3 focused on whether TEI mediates the relationship between GCO and job satisfaction. I hypothesized that TEI would partially mediate the relationship between each GCO (AO, CO, and IO) and job satisfaction (H5). To answer this question, three separate analyses were run (one for each motivational orientation) with TEI as a mediator using PROCESS Macro 3.5 (Hayes, 2018). Hayes's PROCESS Model 4 was used for analyses involving AO, CO, and IO (see Figures 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3), whereas Model 8 moderated mediation (Figure 4.4) was used to test AO as moderator of CO.

Autonomy Orientation. To investigate the hypothesized (H5) partially mediated relationship between AO and job satisfaction by TEI using Hayes' (2018) PROCESS Macro 3.5 Model 4, I ran a simple mediation analysis with job satisfaction as the outcome variable and with AO as the predictor variable (Figure 4.1). There was no statistically significant direct effect. However, there was an indirect effect of AO on job satisfaction that was statistically significant [Effect = .1215, SE = .052, 95% C.I. (.0316, .2386)] and indicated full mediation. Thus, hypothesis H5 for TEI as a mediator for the relationship between AO and job satisfaction was supported.

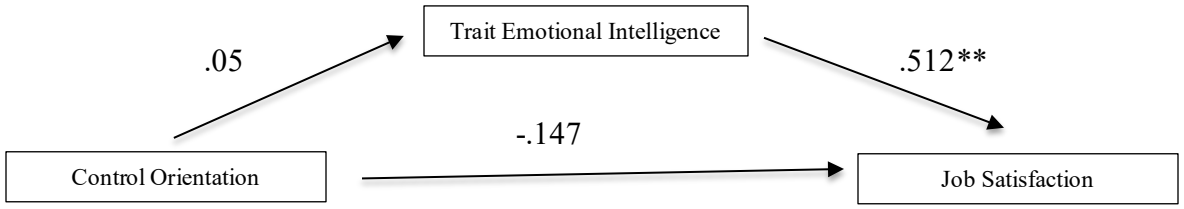
Figure 4.1. *Emotional Intelligence as a Mediator of Autonomy Orientation*



*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Control Orientation. As shown in Figure 4.2, I also hypothesized that TEI would partially mediate the relationship between CO and job satisfaction (H5). However, as discussed previously, there was no significant correlation between CO and TEI or job satisfaction (H3). Out of interest and thoroughness, I conducted a simple mediation analysis using Hayes' (2018) PROCESS Macro 3.5 Model 4 to test H5. The indirect effect of CO on job satisfaction was statistically insignificant [Effect = .0259, SE = .0273, 95% C.I. (-.0212, .0866)]. Accordingly, my hypothesis (H5) for TEI as a mediator for CO and job satisfaction was not supported.

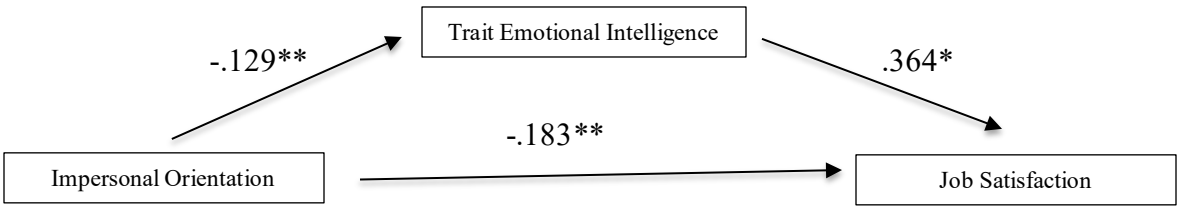
Figure 4.2. *Emotional Intelligence as a Mediator of Control Orientation*



*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Impersonal Orientation. To investigate H5 in relationship to IO, another simple mediation analysis was performed using Hayes' (2018) PROCESS Macro 3.5 Model 4. The indirect effect of IO on job satisfaction was statistically significant [Effect = -.0472, *SE*=.024, 95% C.I. (-.0984, -.0075)]. Thus, hypothesis 5 for IO is supported (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3. *Emotional Intelligence as a Mediator of Impersonal Orientation*

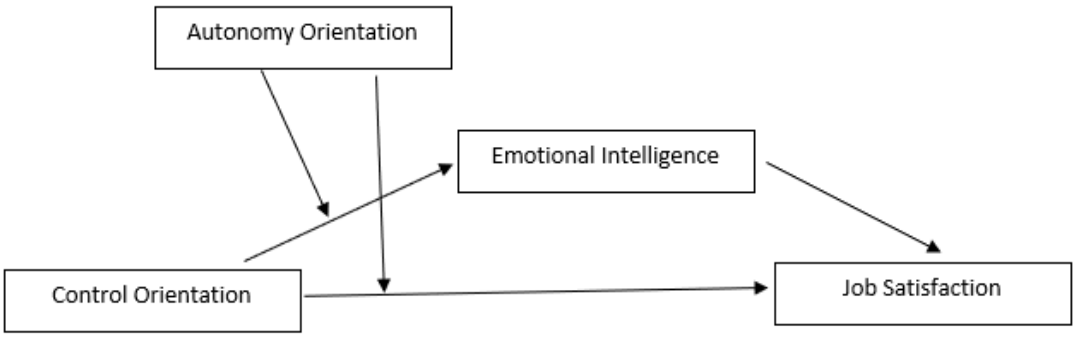


*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Moderated Mediation Analysis

