Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies
Vol. 5, No. 12, pp. 838-850, Dec 2013 (ISSN: 2220-6140)

Teacher job satisfaction and learner performance in South Africa

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of the dismal performance of a number of South African high Schools in recent years, this study investigates the relationship between poor performance of learners and teacher motivation in selected high schools in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. Adopting an exploratory approach, a random sample of 279 educators was drawn from the database of the poorly performing high schools as provided by the Western Cape Department of Education. Using closed and open-ended questions, a survey questionnaire was utilized to collect data. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 21) was utilised to analyse the data. A number of descriptive statistical tests including Chi Square, and Spearman's correlation were conducted on the data. The results suggest that highly motivated educators experience job satisfaction; and also perform better than their poorly motivated counterparts. In terms of motivation, the results further suggest that a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic factors tend to exert influence on the educators motivation. For instance, working conditions, job security, and perceived growth opportunities in order of importance were noted to be contributing factors. As far as the obstacles that these educators encounter, lack of resources, work over load and lack of recognition were noted in order of severity. A positive relationship between the factors that influence an educators' motivation and the level of obstacles encountered was noted. The implication is that, notwithstanding the rankings of the two sets of factors, no factor should be addressed in isolation.

Keywords: *teacher job satisfaction, learner performance, teacher motivation, South Africa*

1. Introduction and background

A well-oiled education system is important for a number of reasons including human development and the maintenance of socially responsive economic and political systems (Modisaotsile, 2012). This hints that an educated population remains the fundamental platform for meeting most of the other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With the acknowledgement that the youths of today are the ultimate leaders of tomorrow, most governments make significant efforts to invest in their education. It is disheartening to learn that such efforts do not always yield the intended results. The South African education system is in crisis. This is attested to by the FW de Klerk Foundation (2012) and Modisaotsile (2012), who affirm that there are many indications of this. These, according to Modisaotsile, are manifested in high enrolment rates and increasingly poor grade 12 output each year. It is therefore imperative that there should be an elevated focus on the quality of education, Modisaotsile adds. An improved focus on the quality of education will positively impact the socioeconomic development of South Africa. In fact, the FW de Klerk Foundation (2012) believes that poor education is to blame for most of South Africa's problems, including unemployment, poverty and inequality. According to the FW de Klerk Foundation, South Africa's education system was ranked 133rd out of 142 countries in the world by the World Economic Forum. The forum pointed out that one of the contributing factors to the system's failure was the poor quality of teachers. Some other reports point in the direction of low morale of educators (Mentz, 2007; Mji & Makgato, 2006; Naidoo et al., 2013). UNICEF (2010:12) specifically implicated identifies trained, experienced and motivated teachers amongst other factors, as critical resource for quality education.

Studies have shown that there may be a relationship between learners' academic performance and educators' motivation. In particular, poor pass rates amongst designated groups in South African high schools and the contribution of educators' motivation have come under the spotlight. In 2012, the Western Cape Department of Education announced that 23 public schools would be closed down due to the woeful performance of their

learners. There may be more than one factor that brought about that. For instance, Strydom et al. (2012) pointed in the direction of indiscipline amongst learners, parent/learner conflict, unavailability of learning materials, large and or overcrowded classes and many more other factors. However, this study is interested in the possible contribution of educators' level of motivation. Teacher motivation is defined within the context of this study as the extent to which a teacher perceives intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics. It is therefore necessary to ascertain what factors or conditions influence the motivation of educators. This study is exploratory and descriptive in nature and attempts to identify and describe these factors. Learner poor performance is not unique to South Africa. In fact, many developed countries have had to introduce policies and programs to deal with this problem. For instance, given the decline in learner performance, many countries such as the US and Israel instituted what they called incentive-based or market-driven educational reforms (Eberts et al., 2002) and Performance-related incentive pay (Lavy, 2004) to improve school quality. Even before then, merit pay plans had been implemented in many places and the concept had been around for many years. In Israel, there was a remarkable improvement in students pass rates whereas in the US, there was surprisingly little evidence of its effectiveness in raising student achievement. It must be noted however that in Israel, the improvements appeared to have been derived from changes in teaching methods, after-school teaching, and increased responsiveness to students' needs. One can make the argument here that this remarkable improvement emerged as a result of performance-related pay; suggesting that teachers felt motivated. It must therefore be noted that pay has shown direct association with job satisfaction in several studies (for instance De Witte, 2005; Castro & Martins, 2010).

This study specifically asks: Is there a connection between poor performance of learners' and teacher motivation? In effect, the study investigates the extent to which high school teacher job satisfaction is a factor in a learner's performance? This question has relevance especially considering Gordon et al. (2006) counsel regarding effective teacher performance. Because there is no consensus on the best way to evaluate teacher performance (teacher performance is often measured using principal/parent/learner evaluations, classroom observations, student outcomes and grades and many more) perhaps a much value-added approach will include tenure (guaranteeing retention), pay/bonus pay and promotion. Therefore examining the extent to which teacher job satisfaction has an effect on learner performance has significance. In fact, Harris and Sass (2010) are of the opinion that if teachers are expected to raise student test scores, their (teachers') ability to raise those scores should be considered very important. That ability can be interpreted to connote intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. An empirical determination of the significance of an educators' motivation and learner performance is therefore justified. In South Africa, the term educator is more preferred to the term teacher. In this paper we have used both terms to refer to someone who teaches in primary and or high school.

