

JOB SATISFACTION AMONG VOCATIONAL TEACHERS IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT: *The effect of globalisation on human capital development is decisive. A country that lacks the means to compete in global market is often left behind. Competitiveness is based on a country's capacity to add value to global economic products, services and processes. A key contributor in this regard is the knowledge and skills of the workforce. The education and skills of the workforce will be the key competitive weapon for the 21st century. Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore the career satisfaction among vocational teachers in the selected technical secondary schools in Malaysia. The aspects that were studied include the job domain, the work environment and the flow of information within the organisation. A sample of 101 vocational teachers in Technical Secondary Schools in Negeri Sembilan and Melaka was selected. The questionnaire contained three sections: (1) profile of the respondents; (2) job satisfaction; and (3) open-ended questions. Descriptive statistics in the forms of frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used for the data analysis. The study found that the environmental and job factors are the aspects which bestow job satisfaction to vocational teachers, while the aspect of flow of information within the organisation was rated low. Therefore, the school administrators need to improve the flow of information in the organisation especially between the administrators and vocational teachers in order to enhance job satisfaction among vocational educators.*

KEYWORDS: *job satisfaction, vocational teachers, human resource development, and Job Descriptive Index in Malaysia.*

INTRODUCTION

Human resource development should be given considerable attention because it is the most important element in ensuring that a country is competitive and resilient, especially in this era of globalisation and K-economy. In Malaysia, various initiatives were planned and carried out to sustain its economic competitiveness. A critical challenge that faces post-modern society is to attain full employment and economic

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growth in the global economy. The future of Malaysia's competitiveness depends on the knowledge and skills of its workforce (Ramlee Mustapha *et al.*, 2008). With the advent of K-economy and globalisation, the need for a strong human capital has never been so critical. Thus, human capital development is designated as the main thrust of *Rancangan Malaysia ke-9* in 2006 or the Ninth Malaysia Plan, 2006-2010.

Human capital development emphasizes on the acquisition of knowledge and skills in critical areas such as science and technology. Equally important is the enculturation of positive attitudes, civilised mind, outstanding integrity and high ethical values. In terms of education and training, focus is given to the technical education and skills training. A relatively high amount of public allocation of RM 493 million was apportioned to enhance students' enrolment in technical, vocational schools and skills training institutions in the Ninth Malaysia Plan (*Rancangan Malaysia ke-9*, 2006).

Job satisfaction is the instinctive desire of every employable individual. People who achieve the high state of job satisfaction may be highly motivated and productive in assisting his or her organisation to achieve its goals. An employee upbeat attitude is important not only to himself or herself but also to the organisation. Job satisfaction can be defined as positive or negative appraisal toward one's career. Job commitment, on the other hand, is an employee's attitude towards the whole organisation (Baron & Greenberg, 1990). An employee high commitment towards organisation may arise from the acceptance of the organisation's values as well as one's willingness to work for the organisation.

The study conducted by W. Schaefer (1986) shows that employees with high job satisfaction have better well-being and longevity than those who are not satisfied with their profession. Job satisfaction also has an impact towards an individual's life condition outside the working hours. Another study shows that the teaching profession is one of the most stressful careers (Kyriacou, 1987). Other studies also show that a prolonged work stress could affect teachers' mental and emotional health and in the long run could affect teachers' teaching quality (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978; Manthei & Solman, 1988; Borg, Riding & Falzon, 1991; Travers & Cooper, 1996; and Antoniou, 2000). Meanwhile Abdul Fuad Mohamad (1997) suggests that the increase in teachers' workload and responsibility should commensurate with the recognition as well as the rewarding system in the career. However, the teaching profession is still perceived as "second-class job", though various efforts have been taken to improve the image of the teaching profession.

The concept of job satisfaction has a close association with teachers' commitment towards the organisation and thus influences the effectiveness of the implementation of a programme (Borne, 1972; and Avalos & Haddad, 1981). Meanwhile A.L. Kottkamp (1990) states that the quality of teaching is influenced by various factors such as job satisfaction and teacher's attitudes. A.L. Kottkamp (1990) also believes that job satisfaction is positively associated with job performance and commitment towards the organisation. Literature shows that teachers' satisfaction is also influenced by the form of communication practised by their principals (Sim, 1994). Further, an organisation may shoulder the cost incurred because of the uncommitted employees.

