

CURRENT RESEARCH ON MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS OF TEACHERS AS KNOWLEDGE WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

The motivational factors of knowledge workers and teachers has been the major interest in research world for many years. However, very few current research on motivational factors of teachers as knowledge workers. The purpose of this paper is to review the literature on intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors of teachers as knowledge workers, focussed on professional development, job autonomy, job security, reward and recognition, monetary incentives and working environment. This review is significant to educational policymaker, school administrator and the government to have an insight into motivational factors of teachers as knowledge workers and how these factors can increase teacher job satisfaction.

Keywords: knowledge workers, teachers, autonomy, job security, reward and recognition.

INTRODUCTION

Previous studies indicated that teachers suffered lack of occupational satisfaction compared to others job profession. It is likely that dissatisfactions can be correlated with several factors that can demotivated them toward achieving job satisfaction. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors can positively or negatively connect to teacher job satisfactions. Thus, it is important to carried out this study in orders to find out factors that lead to

overall satisfaction of teachers as knowledge workers.

To many, teachers is not a knowledge workers. It is often overlooked and deemed unimportant as people often views knowledge workers as someone in more highly professional fields such as engineer, doctors, lawyers and information system designer. The recognition of teachers as knowledge worker was first made by Drucker in 1999 that mention the productivity of teachers is measure based on the quality of the performance just like other knowledge worker. Accordingly, Le Borgne (2012) portraying following traits associated with teachers as modern knowledge workers such as collaboration, best practices, knowledge mapping, cultures, information audits and others. This is supported by Whitby (2013) that stated teacher are knowledge workers that define their own needs and purposes and use their connections to gain information and formulate their knowledge.

However, there is lack of current research on motivational factors of teachers in the aspect of knowledge worker and in the context of primary school in Malaysia. Since teacher populate the centre position in primary education systems, therefore, it is crucial to identify what are the motivation factors of teacher as knowledge workers and how these factors improve their job satisfaction. In general, this paper has been structured into several sections. The first section is the background of the study. The second section is literature review on motivational factors of teachers, focussed on professional development, job security, job autonomy, monetary incentives, reward and recognition and working environment. The last section is the summarisation of the paper.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Professional development

Teacher professional development is the internal processes and activities designated to create and increase the knowledge, expertise, skill and attitudes of teacher professionally (Guskey, 2000; Timperley et.al. 2007). According to Koster et al. (2008) and Ben-Peretz et al. (2010), teacher professional development constituted of inexplicit ways of learning and to encourage one's personal competences. This is supported by (Wang and Paine, 2003; Hu, 2005; Paine & Han, 2010) that include school-based

teaching research group, teaching contest and public lesson as part of teacher professional development.

The continuity of teacher professional development is beneficial in improving school standards, enhancing the quality of teacher and improving student learning (Yates, 2007; Day, 1999; Verloop, 2003; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). However, teacher professional development initiatives should be based on persistence improvement, motivation, cooperation and foundation of professional learning cultures of schools to be successful (Fullan, 2011; Quinn & Fullan, 2016; William, 2016). As knowledge worker, teachers have the strong will to achieve their own goals in career development and to be recognized by professional compeers (Cao, 2002).

Job Autonomy

The primer factors that differentiate a knowledge worker with regular workers are their need to have job autonomy (Pyoria, 2005; Davenport, 2005; Mladkoya, 2011). Knowledge worker demanded for higher job autonomy as they preferred to be in charges of more acknowledgeable piece of work and ought to perform various tasks than regular worker (Mikulic & Hernaus, 2014). Teacher as knowledge worker need job autonomy to carry out their teaching and other duties diligently such as applying their own methods of teaching. Teacher autonomy is defined as teacher ability to employ in self-directed teaching and capacity to take charge of their own teaching include autonomous action, decision-making and vital contemplation (Gavriliuk, 2010). Employee with job autonomy resulted in great efficiently of work, intrinsic motivation and creating a conducive working environment (Langfred and Move, 2004; Kroth & Puets, 2011; Sisodia & Das, 2013). On the other hand, Lamb (2008) suggest that exemption to teach in their own way and improve their teaching through intellectual thinking and research are the expression of autonomy.

