PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS ABOUT JOB SATISFACTION WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON A TO T APPROACH: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

India, like rest of the world is gearing itself for the different challenges posed by lockdown due to Covid 19 pandemic. Educational institutions across India are facing a lot of challenges. Collection of fees, providing salary to the teaching and non-teaching staff, digitalization of traditional classroom are few of the immediate challenges. Traditional classrooms have now shifted to many individual room spread across the country. Teachers play a vital role in imparting knowledge to the students. The National Policy on Education (1986 and 2020) accepts that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Teaching job may be demanding and involves heavy work load and controlling of unruly students which may result in felling of frustration. Job satisfaction is a positive or pleasant emotional state resulting from a person's appreciation of his/her own job or experience. Unsatisfied teachers do not contribute wholeheartedly in the development of the students and country at a large whereas highly satisfied teachers help in the achievement of educational aims set by the country. This paper discusses how Covid 19 pandemic has affected the teachers on a whole and at the same time has come as an opportunity to all where we can work for professional upliftment and personal growth. At this time of stress and job insecurity, the paper proposes the A to T approach to Job Satisfaction of school teachers.

Keywords: Job-satisfaction, Covid 19 pandemic, unseen challenges, A to T approach

I.   Introduction

India as a developing country has a robust emphasis on enhancing its educational system as the quality of life depends on the quality of its educational system. Teacher is the most significant factor of influence inside the educational system. They hold a very crucial role as far as the quality of education is concerned. Receptivity and initiatives level of the teachers govern the entire educational process. The effective, motivated and satisfied teacher is supreme in education.

Job satisfaction is believed to reflect an individual's affective and/or cognitive assessment of his or her working conditions and job attributes. Job satisfaction seems tougher to measure

within the academic field taking into consideration the complexity of roles, duties and responsibilities. Job satisfaction in simple terms is described as favourable or positive feelings about work or the work environment.

In today's scenario, Job satisfaction is regarded as an independent variable for several work-related behaviour like productivity, absenteeism, turnover and organizational citizenship behaviour. It is tied to the growth of teachers as individuals and their self-esteem, because it's associated with quality of living in a broader sense and eventually because a highly satisfied teacher will present more positive and loyal behaviour when compared to a less satisfied one.

II. Objectives of the Study

1. To understand the different factors that results in job-satisfaction.

2. To analyse the factors that have affected the Job Satisfaction of Teachers during Covid 19 Pandemic

3. To investigate the positive impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the teachers.

4. To analyse A to T approach for Job Satisfaction.

III. Review of Literature

The role of teachers' work for student outcomes is widely recognised, but the question whether teachers are content with their school environment is often unheeded. (Bascia & Rottmann, 2011; Liang & Akiba, 2017). Teacher job satisfaction has many important and far-reaching implications. It contributes to teacher well-being as satisfied teachers are less susceptible to stress and burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). In addition, there is evidence that students of teachers who are content with their job also feel better (Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012). Furthermore, satisfied teachers offer higher instructional quality and better learning support for their students (Kunter et al., 2013). Finally, content teachers demonstrate stronger job commitment and are less prone to leave the profession (Blömeke, Houang, Hsieh, & Wang, 2017; Klassen & Chiu, 2011), which is especially crucial in times when teacher turnover is high.

Increasing teacher turnover rates and a subsequent shortage of qualified teachers is a growing concern internationally (European Commission, 2018; Ingersoll, 2017). Teacher turnover comprises interrelated notions of teacher migration and attrition, where migration describes teachers moving to other schools, while attrition pertains to teachers leaving the profession altogether (Rinke, 2008). However, regardless the type of turnover, there are always negative consequences for a particular school from which a teacher is departing. Ronfeldt, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2013) suggest a disruptive impact of turnover beyond compositional changes in teacher quality, especially in lower-performing schools. Besides affecting student learning and motivation, teacher turnover negatively affects faculty collegiality and trust and results in a loss of institutional knowledge, which is critical for supporting student learning. In the end, overall school performance is affected.