Absenteeism, operational delays and accidents occur in the workplace may be due to employees dissatisfaction. Malaysia's National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reported that accident rate in work place and compensation payments are on the rise (*Bulletin NIOSH*, 2006:10). This may reflect the predicaments faced by employees in the workplace which might include stress-related problems.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Literature has shown that there are teachers who are not committed to their career. Job stress, personal conflict, ambiguity of role, students' disciplinary problems as well as lack of social support system are the challenges faced by teachers that may cause dissatisfaction among teachers. These pressures may affect teachers' emotional and physical well-being that may lead to lower job satisfaction. According to William (in Zubaidah Aman, 1999), not all workers have positive view towards their careers. They might be experiencing emotional stress, disappointment, exhaustion, anxiety and unhappy feelings. Further K. Mattox (1974) investigated the reasons why teachers quit from the teaching profession. The study found that the main factors influencing teachers to quit their teaching profession include: low salary, limited opportunity for promotion, heavy workload, lack of freedom to make decisions and students' disciplinary problems.

According to S.V. Kals & J.A. Well (1985), work environment plays an important role in determining job satisfaction. Their study found that low job satisfaction is caused by poor job condition, heavy workload, unconstructive work group, poor supervision and anarchic-type organisation. Therefore, the rapport between employer and employees in an organisation is very important. According to Abu Bakar Nordin (1986), there are teachers who feel that there exist loop holes particularly in terms of selection criteria for promotion and the weaknesses of the evaluation procedures. One of the weaknesses of the system is that only a small number of teachers receive recognition although everyone works hard. The system usually favours teachers who teach examination classes and senior teachers who almost retire.

In addition, teachers may be required to work overtime, do clerical work, attend courses and seminars, and implement new teaching and learning methods (Siti Rohani Md. Sharif, 1991). A study in Sarawak, Malaysia discovered the main reasons why teachers quit which include personal factor, getting a better job offer, unwillingness to live away from family, unsuitable work environment and heavy workload. The school environment and students also influence the teachers' job satisfaction (*Borneo Post*, 9/10/1996).

The teaching profession in Malaysia is at the crossroads. Even though the salary of teachers has increased substantially but the infrastructure and the school environment have improved rather painstakingly slow. According to the Malaysian National Union of Teaching Profession or *Kesatuan Perkhidmatan Perguruan Malaysia* in 2006, job stress, lack of promotion, poor social support system as well as other chains of problem which were not solved fairly and satisfactorily have caused a number of teachers to quit and migrate to other professions or retire early.

Literature also shows that most studies about teachers' level of satisfaction were conducted regarding teachers in regular academic schools. Therefore, there is a lack of studies conducted on technical and vocational teachers. Thus, it is critical that this study is conducted to identify the level of job satisfaction among vocational teachers.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

This purpose of this study was to determine the job satisfaction among vocational teachers teaching in Malaysian public technical secondary schools in Melaka and Negeri Sembilan. Specifically, the research objectives are as follows: (1) to identify the level of job satisfaction among vocational teachers; (2) to identify the environmental factors which influence the level of satisfaction among vocational teachers; and (3) to identify the level of flow of information within the organisation which influence job satisfaction of vocational teachers.

The theoretical framework in this research was based on F. Herzberg, B. Mausner & B. Synderman (1959) dual theory. The dual elements in this theory are hygiene and motivation. The fundamental factors (hygiene factors) include salary, job status, relationship with other employees and employer as well as employees' safety and welfare. Motivation factors, on the other hand, include recognition and the opportunity for promotion. The F. Herzberg, B. Mausner & B. Synderman (1959) dual theory states that if these factors are fulfilled positively, the individual's job satisfaction would increase. The independent variables in this present study were gender, age, levels of education, experience, income and marital status. The dependent variables consisted of job satisfaction, workplace environment and flow of information within the organisation. Results of past research generally show that job satisfaction increases with age. For the teaching career, past research found that the main factors contributing to job dissatisfaction among teachers include workload, not-so-good relationship with the administrators and limited opportunity for promotion.