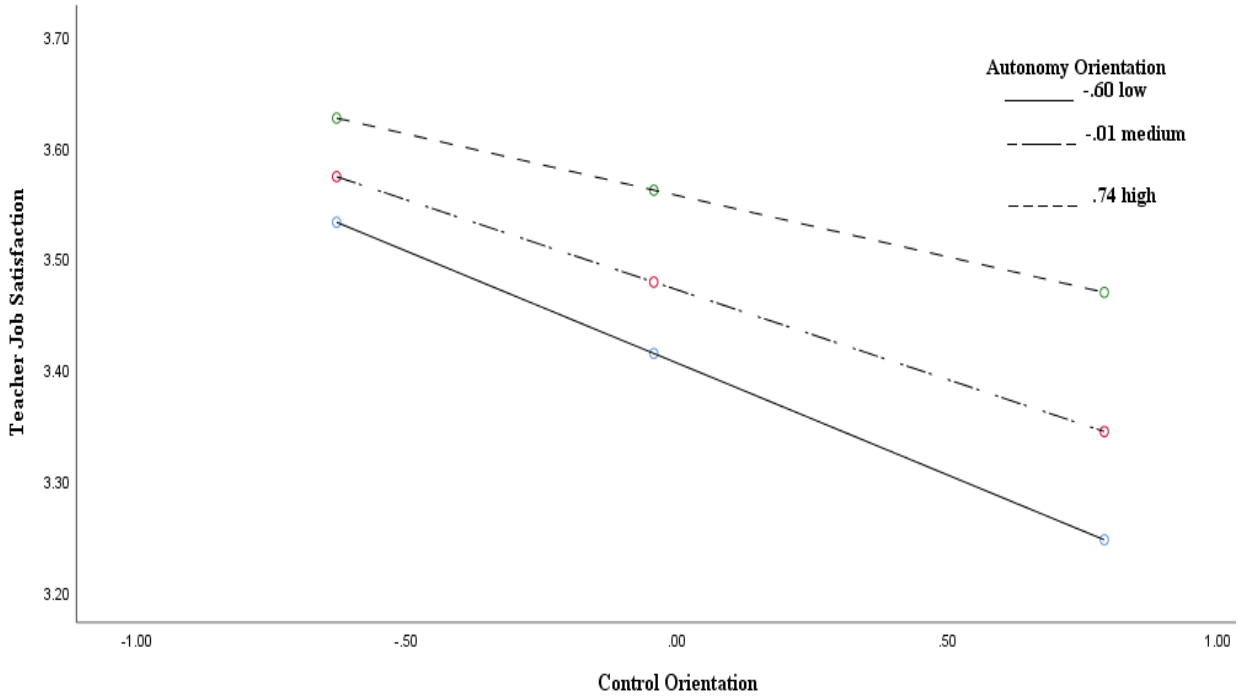
As previously noted, CO was not found to predict job satisfaction (H3) or be mediated by TEI (H5). I hypothesized (H6) that AO would be a moderator of CO. For thoroughness to ascertain whether there was a moderating role of AO on CO's relationships with TEI and job satisfaction, a moderating mediation analysis was performed using Hayes' (2018) PROCESS Macro 3.5 Model 8 (see Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4. *Autonomy Orientation as Moderator of Control Orientation*



The interaction between CO and AO was statistically non-significant (CI -.063, .0358). Hence, hypothesis 6 was not supported (see Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 *Visual Representation of Non-Significant Moderation Results*



Qualitative Analyses

Although the research questions for this study centers on the relationships between general causality orientation of motivation, trait emotional intelligence, and job satisfaction, three Covid-related questions were asked due to the nature of an ongoing pandemic during the data collection period. These questions were added to the end of the survey and provided information not obtainable during other school years. Two of these questions asked participants to respond on a likert-type scale and one question provided an open text box for a written response. Altogether, 205 teachers responded to both Covid questions one and two, while 178 responded to the open-ended question. The results are found below.

Scaled Responses

For the first two questions, the Likert scale ranged from 1 to 7 with 1 being "very little," 4 being "moderately affected," and 7 being "very much." The first likert-type question

was, “To what degree do you feel your answers to this survey were affected by the social and educational climate caused by the COVID-19 pandemic? The second likert-type question was, “To what degree do you think your views on the current educational climate are shared by other school teachers in general?”

Table 4.3 *Likert-type Covid-related Questions 1 and 2 (n = 205)*

	Q1: To what degree do you feel your answers to this survey were affected by the social and educational climate caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?	Q2: To what degree do you think your views on the current educational climate are shared by other school teachers in general?
1 very little	74 (36%)	5 (2%)
2	23 (11%)	11 (5%)
3	19 (9%)	14 (6%)
4 moderately	36 (17%)	54 (26%)
5	17 (8%)	34 (16%)
6	19 (9%)	43 (20%)
7 very much	17 (8%)	44 (21%)
mean	3.12	4.98
SD	2.06	1.58

Notably, most participants reported the pandemic had little to moderate effects on their survey responses as illustrated by nearly three-fourths of respondents selecting 1 to 4 on this 7-point Likert scale. Regarding whether other teachers shared their views (Q2), most participants (85%) believed other school teachers did share their views, choosing 5 to 7 on the scale.

Open-ended Responses

To capture a wider range of understanding about the teachers' survey responses as they might pertain to working during the novel work environment conditions presented by a pandemic, the third question was open-ended and utilized an open text box for a written response. The open-ended question was, "Do you feel your responses on this survey would be different if the COVID-19 pandemic had not occurred? If so, please explain how they would be different." Altogether, 178 teachers responded to the open-ended question either in brief or at length. Through a process of open and axial coding, I reviewed each response, initially sorting them based on whether they contained a positive or negative sentiment. These two groups were then examined for common subject matter and eventually produced four prominent themes. Next, these four themes were further examined for possible subthemes. See Table 4.4 for definition and exemplars for each theme and subtheme as appropriate.