2. Literature Review

With regard to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, the work of Herzberg et al. (1967) is renowned for capturing the salient elements. These include the work itself, recognition, advancement, responsibility, and achievement. Others are co-worker relations, supervision, company policies, and working conditions. All of these elements have been associated with teacher motivation in several studies. Aside from Herzberg et al, many other researchers have come up with models for analyzing job satisfaction. The ones that have received the most interrogation are Maslow (1954), Locke's (1969); Smith et al. (1969), and Hackman and Oldham's Job Descriptive Index (1974). These models, organisational behaviour experts argue, can be utilised to determine the extent of job satisfaction enjoyed by a given employee. In other words, if a given employee positives perceives any or all of the above mentioned facets, the employee can be said to experience job satisfaction. For instance with the job itself, an employee may be happy with a job that has a good degree of challenge, autonomy and task variety. Subsequently, if the job holds these 'virtues', it could also hold opportunities for the job holder to grow on the job, as well as access promotional opportunities. Researchers have also found a direct link between job satisfaction and income. It is safe to say therefore that what determines job satisfaction varies. Bennell (2004) undertook a study on teacher motivation and incentives in low-income developing countries (LICs) in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. With regard to the material and psychological needs of teachers, Bennell's study found, among others, that (1) teacher job satisfaction improves when they are given wider responsibilities other than just class teaching. These other

responsibilities can include supervision, professional development, and community relations; (2) to enhance the status and performance of teachers will also require the upgrading of their qualifications; (3) professional growth of a teacher is encouraged when they work collegially, and fourthly; effective de-centralization over staffing in the education sector was probably the most effective way of ensuring a more transparent, equitable and efficient deployment of teachers. George et al. (2008) reported significantly high levels of dissatisfaction among teachers pertaining to factors related to their workplace. They found that variables of school resources and rank played an important role in determining teacher job satisfaction in Namibia, thus explaining the high levels of dissatisfaction with intrinsic factors of their work. They also found that the inability to understand the dynamics in the learner's multicultural setting could have contributed to teacher dissatisfaction.

A study in Zimbabwe revealed a mix of results with regard to teacher job satisfaction. Significantly, poor teacher motivation was rife in rural areas because of the unattractiveness of living and working in rural areas; teachers were more likely to resist deployment to the rural schools. It can be argued therefore that this kind situation would have adverse ramifications on the performance of rural school teachers (Takupiwa et al., 2013). In essence, quality of teaching and learning in these rural areas is compromised (Bhorat & Oosthuizen, 2006), which can impact pass rate. In South Africa, Naidoo et al. (2013) study of teacher dissatisfiers in a designated province revealed that some of the reasons for teacher job dissatisfaction included job demands (overloads), a lack of growth opportunities, job insecurity and a lack of control. Mji and Makgato (2006) found teacher motivation to have caused high school learners' poor performance. This means that desirable teacher qualities were lacking. Desirable teacher qualities are linked to good subject knowledge, teaching skills and classroom management, relationships with learners, dedication, accessibility, and hard work (South African Department of Education, 2000). Since these seem to be part of the desired outcome for teachers, in their absence, teachers are likely to experience dissatisfaction. Also in South Africa, Peltzer et al (2009) reported that hypertension, stomach ulcer and other stress-related diseases were some of the negative effects of teacher dissatisfaction. In that study, association was made between these negative effects and high levels of teacher attrition and absenteeism. Armstrong (2004), cited in Naidoo et al. (2013) also reported previous studies that linked teacher stress to learner indiscipline, learner population, retrenchment and a host of other factors. In fact, George et al. (2008) cited Mwamwenda (1995) who found that as a result of job dissatisfaction, schools in Namibia experienced the following: frequent teacher absenteeism from school, aggressive behavior towards colleagues and learners, psychological withdrawal from work, burn-out, and early exits.

Pressure to improve learners' performance could also be a significant source of dissatisfaction (Maforah and Schulze, 2012). Improving learner performance can therefore be a function of proper training and development of the teacher. Mji and Makgato (2006) found a correlation between proper training of teachers and learner performance. A teacher's poor performance can therefore erode his self-efficacy. Other factors have also been identified in teacher motivation studies. Maforah and Schulze indicated that interpersonal relationships correlated significantly with job satisfaction, while a major source of dissatisfaction for teachers was the policies and practices of the Department of Basic Education (DBE). The researchers hinted that South African teachers were largely ignored by government when policies are formulated. This is an important point especially when one considers the result of previous studies which suggest that employees enjoy a sense of recognition and self-worth when they are involved in the decision making processes of their organizations. In other words, feeling a sense of belonging can extend ones commitment to ones job and organisation. While obtaining the support of colleagues at work is essential to job satisfaction, having the support and co-operation of supervisors and or management may present an even equal or higher positive impact on job satisfaction.