Job satisfaction of teachers is mandatory for the high quality of teaching and academic excellence (Ngada, 2003; Ingwu & Ekefre, 2006), and help the teachers to nurture positive feelings for the profession (Sirin, 2009; Ali,2017). Teachers gain freedom and

empowerment (Ali,2017) through their job satisfaction and contribute to the accomplishment of the teachers as well as their institution.

IV.   Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to read, explore and acquire a greater understanding about the job satisfaction of teachers through the perspective of literature review in order to suggest recommendations for enhancement of teaching profession.

V.   Methodology

The search of literature search was done by typing keywords, like job-satisfaction of teachers, dimensions and factors of teacher's job-satisfaction, teachers' job satisfaction in Google Scholar, Sage, Springer and Science Direct (Elsevier) databases. Secondary data inform of scholarly views; articles and papers from repositories like Inflibnet, Proquest and ShodhGanga; writings in various magazines and e-journals became the base for the study.

VI.   Analysis and Discussion

1. Factors of Workplace Satisfaction

Keeping employees engaged and satisfied is not limited to pay and benefits. The following list reveals some of the key job satisfaction aspects cited by employees:

i. **Respect** – Majority of the teachers have given respectful treatment of all employees as the most important factor in job satisfaction.

ii. **Trust** – Perhaps because of workplace uncertainty in the years and the current pandemic scenario, most of the teachers indicated that trust between themselves and the management is another highly important satisfaction factor.

iii. **Security** – Job uncertainty causes a great deal of anxiety. Schools can provide a sense of security through honest communication and transparency about the school's health and long-term viability.

iv. **Healthy Environment** – Institutions that are free from stress, morale issues, harassment and discriminatory practices can create a positive and healthy environment for everyone.

v. **Career Path** – No teacher wants a dead-end job. They are more likely to perform well if they can see an established upward path, with the opportunity to earn a higher salary and take on more challenging responsibilities.

vi. **Pay and Benefits** – Good salary isn't the only reason why teachers find satisfaction in their jobs, but they typically rank high on the list. Competitive pay generally makes the teachers feel valued, and gives them less reason to look elsewhere for work.

2.   Factors that have affected the Job Satisfaction of Teachers during Covid 19 Pandemic

i. **Poor experiences with ed-tech:** Teachers are forced to adopt teaching and learning approaches that they do not know very well. This unexpected pandemic forced the teachers to leave the traditional method of teaching they are comfortable with and start taking classes online.

ii. **Lack of Support from the Management:** Due to this pandemic, all the educational institutions adopted online classes. This has come as a big surprise to many of the teachers. Aged teachers are finding it very difficult to get accustomed to the new digitalized method of teaching. And what comes more surprising for these teachers is the lack of support they have received from the management. Their inexperience with technology is being seen as an excuse and being issued termination letter if they are unable to take the class online.

iii. **Reduction in Salary:** Due to the pandemic, all the institutions are closed down as a precautionary measure. Most of the schools have cut down the salary of the teachers without any assurance that they will get the balance money once the schools reopen.

iv. **Insecurity of Job:** Job security is seen as one of the most important factor for Job Satisfaction. However, during this pandemic, the teachers are being asked to sit at home without any payment till the school re-opens. Any difference of opinion or saying no to the institution increases the chances of job insecurity.

v. **Lack of Respect and Appreciation:** This pandemic has brought in limelight a very negative outlook of the parents towards the school and the teachers who are taking online classes. Every now and then, messages or posts appear in social networking sites where they humiliate or question the efforts that the teachers are taking to conduct classes online. Very few positive comments or appreciations are seen for the efforts that the teachers take to make the classes effective. As a result, the teachers are becoming demotivated.

vi. **Extra burden and more handwork:** This pandemic has brought extra pressure on the teachers. From lack of experience in using ICT, to competition of syllabus, network connectivity issues, family pressure and work has all made the teachers frustrated and overworked.

