

## Teachers' Perception of the Role of School Administrators in Motivating High School Teachers

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### Abstract

*This study investigates the perceptions of high school teachers on the role of school administrators in motivating them. The study used survey method and distributed questionnaires to teachers of ten aided high schools in Malappuram Educational District of Kerala, India, using quota sampling technique. Descriptive statistics, independent sample t-test, ANOVA, correlation, and multiple regression analysis were performed to analyse the data. The findings demonstrate that while the level of motivation received by teachers was low, their job satisfaction was found to be moderate. Only two age groups differed in their job satisfaction level while there were no significant differences found among gender and academic qualifications. The findings also revealed a significant relationship between job satisfaction of the teachers and their perceived level of motivation received from the authority. Instructional field was the largest contributor to teachers' job satisfaction followed by the welfare and career progression aspects. These findings imply that the District level school administrators, as well as the state Ministry of Education should cultivate proper awareness among the school administrators about their role in motivating their teachers being cognizant of at least the three dimensions on which this study focused.*

**Keywords:** teacher perception, school administrator, aided high school teacher, motivation

### 1. Introduction

Motivation is considered as one of the inevitable contributors of job satisfaction for the staff, by which any organization can be creative and productive in terms of its effectiveness. Motivation can be enhanced by many aspects of organizational life: organizational commitment, the behavioural aspects of people in an organization, their personal characteristics and how they perform their work. The performance of an individual relies upon the overall satisfaction he gets during his career (Worley, 2006). Motivation, similar to satisfaction, is strongly related to several areas of the academic life of an individual, such as teaching and learning process, critical thinking, workforce and organizational communication among the community, as members of the educational institutions would be more interested in giving whatever they ought to give during their career (Lam, 2011). Consequently, the number of research studies focusing on the teacher motivation is increasing (Schellenbach-Zell & Gräsel, 2010).

The nature of a person is a condition needed for the motives that would make him active at work. Regarding educational institutions, it is necessary for the students and academic staff to be motivated according to their needs during their career. This is because motivation beliefs, perceptions, values, interests, and actions overlap with each other

(Emily, 2011). Alam (2011) argued that certain factors greatly affect teacher motivation. He investigated whether the factors including; income status, importance in the society, self-confidence, and incentives and rewards on showing good results affect the motivation of teachers.

It is a matter of fact that many teachers are not satisfied with their career due to lack of motivation, which they expect from the school authority. There are increasing concerns that "teachers do not enjoy the prestige and respect they once did, and that this has led to more dissatisfaction with their careers" (Blatchford, Moriarty, Edmonds, & Martin, 2001, p. 34). Mnasfield, Wosnitza and Beltman (2012) conducted a conceptual study for developing a framework for teacher motivation. They found that graduating teachers have a variety of goals for their teaching careers. These goals consist of employment, providing support and effective learning environment for their students, proceeding to understand more about education, being happy, and satisfied with the work environment and developing self-confidence in the field of teaching profession (Mansfield, Wonitza, & Beltman, 2012). However, teachers are being de-motivated through many ways during their teaching career, as findings of a study conducted in Tanzania revealed. The researchers, Bennell and Mukyanuzi (2005) found disconcerting fact that teachers in the rural areas are not even respected by the public, compared to urban teachers. The teachers who were interviewed by the researchers perceived that the teaching profession is not a respected occupation any more. The reason for the teachers in the rural area of Tanzania being respected is that, as the authors opine, they are the only group who have a regular and stable income in those places. Yet, in some other places they are considered similar to children. Supervision from the administrators has certain connections with satisfaction which should be given through motivation (Shah et al., 2012). For achieving a better future in terms of the teacher motivation, Bennell and Mukyanuzi (2005) proposed making advancement in management procedure and practices. It has also been an unfavourable fact that teachers are found to be dissatisfied with their job, without any motivation from others in the organization (Bishey, 1996), implying that the time for revising the process of recruiting, selecting and retaining the teachers is required a cardinal revision (Crossman & Harris, 2006). This is an alarming issue prevalent in almost every country, especially in developing countries (Belle, 2007). In India, for instance, teacher motivation is a national issue (Ramachandran, Pal, Jain, Shekhar & Sharma, 2005) being both the politicians and school administrators have realised and admitted that teacher motivation is a serious problem.

