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Enhancement of Employment Satisfaction on Emotional Needs and Work Persistence

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Abstract

The satisfaction factors in this study refer to the factors which influence job satisfaction that meet the emotional needs of teachers towards their tasks. The study identifies how job satisfaction can create work excitement and increase the determination to work hard. The findings of this study are focused on job satisfaction which will have a high impact on emotions in influencing the thinking and action of participants. The discussion covers three main job satisfactions namely: i) job satisfaction from student achievement ii) job satisfaction from administrator action and iii) job satisfaction from colleagues cooperation. This qualitative case study is conducted to ensure that the responsibilities need to be done by teachers should be complemented by job satisfaction and the excellent teaching outcomes can shape the quality students. Data sources were obtained from five excellent teachers as research participants. Two instruments, interview protocols and document analysis were used as tools to collect data. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain detailed information from the participants. The findings was analyzed descriptive and interpretive based on emerging themes and triangulation techniques were conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the results. The findings show job satisfaction is a requirement that needs to be fulfilled because every individual needs internal satisfaction which can encourage ones to achieve the desired goal. The role of students, administrators and colleagues cooperation are the needs to be given priority as inspiration in improving the commitment of teachers to the task being entrusted. Therefore, this study will provide guidance to teacher education programs to plan and implement teachers' professional development efforts by emphasizing the importance of job satisfaction to produce outstanding teachers.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Excellent Teachers, Descriptive and Interpretive, Qualitative.

Introduction

Teachers' excellence has always been a concern since the rapid knowledge development requires educators who are mentally, emotionally and physically prepared. In producing professional teachers, appropriate procedures should be identified in upgrading the teaching profession since teachers are the most important and critical group in facing the future challenges (Zahid, 2003). The focus on teachers' commitment has scarcely been carried out though in reality, their roles cover vast aspects and teachers need motivation in effectively carrying out their responsibilities. Mertler (2002) stressed that teachers who are satisfied with their job became more productive and were able to influence their students because motivation is the main factor that affected the way a teacher delivered the knowledge to the students. Not only teachers required extrinsic motivation such as pay rise, promotion, excellent award and as such, intrinsic motivation namely support, encouragement, and spiritual values are also needed.

Nowadays teachers are facing more complicated challenges due to higher expectations from the society as well as on the increase of job requirements. Thus, good on job motivation is able to encourage teachers in upgrading their teaching performance. In this aspect, motivation can be observed in the interest, attitude, needs, emotion and behaviour which are displayed towards their service (Ishak, 2006).

Literature is filled with evidence to show that teaching profession is facing problems related to teachers' job satisfaction. If teachers are not truly satisfied, they would not be performing well. Therefore, teachers who are not satisfied with their job could not be committed and productive. The managements are able to know how to avoid the unnecessary problems occur in working place and satisfy their employees (Abdullah, Uli & Parasuraman, 2009). However, very seldom teachers commitment in their work are being focused on eventhough teachers play a larger role and a wider scope in being motivated to carry out a perfect job. Teachers who are satisfied in their work will strive harder to achieve excellence, having good rapport with their colleagues and work harder to improve their quality of work (Woods & Weasmer, 2002).

Hence the needs towards motivation among excellent teachers has been the focus of this paper since challenges towards the teaching profession requires optimal on job motivation in effectively delivering the teaching process as well as to perform their commitment at their best.

Research Objective

- i. To identify how job satisfaction can lead to work excitement and increase the determination to work harder.
- ii. To identify the factors of work satisfaction on emotions as well as in influencing teacher's thoughts and actions.

Methodology

This research involves five excellent teachers from five schools participated in the case study. Qualitative case study is applied in observing and understanding a phenomena in detail related to the needs of on job motivation in upgrading the teaching profession. The purposive sampling approach has been used because the researcher was able to choose the sample and forecasted location that can provide appropriate information (Creswell, 2008 & Gay; Mills, & Airasian (2006). In obtaining the participants, researchers have selected them based on the recognized list of excellent teachers by the Ministry of Education Malaysia. The selection was not based on the field of study or gender, but through the highest recognition of excellent award. Besides that, the samples are not chosen based on their expertise, or gender but it is based on the highest recognition as expert teachers. To answer the research questions, a few procedures of collecting data have been used that is interview, teaching observation in the classroom and document analysis.