Consequences of poorly satisfied teachers: Research has shown that when employees are satisfied, organizations experience high productivity; low absenteeism and turnover; less job stress and burnout; and a stronger tendency to perform. The opposite is that dissatisfied employees exhibit behaviors that are incongruent with the objectives of the organizations they work for. In the case of teachers, schools may face poor pass rates because teachers may lack the drive to prepare lesson notes and even present themselves with enthusiasm for classes. Beyond the above, dissatisfied teachers may experience a host of psychological

(Moolla, 2005) and physiological consequences (Newstrom & Davies, 2002). Physiologically, a teacher might suffer stress-related problems such as fatigue, muscle tension and weight loss (Grobler et al., 2006). Kreps and Kunimoto (1994:20) insist that stress can seriously threaten the human body's immune system and therefore increase vulnerability to psychological and physical stress. These can cause the teacher to miss more days of work; dread going to work or even consider giving up his job. Psychologically, a teacher may display attitudes of cynicism, resentfulness, apathy or anxiety (Grobler et al., 2006). Teachers may also develop low motivation and poor self-esteem (Appleton et al., 1998). Generally teacher dissatisfaction will not augur well for a nation. If one of the outcomes of teacher dissatisfaction is poor pass rates, then future economic development of the nation is threatened.

3. Methodology

This is an empirical study as it uses primary data collection to shed light into areas of enquiry. Bless and Achola (1996) explain empirical study as an attempt to provide an accurate account of the characteristic of a particular phenomenon, situation, community or person. For reasons explained in the background section of this paper, this study is both exploratory and descriptive. An exploratory study helps to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or individual (Blaikie, 2003) where there is lack of available information on such area of interest (De Vos et al., 2011). Through the description of the facts, qualities or characteristics of the population (Kruger, 2000) this study is empirical in design. Hence, the researchers attempt to describe the research problem, events or areas of interest as factually and accurately as possible.

Sample: The target population for this study was educators in schools under the jurisdiction of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). For sample selection and representativeness, a random sampling method was used. Educators from secondary schools were randomly sampled. Random sampling was possible because the WCED gave permission for the study and also had the list of schools in the jurisdiction covered in this study.

Instrument for data collection: A questionnaire was designed to identify and describe factors and conditions that are associated with educators' motivation. The questionnaire contained closed-ended, Likert scaled and open-ended questions. Apart from demographic data, there were two major sets of questions in the questionnaire. One section focused on job characteristics, which are important for determining educators' motivational level at work. The other section focused on obstacles that these educators experience in the process of meeting their goals of teaching and learning. The questionnaires were administered to 279 educators that were randomly selected. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 21) was used to analyse the data and to generate descriptive statistics (central tendencies and ranking) as well as statistics that compare groups (Chi tests) and explore relationships among variables (Spearman's correlations) (Field, 2013).

4. Results and Discussion

The following results consist of demographic representation of the sample, some descriptive statistics about some selected variable, test of statistical significant differences among groups (gender, year of experience and level of teaching) and relationship testing (Spearman's correlation). To test for reliability of the collected data, Cronbach's Alpha was computed for the entire data sets and a coefficient of 0.83 emanated. The section on motivation (with 9 questions) returned a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.79 while the section on obstacles (with 12 questions) was 0.85. According to Chen et al (2006), all these coefficients indicate acceptable level of reliability. Discussions based on respective aspects of the results presented are included in this section of the paper for ease of read and coherence.

Demographic information: Table 1 below is a summary of the demographic formation of the target population. The female educators are twice the male educators in numbers. There are enough educators, more than 70 % within the range of 36 years of age and 55 years, to replace those that are approaching the retirement age of 65 years. However the younger educators constitute only 23 %. This may be an indication of shortage of fresh professionals opting to be educators. This shortage of teachers may eventually lead to

work overload for available and "not-so-young" educators. This possibility is confirmed from responses to the open-ended question. This is further expounded in the section on responses to open-ended questions. Results from the years of experience in teaching indicate that approximately 13 % of the respondents have more than 20 years of experience in the profession. Majority of educators are still rather new in the teaching profession. Inadequate teaching experience may have influence on their performance and motivation. To this effect, groups within gender, age and years of experience were tested using Chi test. Results are presented in a section below. Majority of the educators are involved with senior high school learners. Less than 10 % of the educators teach both junior and high school learners.

Table 1: Demographic data of respondents

Variables	Values	Counts	%
Gender	Male	101	36.2
	Female	178	63.8
Age	Between 23 and 35	64	22.9
	Between 36 and 45	136	48.7
	Between 46 and 55	65	23.3
	Between 56 and 65	14	5.0
Experience	0-5 years	46	16.5
	6-10 years	66	23.7
	11-15 years	74	26.5
	16-20 years	58	20.8
	21 years and above	35	12.5
Teaching level	Junior high	25	9.0
	Senior high	233	83.5
	Both	21	7.5