This study utilised a survey research. Mohd Majid has stated that a survey research aims to collect information about the variables which are studied in a natural setting (in *Bulletin NIOSH*, 2006). The population for this study was all vocational teachers in Malaysia. The research sample consisted of 101 teachers selected randomly from technical schools in Negeri Sembilan and Melaka. A pilot study was conducted to validate the research instrument comprising of a set of questionnaires. The instrument was adapted from the *Job Descriptive Index* (JDI) inventory by Smith *et al.* (in Dessler, 1985; and Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The questionnaire contains three sections namely A, B and C. Section A contains 10 demographic items. Section B consists of 60 items related to teachers' job satisfaction. The sub-domains for Section B include 20 items for *Job Satisfaction*; 20 items for *Environmental Factor*; and 20 items for the *Flow of Information* within the organisation. The items in Section B use 5-point Likert scale [1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=not sure; 4=agree and 5=strongly agree]. Section C comprises of three open-ended questions. The data collected from Section C were analysed

qualitatively based on the emerging themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The pilot study involving 70 vocational teachers was conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument. Several drafts of the instrument were reviewed by a panel of experts. Revisions were made based on their comments and recommendations. The internal consistency reliability for the instrument using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha and was estimated to be $\alpha = 0.84$. Therefore, the final version of the instrument was considered to possess an adequate degree of content and face validity and internal consistency reliability.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:
A. BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 1 shows the six Technical Secondary Schools from Negeri Sembilan and Melaka that were selected in this study. The schools are Technical Secondary School (*Sekolah Menengah Teknik*) in Ampangan, *Sekolah Menengah Teknik* in Juasseh, *Sekolah Menengah Teknik* in Port Dickson, *Sekolah Menengah Teknik* in Kuala Klawang, *Sekolah Menengah Teknik* in Melaka Tengah and *Sekolah Menengah Teknik* Dato' Seri Mohd Zin. A total of 101 respondents, 82 male teachers (81.2%) and 19 female teachers (18.9%) whom are teaching vocational subjects in Technical Secondary Schools. Based on the ethnic group of the respondents, 94 teachers (93.1%) are Malay, five teachers (5%) are Chinese, one (1%) Indian and one (1%) from other race. Looking into their marital status, 91 respondents (90.1%) are married and 10 respondents (9.9%) are still single.

Table 1:
Demographic Information of the Respondents

Demography	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
School:		
1. SMT Ampangan	17	16.8
2. SMT Juasseh	17	16.8
3. SMT P. Dickson	15	14.8
4. SMT K. Klawang	17	16.8
5. SMT Melaka Tengah	17	16.8
6. SMT DSM Mohd Zin	18	17.8
Gender:		
1. Male	82	81.2
2. Female	19	18.9
Ethnic Group:		
1. Malay	94	93.1
2. Chinese	5	5.0
3. Indian	1	1.0
4. Other	1	1.0
Marital Status:		
1. Married	91	90.1
2. Unmarried	10	9.9

Table 2 shows distribution of respondents based on their academic qualifications that are 63 respondents (62.4%) possess *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia*/Malaysian Certificate of Education/*Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia Vokasional*; 24 respondents (23.8%) have Diploma; 5 respondents (5%) hold STPM and Bachelors Degree; while the other 4 respondents (4%) have other academic qualifications. The respondents also obtained different professional qualifications such as 92 respondents (91.2%) have Certificate in Teaching, 5 respondents (5%) hold post-degree Diploma and 4 respondents with other qualifications. Frequencies of respondents based on their specialisations are 23 teachers (22.8%) in Automotive Maintenance, 17 teachers (16.8%) in Building Construction, 13 teachers (12.9) in Electronics, 11 teachers (10.9%) in Electrical Maintenance, 8 teachers (7.9%) in Commerce, 8 teachers in Air-Conditioning Maintenance and 8 teachers (7.9%) in Machine and Tools. The sample of this research was divided into three age groups that are 58 respondents (57.4%) in the