Research Finding

Teachers' commitment requires sufficient motivation to ensure quality teachers remain in the teaching profession and demonstrated excellent quality of work. Therefore, the study found that extrinsic and intrinsic motivation is able to contribute to work satisfaction if this requirement is used as a motivator to improve quality of work. Motivation is seen as a psychological trait that can help people to enhance the degree of commitment and enhance one's will and desire to achieve something (Ahmad Shukri, 2003). As a social process, motivation of a worker requires the support of the surrounding people to provide appropriate stimuli in showcasing a consistent response. This fits Beck's (1983) view which states that motivated teachers are happy and satisfied with their careers. Those with enthusiasm will showcase close cooperation and high adherence to the organization. The satisfaction factors in this study refer to the factors which influence job satisfaction based on three main aspects:

Work Satisfaction from the Aspect of Students

The findings clearly proved that work satisfaction plays an important role in enhancing the participants' emotional drive to continuously educate and guide students. The satisfaction of forming students' behaviour has inspired participants to continue to serve in order to achieve self and organizational excellence. In performing tasks and responsibilities, teachers faced with various behavioural issues of students. While the participants are faced with challenges in carrying out their duties and responsibilities, the satisfaction can be felt when the student shows the expected change in behaviour. The participants felt that their sacrifices and difficulties are paid off when there were improvement and progress made by the weak students. The participants of the study stated that their confidence in performing their responsibilities increased after seeing the students' academic achievement. Although academic achievement and behavioural change are the factors contributing to work satisfaction, the participants felt that the students' perseverance in continuously seeking for knowledge and their ongoing strive to be successful are the ultimate satisfaction of being a teacher. Hence, according to the participants, students' achievement is among the factors to continuously guide and educate the students. In this case, work satisfaction can be visibly felt due to the showcased evidence. Work satisfaction, in parallel with the opinion of Kreitner & Kinicki (2000), is the reaction and effective

emotion towards several aspects of individual career. Meyer, Salovey & Caruso (1999) agreed with the opinion by stating that there is a significantly positive relationship between emotional needs and organizational commitment.

Work Satisfaction from the Aspect of Administrators

Discussion on the work satisfaction from the aspect of administrators is seen from a healthy working condition and the connection between the participants and administrators.

Among the work satisfaction found through the results of this study are trustworthiness, open attitude of administrators and work excitement. Meanwhile, the findings show that the feeling of responsibility for the organization is increasing as the administrator realizes that professional teachers actually want to be seen as versatile teachers in carrying out their duties. An open attitude of administrators in providing opportunities for the participants to perform an assignment such as giving talks or conducting a project or activity actually provide emotional encouragement to give more contributions.

This means that an open attitude of administrators can not only bring satisfaction to teaching, but the excitement of doing things can enhance the spirit of being a respected educator. Work excitement is said to be a riddance boredom and this fun factor affects the participants to serve their best. The findings of this study support the findings of Mertler (2002), Pearson & Moomaw (2005) that high work satisfaction is the driving force for teachers to work vigorously, participate in decision-making and determining students' success. The same view is expressed by Ivancevich, Lorenzi, Skinner & Crosby (1994) who found that administrators' should express concerns by being a good listener if there are any problems and concerns expressed by teachers. Therefore effective communication play and important role in improving job satisfaction as communication satisfaction can improve work persistence (Abdullah & Hui, 2014).

The various loads of teacher duties should be noted because the focus on teaching cannot be done entirely if the teacher is experiencing an uncomfortable situation such as exhaustion and lack of time to adequately prepare for their teaching. Internal support from school administrators is more effective as it involves feelings and emotions that need to be controlled in order for teachers to experience full working satisfaction. Problems faced by teachers should be shared by the administrator so that teachers can increase their interest and efficiency in their field of work.

Consequently, wage increment, promotion and service awards are a positive reinforcement to appreciate excellent professional teachers. Given the quality of education received by the students depends on the quality of teacher teaching, such emphasis is necessary so that teachers are better prepared to provide a better quality of educational patterns. It is found that there is a relation between commitment to this entrusted task to the needs of work motivation that affects the excitement and the spirit to work harder. It is clear that the need for this extraordinary motivation is in line with Herzberg's Two Factor theory which emphasizes the importance of rewards to meet the individual's needs and also relates to Equity theory which explains that inputs made such as work, skills, and work performance should be equally

rewarded. Thus, extrinsic motivation plays an important role towards teachers' professionalism and the findings were supported by Ainon (2005) who emphasized that rewards has a great influence on an individual's behaviour due to the fact that one will be encouraged to carry out a task in hoping to get some compensations.