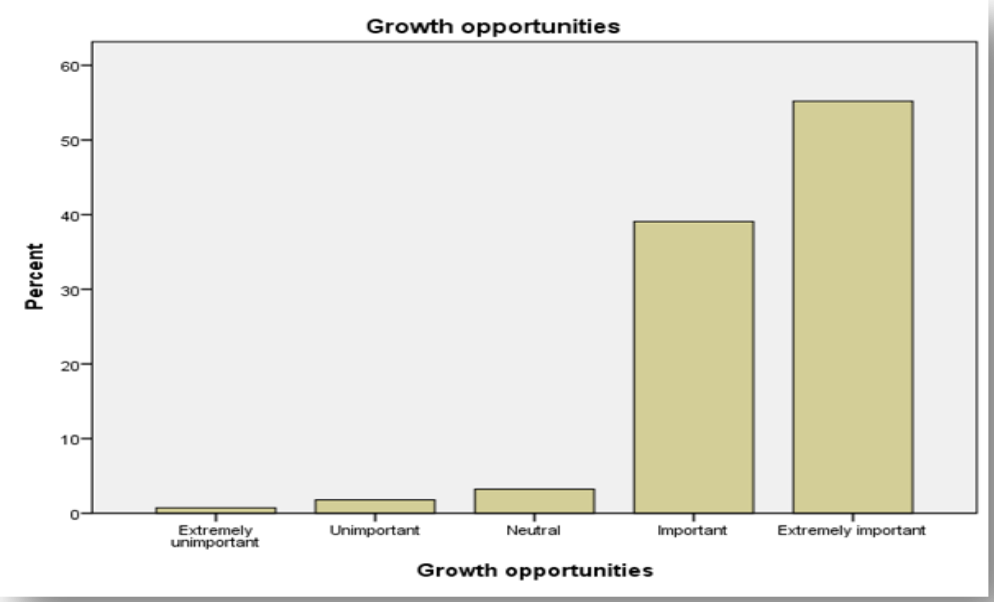
Source: Fieldwork (Researchers' computation using SPSS)

The next sections are presentations of the results based on questions focusing on the two aspects that were mentioned earlier; motivations and obstacles.

Factors influencing motivation levels of educators: Nine factors were listed in a Likert-styled format in the questionnaire and the respondents indicated how they perceive these factors to influence their motivation levels. The range of the scale was from 1 (extremely not important) to 5 (extremely important). A list of nine factors and/or conditions (see Table 2 below for the list) was presented to the respondents. Apart from working conditions, which top the list, educators from the target jurisdictions perceive growth opportunities and job security as factors of immense importance when it comes to their motivation.

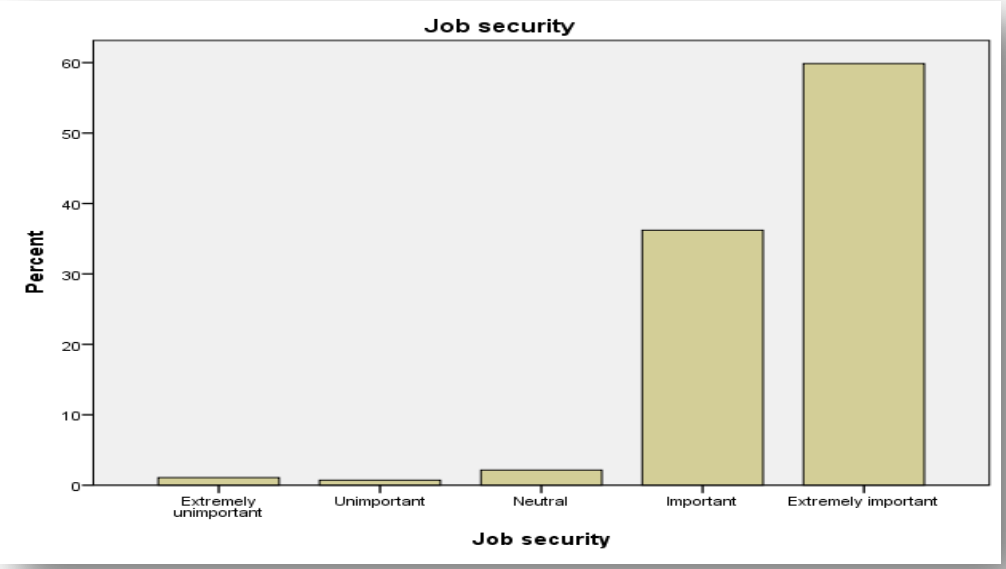
Schulze and Steyn (2007) identified lack of confidence on the part of educators as a function of inadequate educator training and development. Growth opportunities in the workplace include opportunities for advancement (promotion) and training and development. The authors of this paper insist that educators should be provided with regular opportunities for training and development, which in turn can boost their self confidence and also enable growth in the profession. Educators at schools are principals, heads of departments or educators. There is a level of rigidity in ranks and the prospect of development because of enormous workloads which impede the possibility of the educators to further their academic qualifications. With regard to workload, Jackson and Rothmann (2006) counsel heads of schools to pay more attention to the workload of educators. This perhaps suggests that a reduction in workload could lead to an opportunity for educators to pursue growth opportunities that may exist in their schools. In fact, Naidoo et al. (2013) linked a lack of growth opportunities to teacher job dissatisfaction.