Previous studies also found that job satisfaction is positively related to job autonomy (De Carlo & Agarwal, 1999; Nguyen et.al., 2003; Thomas et. al., 2004; Liu et.al., 2005). For examples, a study by Houston et.al. (2006) found that academicians were fairly satisfied with immunity to apply their own methods of work and have a diversity of task. Teacher with great degree of autonomy demonstrated higher job satisfaction on their work (Serow et.al., 1992; Perie & Baker, 1997; Duffy & Richard, 2006).

Job Security

Currently, employees want to keep their job as long as they wish. According to Tower Watson (2010), due to economic crisis nowadays, Malaysian employees rate job security as their top priority. Thus, it has become one of the essential components among employee preference list (KPMG, 2010; Schappel, 2012). Job security is defined as the assurance of employee in their job continuity with probability of keeping his/her job (James, 2012; Adebayo & Lucky, 2012). It is concern with the opportunities of employees to keep their position instead of unemployed and the employee sense of secure from being dismissed from their current job (Simon, 2011; Esuh, Mohd & Hamzah, 2013).

Different profession and employment have different level of job security. Teacher can be categorized as one of the knowledge workers in Malaysia with high job security. They have less probability of being dismissed from current employment because of their indefinite contract with the government. Government, education, law enforcement and health care offer high job security while private sectors have low job security (Adebayo & Lucky, 2012). A study by University of Michigan's Centre for the Centre for Education of Women (2010) found that teacher need greater job security to assist them in balancing work and life and free from stress. Another study on the level of job satisfaction among teacher in public secondary schools in Tanzania also revealed that teacher was satisfied to work in public school due to high job security, permanent assurance on position and pension grant (Ombeni, 2016).

Monetary Incentives

Monetary incentives defined as certain amount of money compensated to an employee for their job (Heathfield, 2012). Salary or monetary reward are used as motivation strategies to improve job performance, employee commitment and satisfaction (Taylor, 1991; Akintoye, 2000; Tella et.al., 2007). The Ministry of Education Malaysia already established their allowance and incentives plan for teachers in primary and secondary school in Malaysia. The allowance and incentives subjected to teacher are housing allowance, entertainment, house and car loan, cost of living and public service allowance (Ministry of Education, 2010). Teachers as one of public servant are proclaims to these allowances.

Bohlander et al. (2001) emphasized that compensation incentives are the crucial element in motivating teacher and need to become the focal point of educational administrator. As reported by Millan, et al. (2011), higher salary will increase employee job satisfaction. Another study by Noordin & Jusoff (2009) also found that monetary compensation is one of the motivational antecedent of teacher satisfaction. If the employee is not being paid enough with the job done, a sense of dissatisfaction will eventually develop.

Reward and Recognition

Reward is the economic welfares that is being provided to employee, exemplified by promotion, spoken recognition and obligation while recognition is the key in ensuring employee engagement (Deperi, Tortia & Capita, 2010; Sun, 2013). Recognition for teacher should be publicly known and resulted in monetary gains for their achievement in academic and research (Rao, 2016). One of the highest reward and recognition for teachers in Malaysia is the Excellence Teacher Award. It is one of the schemes that arouse teaching standards in Malaysia, increase teacher wages and improve standard of living aside from boosting their morale, motivation and satisfaction (Ismail, 2017). The Excellence Teacher Award is to reward teachers who became expert in their subject, exemplified other to follow the trails by improve their quality of teaching, improve school standards and increase promotional opportunities to teacher (Hamzah et al., 2008).

Working Environment

Working environment of an educational institution such as school is an optimal environment for teacher well-being associated with teacher productivity, input and happiness (Timms, 2013). Thus, school administrators need to play their part in promoting a conducive environment that resulted to the increase of teacher engagement (Schaufeli, 2004). Another study added that support of administrator in dealing with problematic students, trust between teachers and administrator and having good balance of work and personal life are practice of fair routine within working environment (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Maslach & Leiter, 2008; Mauborgne & Kim, 2005; Brough et al., 2009). Muhammad, Asad, Usama & Affan (2016) further added that teacher should be provided with dynamic environment to