Table 4.4 *Themes for Covid-related Questions*

Theme	Description	Examples
Person-oriented Negative Pandemic Effects		
Teacher-related issues	Response indicates stress, burnout, health-related concerns, well-being, increased workload, lack of support, and feeling taken for granted.	**1**. I don't love my job anymore. Being home during COVID put life in perspective and made us all realize we need a better work life balance. We were required to go back, and times are more stressful than ever. Teachers are so disrespected, and kids are in desperate need of mental health resources. I can't wait to retire. **2.** We were given more tasks and procedures, with no extra time, pay, or appreciation for those tasks. It's exhausting. **3.** Teachers and students are in a constant state of worry about catching COVID. We have had staff pass from COVID. We do zero quarantine and contact tracing and it seems unfair and makes many of us feel not real important. That our health and well-being is of little to no importance.

Theme	Description	Examples
Student-related issues	Response indicates students were exhibiting learning delays, academic deficiencies, decreased motivation, and socio/emotional problems.	**1.** I feel that it has affected the students with their learning. It has affected students emotionally with losing loved ones or feeling stress trying to get caught up when quarantined that many students have given up on trying with their grades." **2.** The isolation and time away from routine, and kids being very behind socially and academically did affect me more than I like to admit. I like to seem in control and unfazed by events but in reality, I think I am burned out.
Pandemic highlighting pre-existing problems	Teaching has long been considered a stressful, emotion-laden, low paying, underfunded, underappreciated job identified with an intensification of tasks	**1.** The pandemic has exposed a lot of flaws and shortcomings of the education systems and schools specifically. The effects of the pandemic have left teachers dealing with the aftermath and burdened with a broken system that is not sustainable to adequately support students or staff. **2.** Covid didn't create the issues teachers hate. Covid revealed just how much we put up with and shouldn't do to those outside education. It also showed how important good leadership is and how bad leadership makes everything unnecessarily worse. **3.** I think covid turned a magnifying glass onto an already worrisome public education system. Covid sped up the snowball that has been rolling for two decades.
Teachers contemplating leaving the profession	Teacher attrition and shortages have been of concern and trending upward for a number of years prior to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.	**1.** There is no way on earth teachers can meet all their obligations and tasks during the school day. As much as I love the children, I don't believe I can do this much longer. **2.** The Covid-19 Pandemic has made me feel drained. My reflection on my current employment has become harsher over the past two years. Expectations are changing, becoming more advanced everyday yet the support is lacking. **3.** I was happier and healthier before (the pandemic). The illness all around me and the uncertainty have caused me, my colleagues and students more stress in recent months. I am retiring this year, which is earlier than I had planned. 4. I would not have chosen teaching had I known a pandemic would happen.

Theme	Description	Examples
Positive outlooks and lessons learned	Beneficial and useful outlooks and insights may be gained from challenging circumstances like experience teaching during a pandemic.	**1.** I actually feel that COVID helped me realize what I needed to minimize in my life to decrease stress. **2.** I feel that the pandemic has made me more aware of what is an important use of my time. **3.** I feel that parents are more appreciative of the job I do now. **4.** I do feel that I am more able to adjust and adapt than before. My technology skills are much better than before, so that is a plus!

Figure 4.6 displays frequencies of responses related by theme/subtheme. The first overarching theme of "Person-oriented Negative Pandemic Effects" reflected adverse effects that were specific to the individual, often mentioning the teacher or student specifically and occurred most frequently. Of the 178 participants who responded, a total of 60 teachers (34%) mentioned at least one type of negative effect, from which, two types of negative effects emerged.

The first subtheme (n = 33) was "Teacher-related issues" as responses indicate stress, burnout, health-related concerns, well-being, increased workload, lack of support, and feeling taken for granted. For example, one teacher responded, "The accommodations that I need in order to keep my students safe, keep me safe, and allow me to maneuver effectively despite my co-morbidities have either been implemented and later dismissed or haven't been implemented at all."

Another teacher responded with,

> We are disrespected, constantly used as baby-sitters and treated less than second rate citizens by many parents and admin. We also have so much piled on us along with our normal duties and expectations. It has become a depressing job because of things like this.

Another response includes,

> Teachers have been overwhelmed with so many tasks on top of the business of teaching. Following strictly, scripted planned lessons, grading and analyzing mastery of every standard for every child, performing tasks to make our superiors look good while we do the work. It is never ending.

Together, these educator testimonials reveal that some of these teachers felt an overt lack of regard for their professional position and needs were often accompanied by an indication of insufficient structural support and a physically and emotionally untenable performance expectation.

The second subtheme (n = 14) (see Figure 4.6) was "Student-related issues," with teachers reporting their students as being behind either academically, socially, emotionally, or motivationally. This subtheme is exemplified by the following teacher's response, "Not only are students delayed academically, they are socially and emotionally behind by 2 or 3 years. They don't know how to "do school."