Figure 1: Growth opportunities for educators



Source: Fieldwork (Charts created using SPSS)

Figure 2: Importance of job security

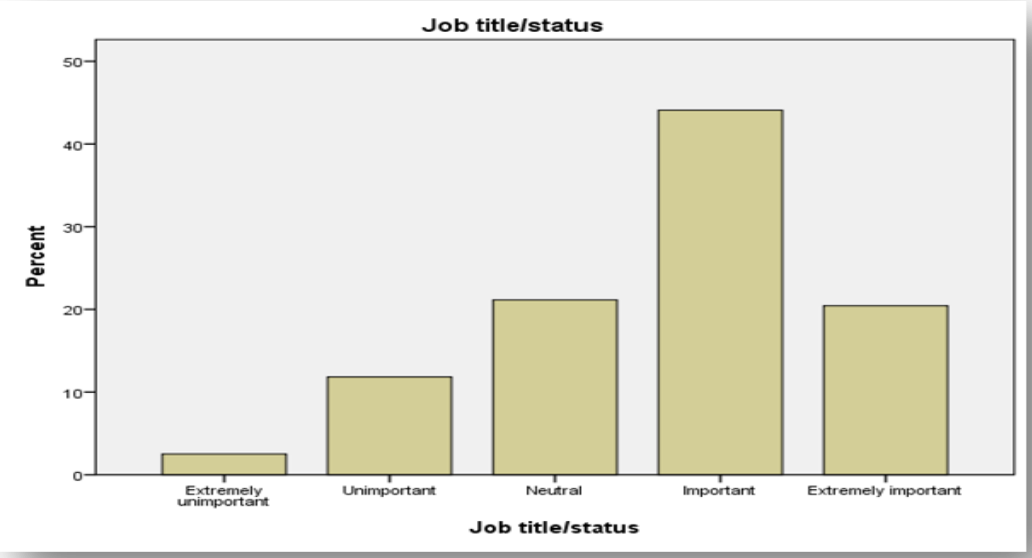


Source: Fieldwork (Charts created using SPSS)

The concept of job security continues to be the focus of several organizational behavior researchers. This is probably for a number of reasons. One of those reasons could be the cost of hiring and replacing an employee. Sadly, many organizations seem not to take cognizance of this as they continue to create workplaces that do not provide the necessary organizational climate that supports job security. Simply put, job security is considered as the likelihood that the holder of a job will keep the job. This study has indicated that job

security is important to the educators sampled. Job security can be achieved through an organizational climate that allows for educators to participate in matters that concern them as well as engage in collegial behavior. This suggestion is borrowed from the study of D Vos et al. (2012) who affirmed that the lack of collegial behavior on the part of heads of schools in a South African province created a dismal organizational climate and as a result teaching and learning may have suffered. Naidoo et al. (2013) found that desirable teacher behavior manifested in a teacher with a high sense of job security.

Figure 3: Importance of job title or status

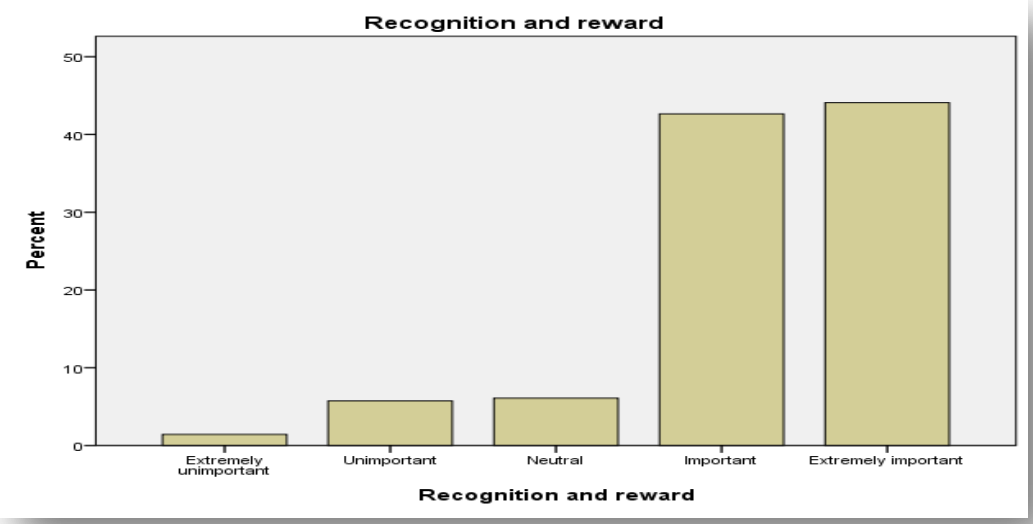


Source: Fieldwork (Charts created using SPSS)

It is important to note that other factors such as salary, duties and responsibilities, as well as working conditions are considered equally important by the educators. Coming last on the importance ranking are both job title and recognition and reward. In fact, Goldhaber and Hansen (2010) assert that while teaching was considered a relatively low risk occupation, salary was governed by degree and experience levels of a teacher. Essentially, this somewhat supports the earlier finding that the educators' yearnings for growth opportunities could bring about job security and the concomitant importance attached to the profession. In the face of a critical lack of growth opportunities, there is a chance that educators feel a sense of job insecurity and if there is no job security, job title and status would amount to nothing.