3. COVID-19 PANDEMIC AS A CLOUD WITH SILVER LINING FOR THE TEACHERS.

Every coin has two sides. The same is true in case of this unexpected Corona pandemic. On one hand, we are locked inside our home with few facilities and limited resources, on the other hand, the lockdown has come as a ray of hope in this despair. In the hustle bustle of our daily life, we teachers had started taking things for granted and stopped appreciating them. This lockdown has given us opportunity to self-reflect and work for our professional enrichment as well as personal growth. Reconnecting with families, reflecting on teaching practices, more emphasis on social-emotional learning for the students, emerging as a mentor and facilitator to the students, spending time on one own's health and well-being are few of the positives that have impacted our life during this lockdown.

Figure 1 shows various fields in a teacher's life where this pandemic has come as an opportunity for one's upliftment.
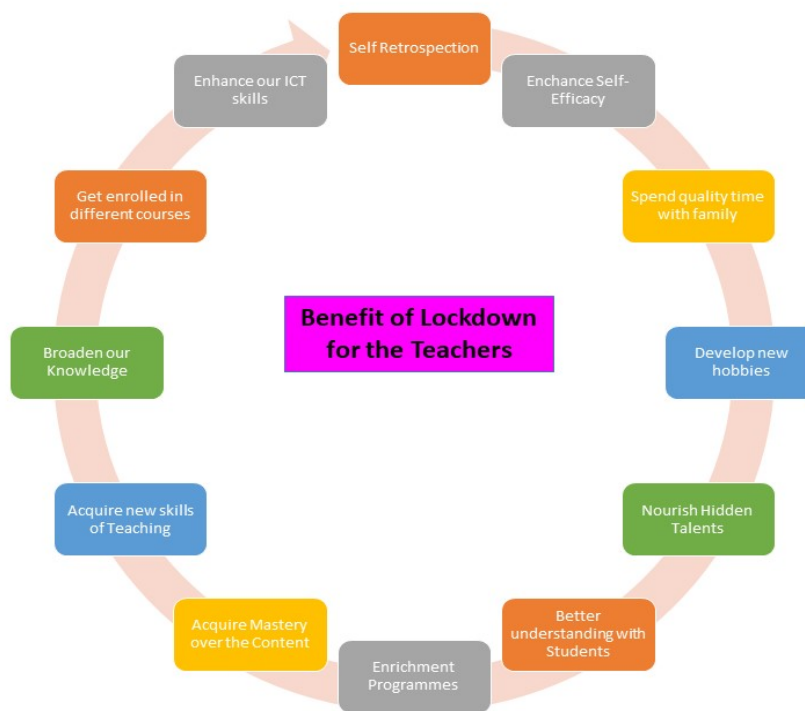

Figure 1: Benefit of Lockdown for the Teachers

Given that teacher shortage is a world problem, teacher job satisfaction merits closer attention. Not only is job satisfaction closely associated with teacher retention, but it also contributes to the well-being of teachers and their students, overall school cohesion and enhanced status of the teaching profession. Lack of resources in terms, crowded classes and indiscipline among learners are major reasons of dissatisfaction among teachers. Administrative issues, lack of recognition and appreciation for the hard work and innovative initiatives taken by teachers from the Head of the Institution and the parents also causes dissatisfaction among teachers. The job satisfaction of teachers, predominantly at secondary level, is very important. The value of secondary education is equally incontestable. It is vital to supply teachers with all the facilities and resources so that they are content with their job. Better performance can only be expected when the teachers are satisfied with their jobs.

Motivational strategies and teacher productivity are related constructs that influence the standard of education. Quality education is the degree to which education can be said to be of a high standard, satisfies basic learning needs and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experience of living (UNESCO, 2000; Orodho,2013).

In this respect, the quality of education is an imperative where it is seen to be efficient, focused on the client (the pupil), and involving all stakeholders. The achievement of quality education rests squally on the shoulders of teachers who need appropriate motivation to produces the specified educational productivity. Education is one among the important factors that help in bringing about rapid social and economic development in any given nation, the role of principals and teachers cannot be

downplayed. However, concerted efforts are always made through effective and efficient motivational strategies by the school management to make sure teachers' productivity within the establishment.