The root of the problem related to lack of administrative responsibility and poor teacher motivation lies in adverse effects caused by the educational system itself. Therefore, bringing about a change to an education system and improving teacher motivation-both are to be resolved by continuous researches- are essential (Arumugaswami, 2012). The current educational system of India shows serious decline and the problem is compounded by the presence of political and communal issues that are prevalent in the country. Interference with schools and educational institutions is prevalent in India; it is a common practice that the dominant political party often appoints teachers, administrators, and officers who are close to party members. Sometimes, they even look into the caste and race of the candidate who is going to be in authority. (Ramachandran et al., 2005). There are teachers who do not get proper salary. This phenomenon leads to an issue of confidence, faith and trust of teachers towards school administrators and the educational system in India.

Yet, there is a lack of empirical research on the topic even though a variety of educational reformations have been initiated in the country. Moreover, although there are few studies on teacher motivation such as the ones conducted in the context of different districts in India like Kanyakumari, Madhurai, Thirunalveli (State of Tamilnadu; see Arumugaswami, 2012), Tonk (State of Rajasthan; see Ramachandran et al., 2005), to the researchers' best of understanding there is not a single study conducted in the aided high schools of the Malappuram Educational district (Kerala) concentrating on the role of the school administrators as motivators of teachers, as perceived by the teachers, which constitutes the focus of this present study.

As such, this study has particularly investigated (i) the extent to which the school administrators play their role as teachers' motivators in the areas of career progression, welfare and instructional related matters, as perceived by teachers, in the aided high schools of Malappuram Educational District, India; (ii) the current job satisfaction level of the teachers in these schools; (iii) the significant differences in the perceived level of motivation received by the teachers based on selected demographic variables (gender, age, and academic qualification); (iv) the relationship between teacher's job satisfaction and their perceptions on the received motivation from the school administrators; and (v) the predictive ability of the teachers' perceptions of the motivation received on their job satisfaction.

## 2. Methods

This study is an exploratory in nature, utilising specifically the quantitative research through a cross sectional survey as the method of data collection. It is designed to identify the level of teacher motivation given by the school administrators

in the educational district of Malappuram, India. The population of the study consisted of all aided high school teachers in Malappuram, India. The researchers selected 10 schools through purposive sampling procedure in order to get the data from within the accessible location. The recommended sample size for a population of 4300 teachers was 353 when calculated using the sample size calculator with 95% confidence level and a 5 % margin of error.

Therefore, from each of the sample schools, 30 to 40 teachers were randomly selected after getting the name list of the teachers and the questionnaire were distributed to them. A self-developed questionnaire was created based on literature review, which was subjected to experts' validation in both format and content before it was exposed to pilot testing to identify the reliability indexes of the instruments. Descriptive statistics percentage, correlation, independent sample t-test, multiple regression, and one-way ANOVA were used to analyse the data collected.

### 3. Results

The units of analysis revealed that the majority of respondents (n = 111, 53.9 %) were female teachers, while only 95 (46.1%) male teachers participated in the study. The respondents were then categorized into seven groups based on the age level, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Age group of respondents

		Age of respondent							Total	
		20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50 and above		
Sex	Male	Count	4	16	15	22	15	14	9	95
		% of Total	1.9%	7.8%	7.3%	10.7%	7.3%	6.8%	4.4%	46.1%
	Female	Count	6	19	30	21	16	9	10	111
		% of Total	2.9%	9.2%	14.6%	10.2%	7.8%	4.4%	4.9%	53.9%
Total	Count	10	35	45	43	31	23	19	206	
	% of Total	4.9%	17.0%	21.8%	20.9%	15.0%	11.2%	9.2%	100.0%	

#### 3.1 Levels of Motivation Received as Perceived by the Teachers

The researchers have identified three areas i.e. career progression, welfare and instructional field as important in obtaining the accurate data concerning the teachers' perception on the administrators' motivation.

The item in the questionnaire, measuring the teachers' perception towards the motivation level in career progression, which states that the school administrators facilitate for the development of their teaching skills, got the highest mean score (M = 3.42, SD = 0.87) among all others. It is notable that the number of the respondents who agreed to this statement and who were neutral was same in terms of the number and the percentage as there were 83 teachers (40.3%) in both categories. It is also observed that the majority of the respondents came under the category of "neutral" except for this item and the sixth statement, which is *"the administrators encourage me to participate in all activities related to my career"*. Around 35% of the respondents (n=70) agreed that they were encouraged for taking part in the activities. The last item under this construct, which states that the administrators are open to give them extra training for their career progression, yielded that 66 of the respondents (33.5%) with the lowest mean score (M = 2.92, SD = 1.07) compared to two items discussed earlier, while 67 teachers (32.5%) neutrally their perceptions with the statement. The number of the respondents under the category of "strongly agree", "disagree", and "strongly disagree" dispersed with a small percentage.