Recognition and reward took the penultimate position in the importance ranking (see Table 2 below). Recognition can be said to refer to a 'pat on the back' or an award for a task well done. It could also relate to a reward for an achievement. Within the context of this study, it is obvious that this is lacking. This a slightly worrying finding in the sense that since recognition comes with a well-deserved acknowledgement, one gets the feeling that the educators sampled do not feel good about their jobs and so do not deserve any form of recognition or reward. It could also mean that with working conditions and job security topping the list, the educators sampled are essentially saying that good working conditions and job security will improve the chances of their achievement of recognition and rewards. In other words, with good working conditions and a feeling of job security, delivering the right type of service is possible. The authors of this paper make the argument that as long as these important factors are absent, educators may not enjoy a sense of recognition and self-worth.

Figure 4: Recognition and reward of educators



Source: Fieldwork (Charts created using SPSS)

Table 2: Ranking of factors influencing educator's motivation

Factors	Mean	Standard Dev.	Rankings
Working conditions	4.54	.638	1
Job security	4.53	.682	2
Growth opportunities	4.46	.713	3
Duties and responsibilities	4.45	.692	4
Pay/salary	4.35	.803	5
Interpersonal relationships	4.27	.743	6
Supervision/leadership	4.25	.722	7
Recognition and reward	4.22	.902	8
Job title/status	3.68	1. 008	9

Source: Fieldwork (Researchers' computation using SPSS)

Table 2 above shows the ranking of the influences on educators' motivation. There is clearly a mix of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that are responsible for teacher motivation. Job title, an extrinsic factor is perceived as not as important as the other factors. Stability in the workplace (job security), an opportunity for advancement as well as a positively perceived working condition are key factors that keep educators motivated and may propel them to ensure that their learners are successful (George et al., 2008; Mji & Makgato, 2006; Naidoo et al., 2013).

Obstacles experienced by educators: In order to ascertain the obstacles that the educators experience, twelve factors were listed in a Likert-styled format in the questionnaire and the respondents indicated how frequently they experience these obstacles. The range of the scale was from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). See Table 3 below.

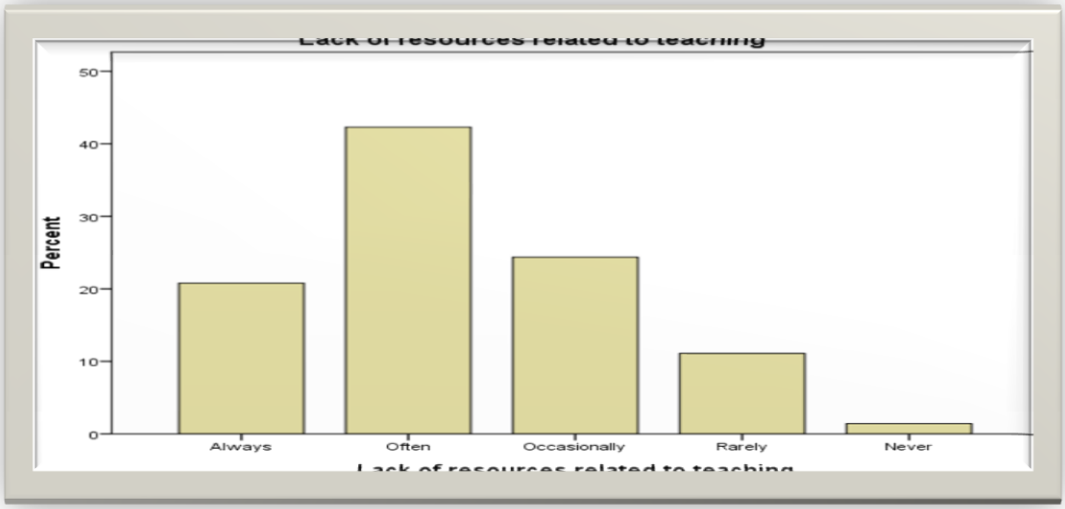
Table 3: Ranking of obstacles faced by educators

Factors	Mean	Standard Dev.	Rankings
Lack of resources related to teaching	2.30	.968	1
Multiple task overload	2.30	1.101	2
Inadequate infrastructure	2.39	1.019	3
Lack of resources related to research	2.44	1.077	4
Lack of recognition/reward	2.59	1.231	5
Communication barriers	2.71	1.000	6
Quality/skill of new intakes	2.80	.933	7
Institutional bureaucracy	2.82	.989	8
Lack of mutual cooperation and pleasant environment	2.91	.987	9
Non-transparent work culture	3.00	1.054	10
Multi stakeholders with divergent goals	3.07	1.017	11
Cultural barriers	3.54	1.108	12

Source: Fieldwork (Researchers' computation using SPSS)