The second overarching theme (n = 22) (see Figure 4.6) to surface was "Pandemic highlighting pre-existing problems." In other words, teachers reported the pandemic as functioning to make a host of longstanding, pre-existing problems in the teaching profession more salient. For example,

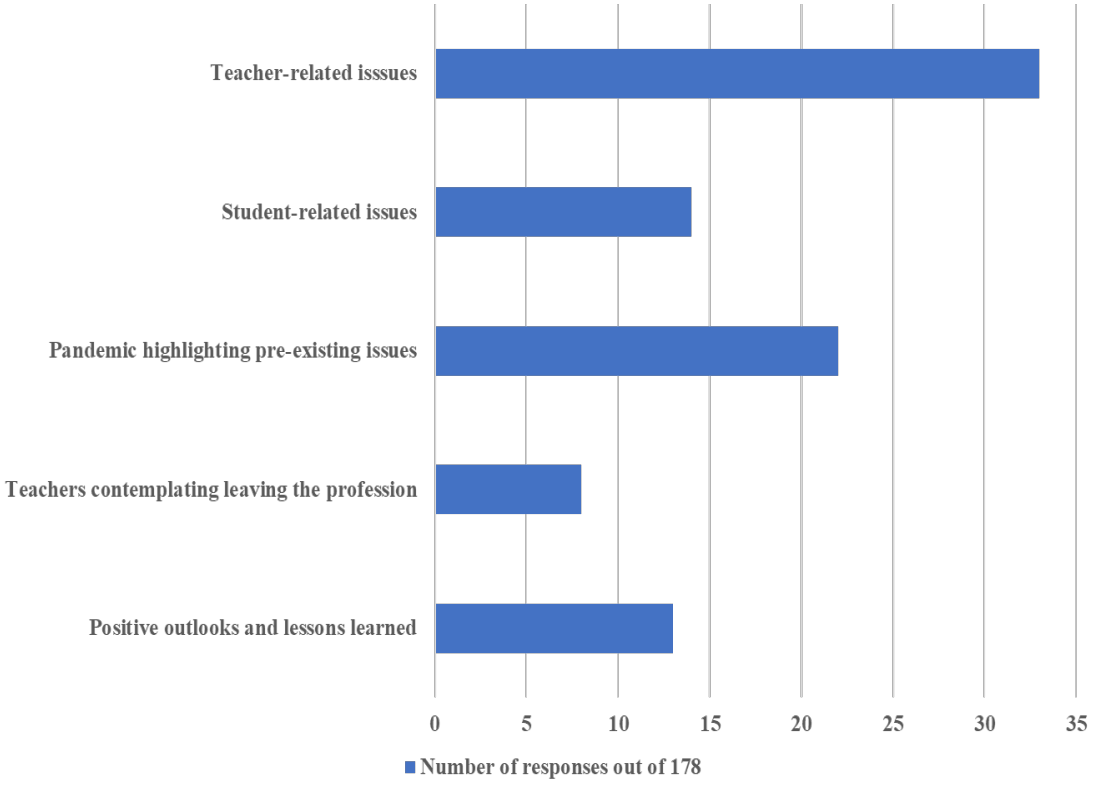
> Some of the issues we're facing now existed pre-pandemic, but they are greatly exacerbated now (e.g., low attendance, behavior issues, etc.) Even more than before, it seems as though students are unwilling to put in the bare minimum of effort, and it's harder and harder to get them actively engaged in learning.

Another response includes, “I think covid turned a magnifying glass onto an already worrisome public education system. Covid sped up the snowball that has been rolling for two decades.” These teacher observations point to performance expectations that were already at a critical point. That is, the unprecedented and abrupt social, health, and required teaching format changes that affected both teachers and their students called public attention and scrutiny to the difficult jobs that teachers already had to do.

The third theme was “Teachers contemplating leaving the profession” (n = 8). For instance, a teacher replied, “The restrictions placed due to covid were harmful to the way I was taught to teach and with the way my students were able to learn. Having our world turned upside down made me contemplate whether or not I had actually chosen the right second career for myself.” Whereas teacher thought processes connect to a loss of instructional autonomy and a subsequent questioning of professional-life purpose. Such questioning suggests an undermining of intrinsic motivation by external, contextual controls.

The fourth theme, “Positive outlooks and lessons learned,” provided a different perspective on teaching during the pandemic. To expound, although a variety of historic and current difficulties in the profession was previously shared, there were also opportunities for educators to learn from such unprecedented times. While only 13 of 178 teachers shared a positive take or beneficial lesson learned, the wisdom gleaned and applied by teachers in the trenches was exemplary. For example, teachers shared, “I don’t like changes, but change often forces me to reevaluate what I’m doing and spur improvements in my lessons,” and “I actually feel that COVID helped me realize what I needed to minimize in my life to decrease stress.” It stands to reason that those individuals who experience teaching during a pandemic first-hand are those with the most insight.

Figure 4.6 *Frequency of Responses by Theme*



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Teachers perform an essential role in the education and life success of students. However, the profession of teaching can be overwhelming and stress-inducing to the point of lower job satisfaction and teacher attrition. With critical shortages of qualified educators in the teacher workforce, studies are needed that center on the needs of teachers as people are key for understanding factors that enhance or detract from their sense of well-being. Thus, the purpose of this study was to gain a greater understanding of the relationship between general causality orientations of motivation (GCO), teacher emotional intelligence (TEI), and job satisfaction, so that teacher well-being and professional fulfillment may be better supported and sustained.

Scholars of self-determination theory (SDT) postulate that more studies of teaching motivation and training initiatives are necessary (Ryan & Deci, 2020). On a theoretical basis, SDT links a teacher's motivation and well-being with the ability to be supportive of their students' psychological needs. Furthermore, emotional intelligence has been linked with numerous positive outcomes and was hypothesized to mediate the relationship between motivational orientations and job satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 1985a). Also, as previous research has suggested that control orientation of motivation (CO) may at times present unique and varied effects in combination with autonomy orientation of motivation (AO)

(Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2011; Hagger et al., 2015; Moran et al., 2012), AO was hypothesized to moderate the relationships of CO.