In relation to the area of welfare, there were eleven items measuring their perception on motivation received. The majority of the respondents fell under the category of "neutral" for the items starting from the second until tenth. These items stated about provision of better work environment, promotion of good relationship with teachers and other staff, assistance in non-teaching activities, keeping warm relations with teachers' family, concern for teachers' gathering programmes, habit of informal conversation between teachers and administrators (to this statement, 40.0% of teachers responded neutrally with the lowest mean score of M = 2.90, SD = 1.04), calling with their first name, payment for overtime, and allowance of extra leave for emergency respectively. The remaining two items indicated that the majority of the teachers responded positively. With reference to the first item, which stated that the administrators often provide opportunities for the teachers to have a discussion about their salary and perks, 83 of them (40.3%) accounted for the highest mean score among all other items agreed, while more than 30% were undecided (N = 68, 33.0%). In relation to the statement about the teachers' feeling of safety, 69 of them (33.5%) agreed and 60 teachers (29.1 %) were not sure.

Concerning the perceived motivation level with regards to instructional related matters, unlike in the other two areas of motivation, from the 8 items which measured the perception, the majority of teachers responded positively to 7 items. The remaining items, which stated that *"the administrators update the latest technologies and encourage me to use them in my instructions"* 75 teachers (36.4%) were unsure about the statement and the mean score accounted for only ( $M = 3.29$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ). The first item accounted for the highest mean score ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = 0.92$ ) with 45.1% teachers ( $n = 93$ ) agreed that the administrators provide adequate infrastructure for the classrooms, while there was a negligible percentage of the respondents under the category of disagreement like in all other items. However, 32.5% of teachers ( $N=67$ ) were not sure about the issue.

Based on the overall mean score of the three aspects, namely the career progression ( $M = 3.18$ ,  $SD= 0.78$ ), teachers' welfare ( $M = 3.14$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ), and instructional related matters ( $M = 3.29$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ), it is observed that the level of motivation received by the teachers in these three areas is low. The results clearly indicate that the administrators should be concerned about giving proper motivation to the teachers, particularly in the abovementioned three areas. Table 2 depicts the details.

**Table 2.** Level of teachers' motivation

Aspect of motivation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Career progression	3.1831	.79368
Welfare	3.1443	.74599
Instructional field	3.2961	.74725

### 3.2 Teachers' Job Satisfaction Level

Majority of the teachers (49.0%) strongly agreed to the statement indicating their general satisfaction ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ), revealing that they were satisfied with their career while more than a quarter of the respondents ( $n = 66$ , 32%) showed their agreement toward the statement. The item with the lowest mean score was the one which measured the teachers' satisfaction level based on the orientation they got from their administrators for a better performance ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ). While 92 teachers ( $n = 92$ , 44.7%) were positive toward the statement, more than a quarter's response was neither agree nor disagree ( $n = 55$ , 26.7%). It is notable that concerning the job satisfaction there is only a negligible percentage of the respondents who have disagreed with all of the items as the majority fell under the category of "agree".

Based on the overall mean score of 3.64 ( $SD = 0.79$ ), it is observed that the level of teachers' job satisfaction is moderate. The result indicates that the role of the administrators in motivating teachers by giving them an environment of satisfaction in their job field should be increased and given more priority.

### 3.3 Differences in Teachers' Job Satisfaction Based on Gender, Age, and Academic Qualifications

#### 3.3.1 Gender

Gender invariance was then investigated. The result shows that there was no statistical difference in teachers' job satisfaction for males ( $M= 3.61$ ,  $SD= 0.87$ ) and females ( $M= 3.65$ ,  $SD= 0.70$ );  $t= -0.36$ ,  $p= 0.71$ . Table 3 depicts the details.