Motivational strategies have been always been regarded as the internalized drive that is more dominant in an individual at a given moment which are integral and essential part of the secondary school administration. To this end, no meaningful development could be achieved in the school system without the appropriate strategies to stir up the commitment of teachers on part of the school principal as regards their productivity.

4. The A to T Approach to Job Satisfaction

Attitude of the Management: The positive attitude of the school management plays a vital role in retaining and motivating teachers. The principles of Competence, Development, Responsibility, Good relationship with the supervisors and Rewarding successful employees are the foundations of the employer's attitude towards employees.

Behaviour of the Employer: Every school management needs to create and sustain the image of its institution among the employees for recruitment, career management and long-term retention. Therefore, behavioural dimension becomes one of the crucial components of the employer's profile. The good behaviour of the employer reinforces positive behaviour among the employees.

Colleagues: Non-acceptance of new employees by co-workers very often dissuades employee participation in the institutional process and activities. It is the responsibility of each and every employee to initiate better relationships with their colleagues. Researchers have reflected that a poor relation with a fellow member brings about dissatisfaction among the employees.

Direction: It is the key area of responsibility of any supervisor to act as a leader and direct the employees towards goal accomplishment and business objective. Due to inadequate information and lack of training facilities, usually employees face the problem of not achieving their expected targets. They expect the Principal to lead and direct them in such circumstances. Any failure on the latter's part to lead the teachers results in job dissatisfaction.

Empathetic Approach: This is the fifth habit described by Stephen R Covey in his book, "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People." He urges every human being to "seek first to understand, then to be understood." This reflects the importance of emphatic communication. Employees always desire an empathetic approach from employer in regard to their job, benefits and employment.

Freedom and Empowerment: The traditional management emphasized on the unity of command in order to regulate the teachers in the workplace. The freedom to take any class in any innovative manner or project from the idea stage to the finished product, freedom to be creative, freedom to participate in the professional development decisions are some areas of employee autonomy. An empowered team is more effective than an individual performer.

Goal Clarity: The success of employees in the institution depends on how well the goal and the role have been communicated to them. Every principal needs to communicate the

vision of the institution and align it with the individual objectives. Many leaders have felt the urgent need of clear goal perception among the employees. The most crippling problem in any institution is sheer ignorance about how business works. Once we are really sure of what we want to do, we can really attain our hopes and dream. Information should not be used to intimidate, control or manipulate people. It should be used to teach people how to work together to achieve common goals and thereby gain control over their lives.

Humour: Stress is the biggest enemy of the employees and to get rid of it, medical experts usually advice adequate laughter and humour at the workplace. Laughter increases the level of energy and relaxes the body. It regulates the blood circulation. To enhance humour at workplace, institutions have come forward with several exercises to infuse laughter and create a stress-free work environment. Humour improves relationships. However, one should be careful that humour should not hurt the sentiments or make anyone the butt of a joke.

Information: Information is the backbone of any institution. The responsibility rests with the school management to disseminate vital information to all employees. Transparency should be maintained while communicating information related to the employment rights, conditions and agreements, benefits, financial soundness of the institution and the future plans which involve employees and concern their benefits.

Joy: An exciting workplace can bring in joy among the workers. It is an exhilarated feeling. Joy can be achieved from a meaningful work. A satisfying leadership style of the principal, a social support network, and trustworthy relationships with the co-workers bring workplace joy.

Knowledge Management: Knowledge management practices include identifying, creating and distributing knowledge and application of intellectual knowledge towards organization learning. People management, process management and information management are the three components of knowledge management. Employee motivation is sustained when an institution effectively captures knowledge and manages the intellectual capital for a better future. In the field of education, Knowledge Management has still a lot to achieve. There is still a lack of single clear template for the successful implementation of knowledge management. However, the schools and colleges facilitate knowledge management practices such as e-learning, web conferencing, collaborative software, content management systems, e-mail lists, etc.