Discussion

Mediating Effects of Emotional Intelligence

The first finding of note is that TEI fully mediates the relationship between AO and teacher job satisfaction, indicating TEI serves as an underlying mechanism through which the influence of AO on job satisfaction is processed. Operationally, TEI is a set of "non-cognitive," emotional and social capabilities along with motivational and personality dimensions that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures (Petrides et al., 2007; Schutte et al., 1998). Teachers' TEI has been conceptualized as subsuming trait emotional self-efficacy along with other self-perception based aspects and predilections (Kirk et al., 2011) to encompass the four dimensions of emotional functioning: emotional appraisal, positive regulation, empathic sensitivity, and positive utilization (Chan, 2004; 2006; Schutte et al., 1998). So that a high self-efficacy for emotional processing seems to complement qualities inherent in AO, namely the tendency for higher self-confidence, a mastery-orientation to challenges, an internal locus of causality and controllability. Given this congruence, TEI's full mediation of the relationship between AO and job satisfaction is reasonable.

Furthermore, this finding extends previous research showing EI's ability to fully mediate a relationship (Bhullar et al., 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2001). As this study utilized job satisfaction as an indicator of teacher well-being, TEI's mediational role necessitated an inspection of aspects operationally shared between AO and the pleasure and engagement well-being processes that lead to different types of satisfaction. To elucidate, AO involves

making free and volitional choices in line with one's own values and beliefs. AO persons are oriented to a mastery versus performance learning orientation and tend to persist longer with or without extrinsic-based rewards (Koestner & Zuckerman, 1994). For instance, persons high in AO tend to seek out challenging activities that are of intrinsic value, interesting, and done for pure enjoyment (Deci & Ryan, 2017). Importantly, the AO person's intrinsic motivation is associated with intrinsic regulation and an internal perceived locus of causality. Research indicates that the intrinsic motivation involved in both pleasurable and engaging expressions is the purest form of autonomous behavior, a key underlying factor of AO (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

However, well-being is not encapsulated in pleasurable expressions alone but must be combined with autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relatedness, personal growth, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 1989) with the foremost bearing resemblance to SDT's basic psychology needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, respectively. Hence, the full mediation of AO and job satisfaction (i.e., this study's indicator of well-being) by TEI reflects the underlying basic need satisfaction that facilitates intrinsic motivation and the pleasurable engagement associated with both well-being (i.e., job satisfaction) and AO.

By contrast, TEI only *partially* mediated the relationship between the Impersonal Orientation (IO) and job satisfaction. To understand why TEI partially mediates the relationship between IO and job satisfaction but fully mediates AO's relationship to job satisfaction, it is important to recall that unlike AO, IO is associated with a perceived external locus of control combined with an external locus of causality and results from an extended lack of satisfaction of all three psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985a). IO, or

amotivation, is conceptually distinct from any form of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. In other words, a person with IO does not perceive themselves capable of attaining their desired goals (i.e., low self-efficacy). This belief leads individuals to attribute successes and failures to things outside of their control such as "luck" (Deci & Ryan, 1985a; Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Furthermore, for the purposes of this study, TEI was conceptualized as having four dimensions (i.e., emotional appraisal, positive regulation, empathic sensitivity, and positive utilization), which are not only considered non-cognitive, but are also intertwined with motivational and personality dimensions that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures (Petrides et al., 2007; Schutte et al.,1998a). If IO reflects the belief that no form of motivation, either internal or external, will result in making change in one's world, and TEI reflects non-cognitive capabilities as well as motivational and personality dimensions, then TEI would not be able to mediate the relationship fully because it involves personality dimensions that are operationally distinct from IO. Moreover, TEI's capacity for heightened inner awareness may allow a teacher with higher IO to better negotiate inconsistencies between felt amotivation and cognitive ideals connected to authentic senses of self. Also, TEI's motivational dimensions help one cope with environmental challenges, and it stands to reason that IO's influence on job satisfaction may be explained in part through the motivational domain.

The third finding involves control orientation (CO) results. To expound, results from past studies indicated AO was a significant predictor of job satisfaction whereas CO was not a significant predictor of job satisfaction (Lam & Gurland, 2008). Similarly, CO did not predict job satisfaction and subsequently TEI was not found to mediate the relationship between CO and job satisfaction in this study. Although prior research suggests that AO may

moderate the effects of CO (e.g., Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2011; Hagger et al., 2015; Moran et al., 2012), the results of this study showed no such moderation. Additionally, I hypothesized (H5) that TEI would mediate the relationship between control orientation and job satisfaction. However, as discussed above, there was no significant correlation between CO and TEI or job satisfaction. A simple mediation analysis showed a statistically insignificant indirect effect of CO on job satisfaction.

A plausible explanation for the nonsignificant relationships between CO and TEI, and CO and job satisfaction may involve the self-regulation style underpinning CO. For instance, prior research (Koestner et al., 1992) conveys people who regulate their behavior in an autonomous way (i.e., AO) tend to be more mentally self-aware and possess higher levels of conscientiousness versus lower levels associated with controlling manners of regulation (i.e., CO's external regulation and introjected regulation styles). Additionally, CO persons are less open to exploring their own emotions but possess a strong tendency to base their actions on ego-involved, environmental sources of feedback. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that this study's lack of significant relationship between participant CO and their self-reported TEI and job satisfaction is explained by a CO person's focus on ego-involved sources of feedback happening within their unique, dynamic, and changeable environment.

Future research may examine the relationship between IO and TEI to uncover what constitutes the unexplained variance in TEI's partial mediation of IO and job satisfaction. Also, a future research question may involve the results of IO and job satisfaction in the presence of autonomy support. For instance, could autonomy support lead to decreases in measured IO and higher teacher job satisfaction? Last, future research may also seek to parse

and measure full external regulation and introjected external regulation separately in relation to TEI and job satisfaction.