**Table 3.** Differences among gender in job satisfaction

Gender	n	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Male	95	3.61	0.87	-0.37	180.17	0.71
Female	111	3.65	0.70			0.70

Significant difference at .05

#### 3.3.2 Age

A one-way ANOVA was used to examine the statistical differences in teachers' job satisfaction based on their age levels. The respondents were divided into 7 groups according to the age (Group 1: 20-24, Group 2: 25-29, Group 3: 30-34, Group 4: 35-39, Group 5: 40-44, Group 6: 45-49 and Group 7: 50 and above). The results showed that the difference in

job satisfaction existed between two age groups:  $F(6, 199) = 2.6, p = 0.01$ . Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the groups was quite small. The effect size calculated using  $\eta^2$  squared, was 0.07. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the Group 1 ( $M = 4.24, SD = 0.57$ ) was significantly different from Group 6 ( $M = 3.29, SD = 0.81$ ). The mean scores for Group 2 ( $M = 3.66, SD = 0.76$ ), Group 3 ( $M = 3.79, SD = 0.67$ ), Group 4 ( $M = 3.68, SD = 0.78$ ), Group 5 ( $M = 3.50, SD = 0.76$ ), and Group 7 ( $M = 3.40, SD = 0.96$ ) indicate that there was no significant difference among these age groups of teachers in terms of their job satisfaction.

### 3.3.3 Academic qualifications

A one-way ANOVA was used to determine the existence of statistical differences in job satisfaction among the teachers based on their academic qualifications. The teachers were divided into 3 groups according to their academic qualifications (Group 1: Diploma, Group 2: Degree and Group 3: Masters). The result indicated that there was no significant difference among either group with regards to their job satisfaction;  $F(2, 203) = 1.8, p = 0.16$ , as it was explicit from the mean scores for each group (Group 1:  $M = 3.94, SD = 0.56$ , Group 2:  $M = 3.67, SD = 0.77$ , and Group 3:  $M = 3.50, SD = 0.81$ ). The result is shown in Table 4 as follows:

**Table 4.** Analysis of variance for academic qualifications

	Job satisfaction				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.246	2	1.123	1.831	.163
Within Groups	124.474	203	.613		
Total	126.720	205			

## 4. Relationship between Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Their Perceived Level of Motivation Received

Concerning the fourth research question, which asked if there is a significant relationship between teacher's job satisfaction and their perception on the motivation received from the school administrators, it was observed that all the relationships between aspects of motivation and job satisfaction were statistically significant. In addition, the relationships were observed to be strong as all the correlation coefficients were larger than 0.5.

### 4.1 Job Satisfaction as a Function of Perceived Motivation Level Received

For the research question about the predictive ability of the teachers' perception on the motivation received on their job satisfaction, the analysis disclosed the following results: The model summary shows how much of the variance in dependent variable (job satisfaction) is explained by the independent variables (levels of motivation received relating to career progression, welfare, and instructional field). That is to say, 52.5% of the variation in the teachers' job satisfaction was explained by career progression, welfare and instructional field ( $R^2 = .525$ , the adjusted  $R^2 = .518$ ). Table 4 provides details.

**Table 4.** Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.724	.525	.518	.54606

The results showed that the explanation and prediction of the three aspects of the motivation, which are career progression, welfare and instructional field, toward the job satisfaction of the respondents was statistically significant ( $p = .001$ , as this means  $p < .005$ ) as depicted in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Career progression, welfare and instructional field with job satisfaction

Model	ANOVA				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	66.486	3	22.162	74.323	.000
Residual	60.233	202	.298		
Total	126.720	205			

Among the three aspects of motivation the instructional field was the largest contributor for the prediction of job satisfaction ( $\beta = .419$ ) and it was statistically significant ( $p = .001$ ). The contribution of the welfare aspect to the prediction of their job satisfaction was lower than that of the instructional field ( $\beta = .263$ ) and it was statistically significant ( $p = .001$ ). However, the career progression aspect contributed very little to the prediction of teachers' job satisfaction and it was observed to be the lowest contributor among all ( $\beta = 1.26$ ) and was not statistically significant ( $p = .063$ ).

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study investigated the perception of teachers on the role of school administrators in motivating them. Teachers' perception on motivation-related to their career progression- received from their administrators was found to be moderate. This result is concurrent with the findings of Bennell and Mukyanuzi (2005) and Ramachandran et al. (2005) which also reached the conclusion that teacher motivation with reference to administrative assistance was observed to be moderate. Yet, based on the total number of the respondents it is a small percentage. This study disclosed that the initial response of the teachers as they are satisfied with their career were contradictory to what they found by an in-depth enquiry (Ramachandran et al., 2005).