Table 2:
 Respondents' Qualification, Specialisation, Age Group, Religion
 and Teaching Hours for Vocational Subjects

Demography	n=101	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Academic Qualification:			
1.	SPM/MCE/SPMV	63	62.4
2.	STPM	5	5.0
3.	Diploma	24	23.8
4.	Bachelors' Degree	5	5.0
5.	Others	4	4.0
Professional Qualification:			
1.	Certificate in Teaching	92	91.2
2.	Post-Degree	5	5.0
3.	Others	4	4.0
Specialisation:			
1.	Building Construction	17	16.8
2.	Automotive Maintenance	23	22.8
3.	Welding	13	12.9
4.	Electronics	13	12.9
5.	Electrical Maintenance	11	10.9
6.	Air-Conditioning Maintenance	8	7.9
7.	Commerce	8	7.9
8.	Machine and Tools	8	7.9
Age Group:			
1.	Below 30 years old	28	27.7
2.	30-45 years old	58	57.4
3.	Above 45 years old	15	14.9
Religion:			
1.	Islam	73	72.3
2.	Buddhism	13	12.9
3.	Christianity	12	11.9
4.	Hinduism	2	3.0
Total Hours Teaching Vocational Subjects:			
1.	Less than 10 hours	9	9.0
2.	10-15 hours	39	38.5
3.	More than 15 hours	53	52.5

range of 30-45 years old age group, 28 respondents (27.7%) below 30 years old and 15 respondents (14.9%) above 45 years old. In terms of religion, 73 of them (72.3%) are Muslims, 13 respondents (12.9%) are Buddhists, 12 respondents (11.9%) are Christians and two of them (3%) are Hindus. Most of the respondents teach more than 15 hours of vocational subjects per week (52.5%) followed by 10-15 hours per week (38.5%) and only 9% of the respondents teaching less than 10 hours per week.

B. ON THE SOME OBJECTIVES

First, Objective 1: Identifying the level of job satisfaction among vocational teachers. Table 3 is about the mean score (m) and standard deviation (SD) for work satisfaction items among the vocational teachers. In general, the overall average (m = 3.60) shows that vocational teachers are quite satisfied with their job. They also believe

Table 3:
Mean and Standard Deviation of Work Satisfaction

Item	Mean	SD
1. Teaching career is fun.	4.08	0.83
2. My achievement in teaching career could be improved.	4.10	0.77
3. I have a promising and bright future in teaching profession.	3.74	0.88
4. Teaching is my desired career.	3.59	1.06
5. Teachers have good opportunities for promotion at higher position.	3.11	1.15
6. Teaching is a tenure and stable job.	4.00	0.81
7. I am not planning to resign my teaching job even though I have been offered other jobs with better salary.	3.84	0.92
8. I will continue to work as a teacher even though I was given an opportunity for early retirement.	3.62	0.79
9. I will recommend teaching to my close relatives.	3.38	1.03
10. As a teacher, I have equal or better promotion opportunity as other government officers.	2.93	1.01
11. I consider my teaching salary is relatively low.	3.72	0.95
12. I will continue working hard in order to achieve quality work performance.	3.98	0.73
13. I will continue to work hard even though my superior has given low rating of my work performance.	3.86	0.91
14. I consider the salary/reward that I received commensurate my efforts.	3.35	0.99
15. Recognition by other individuals towards my career as a teacher increases my work performance.	3.69	0.92
16. Society recognises teaching career as a respected and an honour job today.	2.97	1.07
17. As a teacher, I am being respected all along my career.	3.29	0.92
18. The teachers are being provided with similar facilities/perks given to other government officers in other professions.	2.92	1.03
19. I consider carrying out my daily teaching tasks as utmost responsibility.	3.99	0.77
20. I am having fun working as a teacher.	3.82	0.75
Total average mean	3.60	0.97

that the career as a teacher is enjoyable ($m = 4.08$) and it is a secure job ($m = 4.00$). However, they admit that the opportunity for promotion like the government officers in other professions is limited ($m = 2.93$). They also believe that the society's recognition towards teachers is also decreasing ($m = 2.97$).