enhance their skills, competence, knowledge and boost their confidence. It is compliance with a study that stated teacher perception on their working environment such as nature of students, class size and school facilities are dominating their job satisfaction (Ma & Macmillan, 1999; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995; Perie et al., 1997; Dinham & Scott, 1998, 2000; Collie et al., 2012).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction can be defined as a multidimensional concept that have employee's perspective, behaviours, emotion and belief about their job (Lu et al., 2004; Spector, 1997; Locke, 1983; Barriball & Coomber, 2006; Pillay, 2009). It is referred to the positive and negative feelings that individuals have toward their job and work, resulted from their job experience (Judge & Kammeyer-Muller, 2012; Judge & Robbins, 2013). Numerous factors that cause job satisfaction is autonomy, recognition, working environment, job security, organizational climate and support (Lok & Crawford, 2006; Mosadegh & Yarmohammadian, 2006; Schyns et al., 2009).

There are number of studies suggest that intrinsic motivation have more impact on job satisfaction than extrinsic factors. For examples a study by Wei-Cheng, Ellsworth & Hawley (2008) highlighted that teacher are more motivated by intrinsic factors such as professional development and training than extrinsic factors such as pay. Other studies also showed that teachers are clearly motivated by intrinsic factors and influence more on job satisfaction compared to extrinsic (Herzberg et.al., 1959; Sergiovanni, 1967; Kaufman, 1984; Barkdoll, 1991; Saad et.al., 1992; Dilworth, 1991 and Ruhl-Smith et.al., 1993). Even there is numerous studies suggested that teachers are more motivated by intrinsic motivation, but some studies emphasized that the combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is the best motivation for teacher job satisfaction (Bein et.al., 1990; Wu & Short, 1996; Philips & Dvorak, 2001).

REVIEW

Based on previous study, there are seven variables that being analysed and reviews for this paper which is professional development, job autonomy, job security, reward and recognition, monetary incentives,

working environment and job satisfaction. Most of the previous study focussed on job satisfaction and their connection with monetary incentives and working environment. A previous study highlighted the importance of teacher professional development in improving working environment by raising school standard, improve quality of teacher and student learning (Yates, 2007; Day, 1999; Verloop, 2003; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Another study discussed on teacher with high-degree of job autonomy demonstrated higher satisfaction on their work (Serow et.al., 1992; Perie & Baker, 1997 and Duffy & Richard, 2006).

Other than that high level of job security, assurance on permanent position and monetary incentives such as pension grant are the factors that lead to teacher job satisfaction in public school (Ombeni, William, Msuya, 2016). It is supported by another study that monetary incentives can be used to motivate employee in improving their job performance, commitment and satisfaction (Taylor, 1991; Akintoye, 2000; Tella et.al., 2007). One of the latest study conducted in Malaysia are focussing on The Excellent Teachers Award scheme. This scheme improved teacher professional development, increase salary, public recognition and boost their motivation and satisfaction (Ismail, 2017). Lok & Crawford (2006) Mosadegh & Yarmohammadian, (2006) and Schyns et.al. (2009) listed numerous factors that lead to job satisfaction as job autonomy, job security, recognition and working environment. Teacher perception on working environment are also found to be highly influencing their job satisfaction (Ma & Macmillan, 1999; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995; Perie et al., 1997; Dinham & Scott, 2000 ;Collie et al., 2012).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, teacher are knowledge workers and the vital element in education systems. Highly-motivated teachers will not only give positive impact to their student but also to the school, administrator, ministry and public generally. Identifying the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that motivated teachers toward job satisfaction are crucial. The intrinsic and extrinsic motivation exemplified by professional development, job autonomy, job security, monetary incentives, reward and recognition and working environment are factors that can motivate teachers as knowledge workers toward achieving job satisfaction.

These factors are intended to effectively motivated teachers toward their job satisfaction and with the findings, the authorities can reinforce or change the present administration policies and practice by giving more opportunities and support for teacher professional development. This study can furnish new insight into ameliorating connections to improve educational system. School administrator should have some understanding on what are the factors that affect teacher job satisfaction and how satisfaction impact their work lives. The findings of this study should provide policy makers and educators with a cornerstone in retaining satisfied teachers and motivating teacher with low job satisfaction.

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