Thus, Maslow's Theory of the need for self-actualization and self-appreciation is used in determining what the motivating factors at the workplace are. The emphasis on the human needs or desires has become the priority and in this matter, a reward towards service recognition is one of the drive to achieve satisfaction. While recognition is an impetus for performance improvement, attitudes depend on the recognition of others to indicate the weakness of the teaching profession. In this case teachers should build their own professional strengths and work motivation can be obtained through the spirit of dedication based on the awareness of responsibility and commitment and the employers should find out what is the major factors that affecting the employees' job satisfaction and what should they pay more attention on it (Abdullah & Hui, 2014).

Work Satisfaction from the Aspect of Colleagues

In creating a harmonious working environment, the support and cooperation of colleagues is a driving force in relation to work satisfaction. The findings show that social relations between colleagues are crucial to encourage the participants. Colleagues who are attentive, cooperative and understanding are needed to improve job satisfaction. According to Abdul Rahim (2007) the high spirit of service in education, especially as an educator will enable a teacher to achieve satisfaction and excitement. This finding is in line with Herzberg's theory (1959) that colleagues has become one of the key factors in determining job satisfaction and improving productivity. This means that friendly and intimate relationships are the factors that influence the commitment of colleagues (Nordin, 1997).

Additionally, the findings show that co-workers can not only create a high level of motivation, but work dissatisfaction is also due to the stress of colleagues' attitudes. The unfair distribution of work according to the participants was a factor that often triggered dissatisfaction. The dissatisfaction described by the participants of this study has similarities with Kyriacou (1989) view that colleagues can cause stress and this is explained by the findings of Brown & Ralph (1992), that the unfair distribution of work, differences and personal disputes, weakness in the communication system and lack of teamwork among workers will cause work stress.

These work satisfaction requirements are in line with Maslow's hierarchical requirements, which see social needs as a willingness to be accepted by colleagues, create friendships and become part of the group. Smith (1993) stated that the impact on the teaching profession should be taken into account as this would cause individuals unlikely to function effectively if under stressful circumstances. The findings are consistent with the findings of Hoy & Forsyth (1986) who stressed that mutual respect and support are indispensable to improve professional competency in line with teachers' needs and satisfaction. This view is also

supported by Gable (2004) who considers collaborative-based work as one of the ways teachers practice mutual pedagogical practices in order to improve the practice of teaching and learning.

Based on the findings of the study, support from colleagues is needed to motivate the participants in the quest for various tasks and responsibilities. Collaboration from colleagues is considered as a factor that creates work excitement. In the opinion of the participants, the well-established ties raise awareness to guide and provide assistance to colleagues in improving the effectiveness of teaching. The role as a mentor to a partner is a responsibility that needs to be done in achieving organizational objectives. In this regard, both positive relationships are regarded as a reinforcement that can help improve teacher job satisfaction (Singer, 1995). The findings are consistent the study by Abdul Ghani & Tang (2006) which stated that collaborative cultures have implications on teachers' motivation because when the level of teacher motivation is low, teachers need the support of their counterparts such as trusting, appreciating ideas and assistance.

Therefore, work satisfaction should be taken into account in achieving the change and development of the teaching profession. Based on the findings, improved work satisfaction can be achieved if harmonious working conditions can be created. This means that colleagues play an important role in enhancing the spirit of loyalty and satisfaction. It is essentially important to have a good relationship with colleagues to reduce tension and help improve teacher professionalism.

Research Implication and Recommendations

Challenges towards the teaching profession require ideal extrinsic and intrinsic motivation since teaching was not only restricted to knowledge delivery, but to also educate and inculcate good values in shaping students' behaviours. Hence, the capabilities of excellent teachers in enhancing their working performance can be leading factor towards increasing the working quality. Teachers' commitment towards their roles and responsibilities should be recognized and appreciated not only by materialistically awarding them.

Based on the needs, management of organisations such as State Education Department (JPN), Teachers' Education Division (BPG) and Federal Council of Inspectorate (Jemaah nazir Persekutuan) should upgrade the skills of schools administration in motivating teachers to objectify the aims of educational organisation. Management of organisation should upgrade the knowledge of administrators about employees' behaviours in building effective and efficient organisation. Therefore, the needs of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation must be prioritized by the employer in enhancing the quality of working environment. Thus, schools' administration should have sound knowledge about people skills including communication skills, negotiation, management of crisis and conflict, motivation and leadership in materialising the aims of educational organisation.

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