Second, Objective 2: Identifying environmental factors which influence the level of satisfaction among vocational teachers. Table 4 illustrates the mean and standard deviation based on respondents' perception on workplace environmental factor which also influences their work satisfaction. In terms of the school environment, in general, the respondents rated moderately ($m = 3.62$). Even though

Table 4:
 Mean and Standard Deviation of Workplace Environmental Factor

Item	Mean	SD
1. The conducive environment in my workplace increases my focus on my work.	3.89	0.76
2. I have enough rest despite busy with teaching in the school.	3.68	0.76
3. The spacious, clean and comfortable workplace enhances my motivation to work hard.	3.87	0.76
4. I am keen to accomplish my daily teaching tasks.	3.92	0.72
5. My relationship with school administrators is good.	3.93	0.78
6. My relationship with all my colleagues in school is good.	4.16	0.58
7. My colleagues help me accomplishing our tasks together.	4.00	0.65
8. Friendly relationship among colleagues motivates me to work better.	3.99	0.71
9. I believe my school administrators are fair towards the teachers and staffs.	3.31	0.97
10. The training programmes and courses for teachers in related fields are sufficient.	3.11	1.07
11. My administrators consider staffs' complaints seriously.	3.03	0.96
12. Role conflicts arose during carrying my job as a teacher.	3.43	0.79
13. School administrators pay attention to the state of the physical environment in the school.	3.54	0.96
14. I am patience in accomplishing my teaching tasks.	3.50	0.98
15. The school administrators take care of the teachers' welfare.	3.73	0.96
16. I am satisfied that the school administrators did not practice favouritism towards the staffs.	3.42	0.92
17. I have easy access to technology to facilitate my teaching.	3.46	1.10
18. I prepare and submit students' progress report on time.	3.71	0.97
19. I felt easy to communicate with the school administrators.	3.65	1.03
20. The principal often gives constructive advice and ideas regarding the way to improve my work.	3.91	0.95
Total average mean	3.60	0.87

the teachers agree that their relationship with colleagues is good ($m = 4.16$) and the colleagues offer help in doing tasks ($m = 4.00$), respondents are unsure or doubtful ($m = 3.31$) whether the administrators give a fair treatment to school teachers and staff. They are also uncertain ($m = 3.11$) whether the training programmes for vocational teachers are given consistently. Respondents are also uncertain ($m = 3.03$) whether the administrators take a serious attention to their complaints and suggestions. Nevertheless the respondents agree that their relationship with the administrators is good ($m = 3.93$).

Third, Objective 3: Identifying the level of flow of information within organisation which influences the job satisfaction of vocational teachers. Table 5 shows the mean and standard deviation regarding the flow of information relationship in the organisation which influences respondents' work satisfaction. The findings

Table 5:
 Mean and Standard Deviation of Flow of Information in the Organisation

Item	Mean	SD
1. I feel emotionally tired due to my work.	3.32	1.09
2. I'm running out of energy after working hours.	3.19	1.05
3. My current work load affected my health.	3.19	1.08
4. I always received repetitive instructions.	3.18	1.07
5. I always received too much instruction from the school administrators.	3.32	1.06
6. I felt that I could not reach my work target.	3.17	1.06
7. I am lucky to have good people in my school.	3.22	1.08
8. I don't believe that the teachers are able to assist the administrators to improve school performance.	3.16	1.02
9. I felt that my salary is not commensurate with my teaching work load.	3.45	1.11
10. Too much of work at school limits my time for recreational activities.	3.26	1.07
11. Too frequent school's co-curriculum programme perturbs my other school works.	3.36	1.12
12. I carry out tasks apart from my specialised area.	3.37	1.12
13. I have to take sudden or immediate decisions due to last minute orders.	3.39	0.94
14. I feel stress to complete the syllabus within the given time period.	3.59	0.92
15. I usually don't have enough time to produce the desired quality work.	3.19	1.09
16. I am not sure about the teachers' roles and responsibilities.	2.98	1.13
17. I feel emotional conflicts due to heavy work load in accomplishing teaching tasks.	3.23	1.14
18. I have little opportunities to expand my career in my specialised areas.	3.65	1.04
19. My monthly salary is not enough to support my family.	3.31	1.05
20. In my view, there is a limited opportunity to be promoted in teaching line.	3.08	1.10
Total average mean	3.30	1.07