Motivation received by the teachers in the area of their welfare was also found to be moderate. The low response rate for the items under this construct insinuates that the responses might affect their future career as well as the relationship with their administrators. Nonetheless, concerning the opportunities given by the administrators to discuss on the salary-related matters, most of the teachers responded positively. This shows that the administrators are ready to respond to the matters related to the welfare of the teachers despite of their own limitations. According to Faith and Kenneth (2012), it is a mark of democratic leadership style of the principals if they seek information about their teachers' welfare (Faith and Kenneth, 2012) as they have measured this type of principal leadership with items including welfare aspects. However, the moderation in this aspect brings the researchers to a conclusion that the impersonal bureaucracy (as articulated by Crossman & Harris, 2006 and Blatchford et al., 2001) in the schools pertaining to the teachers and administrators affect the teachers' satisfaction level. Moreover, the bureaucracy in the schools creates some unnecessary generation gaps between the aforementioned two aspects particularly.

The findings concerning the level of motivation received by the respondents in the area of their instructional related matters were interesting. Most of the teachers responded to most of the items positively. This shows that despite all other inconveniences that were to be tolerated, teachers were satisfied with what they currently have in their schools and they were ready to recognize them as a factor of motivation given by the administrators.

However, by looking at these three aspects, the study found that the motivation from the school administrators is low. It is inevitable for the authority to realize their role as administrators and give attention to at least these three areas as they affect directly the teachers' improvement in many aspects. The administrators have a responsibility of motivating the teachers from various dimensions among which these three areas deserve a significant consideration.

With regards to the current job satisfaction level of the teachers, it was found that more than half of the respondents were generally satisfied with their job as teachers, which is congruent with the findings of the study conducted by Ramachandran et al. (2005) which reached similar conclusions. However, the level of motivation they received from the school administrators with special reference to their job aspect is moderate which implies that the administrators have to focus more on motivational issues. The level of job satisfaction by all means influences the performance of the employees and undoubtedly, the case of the teachers is not different from this fact (Rones, 2011).

In relation to the difference in teachers' job satisfaction based on their gender, age, and academic qualifications, the study found that on the one hand, there were differences looking at certain age groups while on the other hand there were no significant differences among any other variables. That is to say, the differences were to be shown among the age group of 20-24 and 45-49 (groups 1 and 6 respectively), which was similar to some previous findings (Ramachandran et al., 2005; Bennell & Makyauzi, 2005; Gupta & Gehlawat, 2013). The findings related to gender and academic qualifications were consistent with the findings of Ramachandran et al. (2005) and Rones (2010), and contradictory to that of Crossman and Harris (2006), Bennell and Makyauzi (2005), Arumugasami (2012), Gupta and

Gehlawat (2013), which concluded that there were insignificant statistical differences in their job satisfaction. This implies that the motivation aspect relates to all types of teachers regardless of their gender, age and academic qualifications.

As for the relationship between the variables, each one of the career progression, welfare, and instructional related matters, each were significantly correlated with the job satisfaction of the teachers being consistent with some previous researches (Bishay, 1996; Davis & Wilson, 2000; Shah et al., 2012). The strongest correlation among these aspects was that of instructional related matters ( $r = .680$ ) followed by welfare ( $r = .643$ ) and career progression ( $r = .555$ ), which meant that an increase contributed by the school administrators in any of these three dimensions would significantly influence the job satisfaction level of the teachers.

Concerning the predictive ability of the teachers' perceptions of the motivation received on their job satisfaction, it was revealed that 52.5% of the variation in teachers' job satisfaction was explained by the three dimensions of motivation namely, career progression of the teachers followed by their welfare and instructional related matters ( $R^2 = .525$ , the adjusted  $R^2 = .518$ ). It is worth mentioning that there was another 47.8% of the variation in teachers' job satisfaction which has not been taken by the current researchers. Some of the previous studies (for instance, Shah et al., 2012; Worley, 2006) have found other variables such as reward and recognition, supervision, responsibility, achievement and work itself as the predictors of job satisfaction.

Succinctly, the results showed that lack of certain motivational dimensions significantly affects the career advancement of teachers and consequently leads to the unavailability of qualified staff for the schools in the country. By analysing three motivational aspects, namely the career progression, welfare and the instruction-related matters, the study explored the perceptions of the teachers on the level of motivation they received from their administrators. Based on the finding, it could be argued that the school administrators need to focus on immediate actions pertaining to increasing the motivation levels they give to the school teachers.

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