Leadership Styles: There are three types of leadership styles: Authoritarian, Participative and Delegative. The principals and the managements need to identify the groups of people in a team - new inductees, experienced workers, laid back workers and self-motivated employees - and use all three styles depending upon the types of employees and the situation. An experienced team prefers participative style of leadership whereas a new employee will require an authoritarian leader who will supervise and guide him in the new job. Adoption of any wrong style of leadership will seriously affect employee's motivation, leading to higher attrition rate, absenteeism and workplace dissatisfaction.

Materialistic Benefits: Performance awards, time-off awards, incentives and bonuses are a few examples of monetary gains. The compensatory benefits against accidents in the workplace, the amount payable towards medical sickness and the expense incurred in attending any Faculty Development or Enrichment programmes are vital benefits given by almost all institutions to their employees. Materialistic benefits do provide employee satisfaction to a certain extent in the workplace.

Networking: Adequate steps should be taken to improve bondage and relationship between the employees. Effective networking strategies can improve employee relationship. An interactive and social network is successful when it creates a "shared identity" amongst its members. Such workplace networking improves the transfer of knowledge and information, thereby reducing the areas of conflicts.

Occupational Security: Workplace violence is a serious threat to occupational safety. Reasonable steps should be taken to recuperate and compensate the injuries. Maintaining first-aid facilities, a safe workplace and worker's compensation insurance are some of the areas of responsibility for the management. Uncertainty in adapting to the given situation also leads to insecurity. There have been instances when due to pandemic situation, teachers were asked to leave from the school because they were not able to take online classes.

Positive Culture: A positive work culture is highly flexible and adaptable to changes. It aims to nurture, reward and value the effort made by the employees towards achievement of business goals. Employee participation, communication, creativity and respect to the employee are the four engines of positive culture. Employers need to create a sense of oneness and a sense of pride to build in positive culture among the employees.

Quality of Work Life: The components of work-life quality are safe working conditions, satisfactory working hours and fair salary. The flexi-time work benefits, leave options and employee benefit enhance the quality of work life. A survey on Changing Employment Relationships in Canada, in 2000, brought out several interesting facts about the expectations of the workers from a job: Schedule flexibility, career advancement opportunities, recognition for work well done, training to do a job effectively, job security, freedom to do one's job, friendly and helpful co-workers, develop one's skill and abilities, balance work-family, etc.

Recognition and Reward: Rewards and recognition tools are important for employee motivation. Recognition refers to acknowledging the good work of an employee. The rewards and recognition program needs to be carefully designed and valued by the employees. The rewards should link pay with performance. Instant recognition strategies and recognition at a formal event encourages employees and boosts their productivity.

Stress Management: Stress is a psychological and physical reaction towards an internal or external stimulus. The growing competition in the business environment and the threat to survival are vital reasons that lead to stress among the employees. Stress management programs help to reduce the level of intense stress among the employees. Apart from the traditional stress – relaxing techniques, many schools and colleges are widely adopting the spiritual form of stress relieving programs for their teachers and students. Asanas,

Pranayama, Meditation, Yoga, Reiki and Rational Emotive Therapy are gaining popularity as stress management techniques across different sectors.

Team Spirit: "Exponential gains in organization effectiveness are possible at the intersection of team and spirit. Despite the potency of this synergy of team and spirit, the notion remains incompletely understood by modern enterprises. To realize the likelihood of spirited, high performing teams requires a shift in awareness, a shift in values, and with it a shift within the way teams work" Spirited teams' function effectively and faster than individuals alone. The synergistic effect of the teams infuses positive energy among the members. Enterprises often ignore the positive impact of the teams. Team spirit provides a nurturing environment. Organizations should endeavour to enhance team spirit among the employees through team building activities and programs.

VII.   Conclusion

In an educational institution, job satisfaction will produce a teacher with high vitality. This refers the positive quality of producing good products and in this case, it is good student performance. An individual who is very achievement motivated would tend to be very conscientious in his or her work and have a tendency to be skilled. Achievement motivation becomes the driving factor for future understanding and may be defined as a predisposition to strive for fulfilment. It is very important to note that, a motivated teacher will offer best in terms of achieving the expected goals in the school system.

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