Covid-related Findings

Because this study occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, three COVID-related questions were added to the questionnaire. When participants were directly asked whether they believed their answers were affected by the social and educational climate caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, most teachers reported low or high responses on their personal answers to this survey. Some teachers attributed their responses on this study's survey based on their entire teaching experience while others conveyed that their answers were solely job-based and independent of any Covid-related influence, suggesting that some teachers approached the question in consideration of long-range factors, whereas others may have compartmentalized the pandemic's influence. This finding adds insight into coping mechanisms that some teachers employ within challenging circumstances and complex issues.

When asked whether their views on the current educational climate was shared by other school teachers in general, most respondents indicated that they believed the majority of other school teachers would agree with them. This may be due to the commonality of shared local cultural environment (i.e., Oklahoma K-12 schools) or values by individuals nested within the larger society. It stands to reason that teachers in a community would not only be exposed to the same overall, social influences but experience confirmation bias amid polarizing times.

Covid-related question 3 was open-ended and inquired about teachers' views involving potential COVID-19 effects on their survey responses and revealed thematic

elements representing common experiences that are recurring themes for teachers across the nation (Allegretto & Mishel, 2018). Filtered through the lens of General Causality Orientation of Motivation (GCO), each thematic example may be classified to the varying degree of autonomous motivation underlying the three GCO categories. For instance, under "Teacher-related issues," the response, "lack of support," indicates that there may be a need for competency to deal with these novel circumstances or there may be a need for autonomy support amidst COVID school health protocols and online learning expectations. Alternatively, there may be a need for relatedness in the form of social support from administrators and parents alike. This need may serve to alert researchers of controlling administrative actions that may undermine teacher intrinsic motivation (Salamah, 2021) and of subsequent decreases in autonomy. It makes sense that pandemic-related health protocols requiring masks, spaced seating, contact tracing, and quarantining involve a bureaucratic response. Thus, it may be reasoned that as teachers experience more controlling actions imposed by educational leadership, they may employ more controlling behaviors at the expense of autonomy inducing behaviors in the classroom in order to meet administrative dictates.

Next, the response, "increased workload expectations," within teacher-related issues may point to potential increases in IO as a greater amount of tasks and responsibilities are imposed with no adequate time to plan or extra pay given (Salamah, 2021). Of concern is the undermining of intrinsic motivation present in such autonomy-thwarting conditions. For example, when increased work and task expectations reach a point where there is no more personal energy or time in the day to complete requirements in an excellent manner, then exhaustion and eventually burnout may ensue. Continuing increases in work demands can

affect a teacher's sense of competency for effective completion of the teaching and classroom management tasks as well as strain working relationships if the teacher is experiencing exhaustion or disillusionment and falling behind. Such extended overload of work expectation exemplifies conditions that foster IO and lower levels of job satisfaction, whereby IO is defined by a lack of perceived competence to bring about change in their situations whether by internal or external sources of regulation. Additionally, the amount of autonomy-inducing influence a teacher typically receives from peers may be diminished if they cannot join coworkers during free times such as lunch or after school because they must catch up on extra tasks. A significant concern with loss of interaction between colleagues is that it diminishes avenues for supportive workplace relatedness, and thus opportunities for raised intrinsic motivation.

Problems that teachers have faced for decades were reiterated via the second theme, *pandemic highlighting pre-existing problems,* and thus shows a continuation and perhaps a compounding of stressors that may contribute to the third identified theme of *teachers contemplating leaving the profession*. However, there were alternate perspectives as represented in the fourth theme, *positive outlooks and lessons learned* whereby teachers identified useful personal lessons based on wisdom that can arise from a difficult experience. Although responses in this category were small, the mere presence of the practical and positive responses made by teachers who found things to be grateful for amidst upheaval was inspirational and exemplary.

Implications

Implications for Theory

First, in response to the full mediation of AO and job satisfaction by TEI, according to SDT's Causality Orientation Theory specifically, AO is based on intrinsically motivated behavior and involves making free and volitional choices based on awareness of one's own needs and goals that are integrated with one's own values and beliefs. AO is also linked with resilience, social confidence, and adaptability. It results from the consistent satisfaction of all three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2017). In the workplace an individual teacher and their interactions with students, coworkers, and supervisors benefit from having AO as it is connected to social confidence and adaptability.

As mentioned previously, TEI subsumes the emotion-based dimensions of emotional appraisal, positive regulation, empathic sensitivity, and positive utilization of emotions (Chan, 2004; 2006; Schutte et al., 1998). It may be reasoned that the teacher's underlying emotional skill supports the development of an AO person's social confidence and adaptive behavior, which can lend to the consistent support of teacher psychological needs and, in turn, resulting in raised senses of well-being as displayed by high job satisfaction. This suggests that teachers with higher TEI possess greater internal resource for the development of beneficial AO characteristics like intrinsic motivation so necessary for peak performance and personal well-being.

Second, GCOs affect teachers' situation-specific motivation, in that people seek to satisfy the basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, within their environmental contexts (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Due to underlying external and introjected

regulatory styles, the attributions of a CO person's behavior may stem from a dependence upon and in reaction to externally based, uncontrollable events on their environment. As such, it is proposed that a CO person's external-based regulation of behavior style is the underlying, contingency-based steering mechanism behind pathways from CO to EI and job satisfaction. While the professional teaching environment extends a variety of fundamental challenges to educators across the nation, individual CO teachers' responses may be as varied and unique as each CO teacher's immediate world. In turn, this observed variety in CO's behavior belies an enduring external self-regulation and introjected self-regulation style which must be taken into operational account when forming models that seek to connect specific CO behavior with the motivationally initiating events that incite them.