show that vocational teachers were less satisfied with the flow of information within the organisation ($m = 3.30$). They are unsure whether they receive repeated instructions ($m = 3.18$) or too many instructions from the administrators ($m = 3.32$). Teachers agree ($m = 3.59$) that they feel stressed for having to complete the syllabus in the time frame which has been stipulated. They also believe that the opportunity to develop their career in the field they are involved in is very little ($m = 3.65$).

C. ON THE QUESTIONS

First, Section C (Open-Ended Questions). Table 6 shows the teachers' work satisfaction enhancing factors. Research finding identified 51 (50.5%) respondents stressed on salary or wages could enhance their work satisfaction. Another 36 (35.6%) respondents stressed on conducive working environment and the rest 14 (13.9%) respondents mentioned that promotion opportunities may enhance vocational teachers work satisfaction.

Table 6:
 Factors Contributing Towards Work Satisfaction

Rank	Item	Frequency	(%)
1	Salary or wages	51	50.5
2	Working environment	36	35.6
3	Promotion opportunities	14	13.9
		101	100%

Second, Cause Dissatisfaction on Teaching Career. Table 7 displays the suppressing factors which cause dissatisfaction on teaching career. Majority respondents, 65 teachers (64.4%) stressed on work load, 19 of them (18.8%) on workplace environment and 17 teachers (16.8%) on limited promotion opportunities.

Table 7:
 Suppressing Factors on Teaching Career

Rank	Item	Frequency	(%)
1	Work load	65	64.4
2	Workplace environment	19	18.8
3	Limited Career Advancement	17	16.8
		101	100%

Third, How to Improve Teaching Profession. Table 8 shows the recommendations to improve teaching profession. Almost half, 50 (49.5%) respondents thought that reward/recognition, followed by 36 (35.6%) teachers stressed on training and 15 (14.9%) of them on motivation could enhance the teaching profession.

Table 8:
Recommendations to Improve Teaching Profession

Rank	Item	Frequency	(%)
1	Reward/Recognition	50	49.5
2	Training	36	35.6
3	Motivation	15	14.9
		101	100%

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

A. RESPONDENTS' REACTION ON THEIR JOB

Generally, vocational teachers seemingly agreed that job aspects do give them satisfactions while working. Based on the overall mean ($m = 3.60$) on work satisfaction, vocational teachers hope their achievement as a teacher may be enhanced ($m = 4.10$). They also thought that teaching career is fun ($m = 4.08$) and their work as a teachers is assured ($m = 4.00$). They believe carrying out daily tasks are continual responsibilities ($m = 3.99$) and they will be working hard till their work performance is recognised. However, they agreed that equal opportunities to be promoted are limited ($m = 2.93$) and provided with insufficient facilities compared with the government officers in other professions. They also noticed that current recognition by society on teaching profession is declining ($m = 2.97$) compared to previous time.

This research finding was supported by A.H. Maslow's theory (1954) regarding employees being satisfied if they feel their job is secured and assured. J. Klien & R.M. Maher (1966) discovered that employees always compare works with their colleagues. Due to these factors, the management should make sure the employees are being recognised fairly. J. Greenberg (2000) asserts that an organisation's recognition on employees' contribution could prompt the feelings that they are being honoured.

According to Adam in his equilibrium theory, as the input from employees produces profit, the company should recognise and honour them in return (in Mahmood Nazar Mohamed, 1990). If the recognition and honour is fair, they will be satisfied while performing their job. Meanwhile J. Greenberg (2000) also discovered that some procedures should be given importance such as the employees can voice out their views on the decisions made by their superiors to ensure the tasks given to them can be carried out without any problems. Each decisions made by managers should be fair and consistent to all the employees.