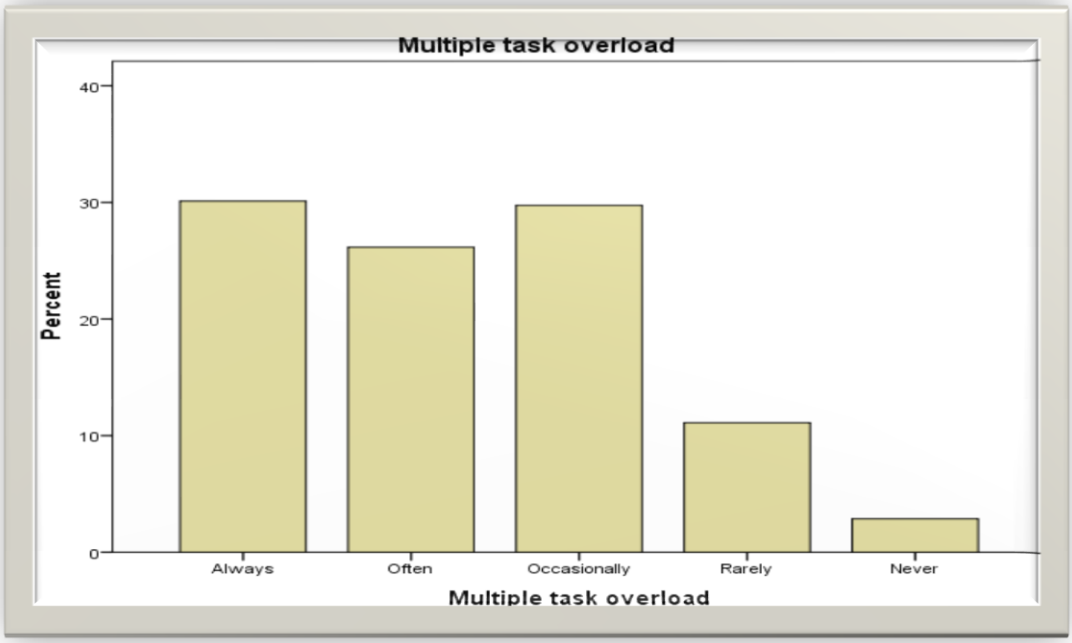
This study reveals that in a rank order, lack of resources for teaching and multiple task overload constitute the major obstacles faced by the educators sampled. This does not surprise one because earlier in the paper, the authors reported the yearnings of the educators for better working conditions, a high sense of job security, and opportunities for advancement. Reference was also made to previous studies where such cases were reported as well as the consequences of those situations. With regard to lack of resources for teaching, majority of the educators indicated that they were often faced with the obstacle (see Figure 5), while multiple task overload was an occasional occurrence (see Figure 6). The points to note here are that in the presence of a disturbing lack of resources for teaching, there is little doubt that the educators will not be able to perform their functions properly. Iwu and Iwu (2013) observed that lack of adequate infrastructure was a major factor that inhibited the effective management of schools. A lack of adequate resources for teaching could also lead to increased workload for educators. An increased workload can lead to stress and burnout. Jackson and Rothmann (2006) warn that heads of schools must pay attention to the psychological wellbeing of educators as well as their workloads. This would enable heads of schools to also experience job satisfaction (Maforah & Schulze, 2012).

Figure 5: Lack of teaching resources as an obstacle



Source: Fieldwork (Charts created using SPSS)

Figure 6: Obstacle of multiple task overload

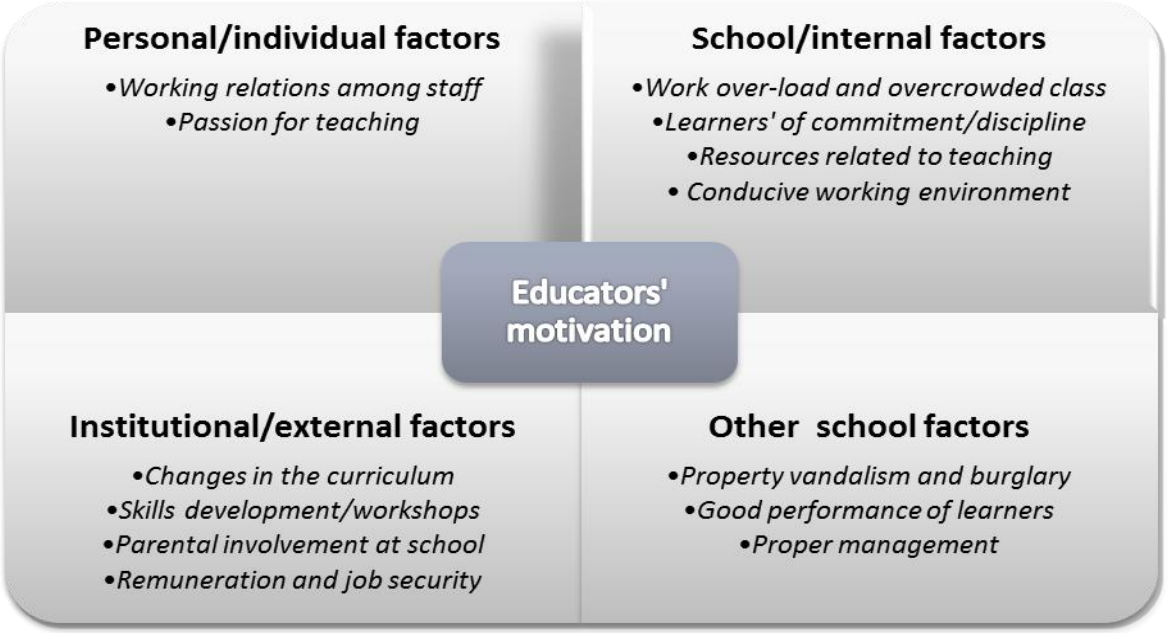


Source: Fieldwork (Charts created using SPSS)