Implications for Practice

First, full mediation of the relationship between AO and job satisfaction by TEI, emphasizes the prime role TEI plays for the transference of AO's effect on job satisfaction. It is important to realize that since TEI fully mediates AO for resulting higher levels of job satisfaction, that if there are low levels of AO then lower levels of job satisfaction may be expected. As previously mentioned, intrinsic motivation is an autonomous form of motivation that underscores AO, and it is intrinsic motivation rather than externally mandated instruction that closely explains the bulk of human learning across the life span (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Thus, it may be inferred for teachers dealing with externally mandated instruction, that positive relatedness between teachers and administrators requires strong respect as professional equals from administrators and a school environment that facilitates strong educator voice in the direction of their own teaching. Implementation of structure in schools is neither autonomy supportive nor controlling on its own, however, it is the manner

of structural implementation that leads to it being perceived as controlling or autonomy-supportive (Ryan & Deci, 2000). As such, structural changes and administrative perspectives that promote greater teacher workday autonomy such as adequate plan time and breaks, scheduling, instructional choices, plus reasonable student-teacher ratios, and workload expectations allow for a greater likelihood of increased teacher intrinsic motivation and competence for professional tasks. Therefore, a sharper focus on professional development addressing teacher EI with autonomy support is vital for the positive emotional aptitudes that lend to a teacher's well-being and beneficial to learners they work with in the classroom.

Ultimately, synergistic relationships between teachers and administrators are bound to support basic needs. AO as a capacity for teachers and as relayed by TEI allows teachers to most readily assimilate autonomy-inducing actions made by autonomy supportive administrators and educational leadership. Thus, it is worthwhile for administrators and other people in educational leadership to be autonomy supportive and in possession of a high TEI. Research shows EI is mediated by perceived social support (i.e., relatedness) from important others on outcomes of life satisfaction and mental distress (Kong et al., 2012). Additional elevated beneficial effects on outcomes of attitude and behavior arise from the combination of individuals with AO and the influence of autonomy supportive mentorship within a learning team (Liu & Fu, 2011).

For teachers who may have an unhealthy level of IO, these findings reveal a two-pronged strategy may be employed. First, as EI may be enhanced through professional education initiatives for teachers (Dolev & Leshem, 2016) and teacher TEI was found to partially mediate the relationship between IO and job satisfaction, it is practical to consider how facilitating an increase in TEI through professional development initiatives would help

facilitate higher levels of job satisfaction. Such that it is important for teacher leadership and administrators to remember how socio-contextual aspects that promote senses of autonomy and competence amid relatedness increase intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985a).

An environmental stratum full of motivational instigators offers prime fodder for further investigations' focus on the interaction of CO people and what they divulge as their actual motivations. Hence, a teacher's GCO profile is an individual difference that can be utilized for better understanding teachers as individuals versus a "one size fits all teachers" type of offering. Although, the influence of AO and IO is transferred on to job satisfaction in full and partial mediation respectively, if professional development and supportive reforms stemming from evidence-based teacher research is implemented, then empathic, emotionally aware leadership can understand their teachers' perspective toward the meeting of teacher needs for autonomy, competency, and relatedness in the workplace. It is hoped that teachers with unfulfilled psychological needs find greater need satisfaction at work and thereby experience heightened senses of well-being that permeate other aspects of their lives as well.

Limitations and Future Research

There are a number of limitations of this study. The first limitation is that only certified schoolteachers in the state of certified Oklahoma schoolteachers were randomly recruited to participate, creating a fairly homogenous sample. For example, in 2018, teachers in the state of Oklahoma came together at the state capitol for a teacher walkout seeking adequate funding for schools, teachers, and students (Goldstein & Dias, 2018). The previous decades of classroom and funding challenges that led to the walkout represent a somewhat homogenous context that might limit the ability to generalize this study's findings to a more

diverse, nationwide sample. Provided that homogeneity may lead to spurious results, it would be advantageous to examine these same variables within a variety of populations.

In an effort to achieve power in a relatively short time period, I distributed a large number of emails (9000), and yet received only 205 completed surveys. Such a low response rate (2%) could indicate there may be unaccounted personality and motivational characteristics of teachers who tend to complete research surveys such as this versus characteristics of those that do not.

Therefore, due to the nature of IO, a second limitation relates to the possibility of teachers characterized by high IO opting out of survey participation. For example, a high level of IO is associated with amotivation and higher levels of anxiety and therefore may lead to some teachers bypassing participation in an optional survey. Whereas persons high in AO may more readily participate in an educational-based survey amid the challenges of the teaching profession. However, varying levels of all three causality orientations are present in most situations and data can provide an opportunity to gain important insight. Future research may focus on obtaining GCO scores in teacher-based studies that are approved by individual school districts and completed during professional development or collaboration sessions. It makes sense that teachers with higher IO would be more likely to complete a survey about their well-being in a social setting where there is time and space carved out for that purpose.

A third limitation is acknowledgement that the survey was administered during the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, as mentioned above, there is the potential for teachers with the higher levels of anxiety and amotivation as reflected by IO, to either opt out of survey participation or not complete the open-ended question. However, such a context full of unprecedented disruption to daily routines and motivational determinants at work stands as

a unique time to obtain data that would not regularly be observable. Admittedly, while the unprecedented nature of the pandemic may add currently unknown confounding variables, it may also have made the variables more salient.

Future research may center on teacher issues amid repercussions of the pandemic in the form of systemic provision and greater access to emotional well-being support. To elucidate, this study asked the temporal, open-ended Covid-related question, "Do you feel your responses on this survey would be different if the COVID-19 pandemic had not occurred? If so, please explain how they would be different." In response, a teacher commented,

> I don't love my job anymore. Being home during COVID put life in perspective and made us all realize we need a better work life balance. We were required to go back, and times are more stressful than ever. Teachers are so disrespected and kids are in desperate need of mental health resources.