B. RESPONDENTS' REACTION ON ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR

Generally, vocational teachers agree that environmental factor enhances their working motivation. The total average mean for environment aspect is 3.62 which means that the environmental factor is perceived to bestow satisfaction among vocational school teachers. Work satisfaction aspect is always associated with work environment, organisational atmosphere, organisational characteristics and employees interest on their career. Respondents agreed that their relationship with colleagues are good ($m =$

4.16) as they often help other teachers to carry out their tasks together ($m = 4.00$). Friendly relationship among colleagues motivate teachers to produce better work ($m = 3.99$). Relationship with the administrators are good as well ($m = 3.93$). According to J. Carol & F. Tusi (1977), if an employee is interested in his/her work, he/she will be more committed with the organisation, more productive and attain higher work satisfaction. Any individual usually functions well in calm, comfortable and away from negative elements (Mahmood Nazar Mohamed, 1990).

Meanwhile B.A. Locke (1982) mentioned that any employees will be satisfied with their work if the characteristics of work and working environment suits personal values and career expectations. An individual will be satisfied with his/her career if the job is suitable with the employee's needs and values. The job also must be appropriate to their skills and abilities. However, the research finding shows that respondents were not sure or not clear whether the management provides fair treatment towards all teachers and staffs. They were also not sure whether they had received sufficient trainings. Thus, they questioned the seriousness of the school administrators in listening to teachers' and staffs' complaints. According to S.V. Kals & J.A. Well (1985), work environment plays an important role while ensuring work satisfaction. Lacking in work satisfaction may be due to the working condition, content of work, working group, supervision and organisation. If the employees are having conflicts or having heavy work load, they are likely to be stressed which led to work dissatisfaction (Hamar & Tosi, 1974).

C. RESPONDENTS' REACTION ON INFORMATION FLOW IN ORGANISATION

The findings show that vocational teachers were less satisfied with the flow of information within the organisation ($m = 3.30$). They are unsure whether they receive repeated instructions ($m = 3.18$) or too many instructions from the administrators ($m = 3.32$). Teachers agree ($m = 3.59$) that they feel stress for having to complete the syllabus in the time frame which has been stipulated. They also believe that the opportunity to develop their career in the field they are involved with is very little ($m = 3.65$) and vocational teachers also felt that their salary is not compatible with the work load ($m = 3.45$). Research conducted by S. Wendram (1989) is about the connection between work satisfaction, work stress and tendency to quit work among the employees in a company in Selangor. He discovered factory's employee with low work satisfaction was going through heavy work pressure while employee with higher work satisfaction was facing less work pressure. Previous research finding also supports the argument that those employees with low work satisfaction are more likely to quit their job while the employee with high work satisfaction has fewer tendencies to quit their job.

Research by Lee Meng Chun (1990) on 101 factory employees discovered there were significant difference about work satisfaction by gender, age and working time except with place of origin among employees handling repetitive tasks. Thus, if the respondents' work satisfaction is low, it could be due to repetitive working tasks

which tend to create dissatisfaction and boredom among the workers. Aminuddin Mohd Yusof (1994) mentioned that work satisfaction is an outcome of various behaviours applied by employees on their job. He also asserts that those who are satisfied with their work feel more comfortable and confident in carrying out their job.

D. FACTORS ENHANCING WORK SATISFACTION AMONG VOCATIONAL TEACHERS

Findings from the open-ended questions show that 51 respondents (50.5%) mentioned salary or wages play important role to increase work satisfaction among vocational teachers. This finding is supported by F. Herzberg, B. Mausner & B. Synderman (1959) whom explained that main factor influences work satisfaction is salary or wage. Satisfaction from salary or wage depends to its value and function. According to Lunch & Ronan, high salary could enhance work satisfaction (in Ahmad Mohamad Sharif, 1989). Thus, dissatisfaction occurs among teachers with disproportionate salary compared to their work load especially in low rank. Meanwhile E.A. Locke (1982) explains salary payment should be proportionate with the completed tasks. Salary is not only motivates them but also one of the factor that causes dissatisfaction among teachers.