Correlation tests for relationships and Chi tests within groups: As earlier mentioned the researchers tested for possible relationships among the variables and also tested if there are statistically significant differences among demographic groups (gender, age and years of experience). Spearman's correlation was used to test for relationship among the non-parametric variable (Field, 2013), while Chi tests was used to test for statistically significant differences among groups. There are strong relationships among both the factors influencing educators' motivation (all p-values < .001) as well as the obstacles that they experience (all p-values < .001). The implication is that, notwithstanding the rankings of the two sets of factors, each and every factor should not be addressed in isolation of the other one. Hence, both the intrinsic and the extrinsic factors have interrelatedness in their influence on educators' motivations and perceptions. With regard to the tests within the groups, there were no statistically significant differences among the groups of gender, age ranges and years of experience. This implies that the perceptions about factors and conditions that influence educators' motivations as well as those about obstacles are shared perceptions among majority of the respondents.

Responses to the open-ended question: Since the study is exploratory, it is important to allow respondents to make qualitative and unrestricted contribution to the area of enquiry (De Vos et al., 2011). The questionnaire posed an open-ended question: *Are there other factors that influence your work motivation?* It was important pose this question for methodological reasons. Being an exploratory study, an open-ended question served to clarify and or answer those questions which structured (closed-ended) statements are unable to unravel. Thus, the open-ended question was designed to shed more light into the research problem. Responses were checked for consistencies and similarities, from which themes were created and qualitatively analysed in the form of narratives. Similar responses were clustered as themes (Creswell, 2002). Four themes (see Figure 7 below) emerge, based on the responses, which influence educators' motivation. They are (1) Personal; (2) School/Internal; (3) Institutional/External; and (4) Other school factors.

Figure 7: Factors and conditions influencing educators' motivation



Source: Authors (Model is based on researchers' thematic analysis)

Personal or individual factors represent negative and positive influences on motivation that emanate from the educators themselves. School or internal factors are within the control of the school management. It may however overlap with the third theme. Institutional and external factors are not within the control of the educators nor the school. These include influences from the Government, Department of Education, parents and other socio-economic factors of macro nature. The fourth theme consists of factors which are within both the external and internal environment. Figure 7 above presents a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic job factors which influence teacher motivation. Earlier, this paper mentioned that a harmonious and collegial relationship between educators was a requirement for educator motivation in a previous study. There is no gainsaying the significance of the need to belong in any work setting. Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory places emphasis on the need for workers to feel a sense of belonging. This sense of belonging is derivable from an inclusion of a worker in matters that concern him or her. In fact Swanepoel (2009) found that South African educators were keener to be involved in school change initiatives than their counterparts in other countries. This goes to show that there is a possibility that the incessant changes in school curriculum do not get the blessing of educators. One could also go as far as saying that educators frown at government's curriculum changes. Another assumption one can make here is that skills development programs such as workshops could mellow the frustration that comes with these incessant changes in school curriculum. If educators are incorporated in curriculum change discussion for instance, it can bring about an improved passion for teaching, which can positively impact learner outcomes. No doubt educators need to put up work attitudes that are congruent to the ideals of education. To achieve these, educators will need ample supply of resources for teaching, a safe and healthy work environment.

5. Conclusion and recommendations for further study

With the deteriorating standards of basic education in South Africa in general and the Western Cape Province in particular, concerned parties seem to be looking for answers. Under the spot light is the role of government, school governing bodies, the attitude of learners and teachers. Against this backdrop of the dismal performance of a number of South African high Schools in recent years, this study investigated the relationship between poor performance of learners and teacher motivation in selected high schools in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. The result of this study suggests that highly motivated educators experience job satisfaction; and also perform better than their poorly motivated counterparts. In terms of

motivation, the results suggest that extrinsic factors tend to exert more influence on the educators motivation than intrinsic factors. For instance, working conditions, job security, and perceived growth opportunities in order of importance were noted to be contributing factors. As far as the obstacles that these educators encounter, lack of resources, work overload and lack of recognition were noted in order of severity. It is surprising though to note that income (salary) was only mentioned in passing as a factor of educator job satisfaction as opposed to several previous (for instance Maforah & Schulze, 2012) studies. A positive relationship between the factors that influence an educators' motivation and the level of obstacles encountered was noted. The implication is that, notwithstanding the rankings of the two sets of factors, each and every factor should not be addressed in isolation of the other one. This study has built a strong case for the need to motivate educators. In fact to reiterate, educators' motivation can lead to improved pass and throughput rates, and improved educator job satisfaction. While this study has noted some of the challenges of educator performance, it also highlights many of the antecedents to educator effectiveness which includes conducive working conditions, collegial work environment, and opportunities for advancement. These factors, the researchers argue, could improve perceptions of job security.

This study indicates cogent factors and conditions, which require immediate attention from schools management as well as the Departments of Education; otherwise learners' success is jeopardized. Apart from the aforementioned, further studies that will validate the perceptions of the educators as well as dig deeper into the matters that arise are recommended. A study on factors and conditions that influence educators' motivation, with a bigger sample, may be done within the positivist paradigm. This will test the validity of the factors that are identified in this study and create a basis for predictions. Following anti-positivist approach, an in-depth interview can generate information that better expounds the problems around educator motivations; obstacles experienced by educators; and how these impact learners' performance in general.

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