Another teacher conveyed,

> The pandemic has exposed a lot of flaws and shortcomings of the education systems and schools specifically. The effects of the pandemic have left teachers dealing with the aftermath and burdened with a broken system that is not sustainable to adequately support students or staff.

Another simply added, "I can't wait to retire."

Future research might focus on the "lack of support" issue by investigating the specific roles and power structures embedded within the current education system that support teacher autonomy and foster intrinsic motivation versus those that impose greater controlling measures that can undermine it. Although "lack of support" is a long-standing

issue that predates the pandemic, it is a concern that will continue to be of relevance. One teacher provides a valuable perspective via the following response,

> Covid didn't create the issues teachers hate. Covid revealed just how much we put up with and shouldn't do to those outside education. It also showed how important good leadership is and how bad leadership makes everything unnecessarily worse.

Hence, the public, lawmakers, and educational leadership might consider prioritizing adequate education funding and a healthy work environment with realistic work expectations to address teachers' voiced need for greater work and homelife balance.

Conclusion

In brief, this study provides an investigation into mediating effects of teacher TEI on the relationship between GCO and teacher job satisfaction. Moderating effects between GCO subscales AO and CO were also examined. The study sample consisted of certified Oklahoma teachers who are expected to lead groups of students through content expertise, engaging academic experiences and classroom management in an ever-changing world. Such people-centered, service-oriented work can be emotionally demanding and requires a level of emotional competency necessary for an educator's successful coping with various challenges. A difficult work environment can be distressing to the point it affects a teacher's level of job satisfaction, a key reason why some teachers leave the profession. With critical state and national shortages of qualified teachers, retaining qualified teachers who experience fulfillment rather than disillusionment at work is paramount. Notably, EI has an advantageous ability to control essential stress and survival management processes for career satisfaction (Nelson & Low, 2011), such that stakeholders would be wise to consider implementation of research-based findings that link teacher motivation and TEI to positive

work outcomes like job satisfaction. The cultivation of teacher well-being in the form of TEI is a worthy effort as TEI was found to mediate the relationship between GCO and job satisfaction.

On the other hand, although AO allows for greater openness to positive change and protection against erosion of intrinsic motivation levels (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2011; Reeve et al., 2018), AO was not a significant moderator of CO relationships. While the dynamics involving combinations of teacher AO and CO levels are not fully known, the lack of significant CO relationships in this teacher study provides additional evidence for contingent, environment-based attributions that reflect an array of individual manifestations. As such, workplace motivational influences may spur autonomous behavior or add to the traditionally, control-based environment experienced by educators for decades. Therefore, it is important for teachers and educational leaders to remain aware of what contextual inputs are autonomy supportive for the nurturance of intrinsic motivation and what inputs are viewed as controlling to ends that may erode teacher intrinsic motivation and lead to lower job satisfaction.

Thus, in order to retain an innovative and qualified teacher workforce for the nation's youth, future studies that center on teachers as educational leaders and social agents who initiate contextual contingencies that directly tap teacher GCO are necessary for facilitation of teacher intrinsic motivation and well-being. Likewise, research focusing on teachers as social agents within their classrooms who initiate contextual contingencies that directly tap student GCO are warranted for the facilitation of learner intrinsic motivation and academic success.

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APPENDICES

IRB Approval Letter and Consent

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date:	06/09/2021
Application Number:	IRB-21-217
Proposal Title:	Public School Teachers' Orientation of Motivation, Emotional Intelligence, and Job Satisfaction
Principal Investigator:	Christal Strickland
Co-Investigator(s):	
Faculty Adviser:	Jane S Vogler, Ph.D.
Project Coordinator:	
Research Assistant(s):	
Processed as:	Exempt
Exempt Category:	

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in 45CFR46.

This study meets criteria in the Revised Common Rule, as well as, one or more of the circumstances for which continuing review is not required. As Principal Investigator of this research, you will be required to submit a status report to the IRB triennially.

The final versions of any recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are available for download from IRBManager. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be approved by the IRB. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI, adviser, other research personnel, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any unanticipated and/or adverse events to the IRB Office promptly.
4. Notify the IRB office when your research project is complete or when you are no longer affiliated with Oklahoma State University.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact the IRB Office at 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

Sincerely,
Oklahoma State University IRB

Statement of Consent

Your participation in this research is voluntary. There is no penalty for refusal to participate, and you are free to withdraw your consent and participation in this project at any time. The alternative is to not participate. You can skip any questions that make you uncomfortable and leave the survey at any time.

By clicking "next" below, you are indicating your consent to participate.

If you do not wish to participate, close your browser.

Next

VITA

Christal Gaile Strickland

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: SCHOOL TEACHERS' CAUSALITY ORIENTATION OF MOTIVATION, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, AND JOB SATISFACTION: AN EXAMINATION OF MEDIATING AND MODERATING EFFECTS

Major Field: Educational Psychology

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Psychology at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in December, 2022.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Education in Adult and Higher Education at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma in 2002.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Science Education - Biology at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, Oklahoma in 1993.

Experience:

Instructional Designer, Online Learning Division, Tulsa Community College, October 2022-Present

Adjunct Professor, Tulsa Community College, October 2022-Present

Adjunct Professor, Oklahoma State University, August 2022-Present

Graduate Teaching Associate, Oklahoma State University, August 2018-May 2019, August 2020-May 2021

Science Teacher, Jenks Public Schools, August 2014-May 2018, July 2019-July 2022

Professional Memberships:

Engaged Learning Advisory Group - Tulsa Community College
Council for Online Learning (COLE) Professional Development Committee
Instructional Technology Council (ITC)