E. DISSATISFACTION AMONG VOCATIONAL TEACHERS REGARDING THEIR CAREER

Among 101 respondents, the majority of vocational teachers (64.4%) were dissatisfied regarding their career. This may be due to heavy work load, as they need to teach the theories and also conducting practical session in unsatisfied working condition. Vocational teachers have to conduct other tasks such as being a class teacher, sport teacher, co-curricular teacher and also doing clerical tasks such as collecting school fees and attending courses while in service. Accordingly, D. Male (1996) investigated the reason teachers quitting their job. Some of the reasons were heavy work load such as conducting clerical tasks, lacking in support by administration and no recognition given to them.

Research by D. Male & D. May (1997) in New Zealand discovered factors contributing towards heavy work load among teachers in schools. They discovered stress, burnout and work load among special education teachers in joined, inclusive or special schools programme involving children suffering due to emotional or behavioural learning problems are relatively high. They also identified that 80% of the respondents mentioned working more than 60 hours in a week that causes stress among them. They were going through very high level of stress as they need to handle children with emotional and behavioural problems compared to other teachers. It contributes towards working environment stress and creates anger, tasks confusion, tiredness, ineffective in teaching, wariness and others. Meanwhile Abdul Halim Sulong (2000) discovered factors influencing stress among teachers include heavy work load, ineffective school administration and poor interpersonal

relationship. Work load factor is the most frequent aspect contributing towards the total stress among male and female teachers.

F. IMPLICATIONS ON TEACHING PROFESSION

Inputs from the open-ended questions given by the vocational teachers in this study recommend the ways to enhance teaching profession. Almost half from the total number of respondents (49.5%) stressed rewards or recognition is the main factor to enhance teaching profession which strongly motivates individual performance. Organisational reward system including salary increment, bonuses, promotion and other benefits could motivate teachers. Rewards confer to teachers should be fair and proportional with their performance.

Teachers are also responsive towards non-cash incentives such as additional leaves, housing and car loans, chances in pursuing studies and many others. This view was supported by F. Herzberg, B. Mausner & B. Synderman (1959) that responsibility, recognition, achievement and other professional enhancement contribute towards work satisfaction. Thus, managers in an organisation have to be fair when rewarding their employees. Sufean Hussin (1993) mentioned that human being needs recognition, appreciation and honour on the tasks they have accomplished or will be carrying out. Work performance may be enhanced if the person receives appropriate rewards with their effort and work achievement. Rewards based on satisfied work performance create work satisfaction (Dressler, 1985). Meanwhile A.H. Maslow (1962) stressed on recognition and appreciation as factors contributing towards work satisfaction. According to J.L. Rundell (1984), teachers appreciate recognition, gratitude and respect. If teachers' contribution is being acknowledged, teachers would be likely to work much harder.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main findings of this study on work satisfaction among vocational teachers based on the three aspects of work satisfaction indicated that environmental and job aspects were contributing towards work satisfaction of vocational teachers, while information flow aspect was rated low. Thus, school administrators should put emphasis on organisational and communication aspects in enhancing work satisfaction and teachers' performance of vocational teachers.

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations may enhance work satisfaction level among vocational teachers in Technical Secondary School:

First, the research findings show vocational teachers were dissatisfied on their prospects in school. Some incentives should be given to teachers such as promotion, recognition and appreciation. Promotion should be based on merit, experience and commitment, and not on favouritism.

Second, performance evaluation should be based on work achievement and outcome in the three-year period before promotion. The way of evaluating the teachers' performance should be accurate and includes overall evaluation on teachers'

performance. This includes activities conducted inside and outside of the classroom. The evaluator should not be limited to the principal only but also can include other individuals who have knowledge on the teachers' work and contributions.

Third, relationship between the teachers and administrators should be enhanced. Thus, the administrators should implement open and humanistic approaches such as tolerance, taking care of the welfare of the teachers and listen to their problems.

Fourth, communication and information flow in the organisation need to be upgraded.

Fifth, teachers should be exposed to motivational and self-improvement courses to enhance their morale, motivation and inspiration such as motivational courses, group training and self-confidence which are critical to work satisfaction.

Sixth, opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills should be opened to all vocational teachers. Thus, courses related to teachers' need should be held and given priority among the interested teachers.

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