# AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE PERSONAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS ON THE MOTIVATION OF SCHOOL TEACHERS

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**Abstract** *Teaching is a dynamic and interpersonal job, thus teachers are strongly influenced by the social environment within which they live and operate. These social and personal factors also influence teachers' motivation to give their best at work. Motivational level of teachers is widely stated to be a major factor which determines the efficacy of the teaching of learning process, thus it is very important to study the influence of personal and social factors on the motivation of school teachers. Studies have been conducted on the various societal factors that influence teacher motivation but the influence and the nature of influence of each personal and societal factor on the motivation of school teachers has not been significantly studied. In order to design a school which acts as a behavioral system and motivates all stakeholders including teachers to give their best at work one has to study in depth the influence of the societal and personal factors related to teachers and their influence on the motivational levels of teachers. This study seeks to do that. The study included a random sample of teachers (N = 111).The results of the survey were analyzed by SPSS 17.0. A principal component analysis extracted three factors: namely Physiological and Safety factors, Happiness factors and Esteem factors. The study sought to provide an analysis of how these factors influence teacher motivation.*

**Keywords:** *Motivation, Teacher, Society, Personal, System, Factor Score Regression*

## INTRODUCTION

The behavioral, cognitive and humanistic approaches are the three approaches by which human motivation has been explained traditionally (Biehler and Snowman, 1993). The behavioral approach was based on the works of B.F. Skinner (Skinner, 1938, 1948). It is based on the concept of reinforced desired behavior. The cognitive approach is based onJean Piaget's theory of equilibration, assimilation and accommodation (Piaget, 1964). Though it is widely construed to be a children centric model the constructivist cognitive theory holds good for adults as well and adult behavioral models have been developed using this theory as basis (Hsiu-Mei Huang, 2002). It has been posited that Piaget's theory seeks to 'highlight the processes by which people outgrow their current views of the world, and construct deeper understandings about themselves and their environment' (Ackermann, 2001). The humanistic approach is the basis of the works of psychologists like Abraham Maslow (1943) and Friedrich Herzberg (1959) and proposes that people are motivated to meet deficiency needs when those needs are unmet.

It has been posited by researchers like Brumback (1986) and Maehr (1984) that better motivated teachers can bring about better student performance. A systemic approach to teacher motivation which studies the impact of personal and societal factors on the motivation of teachers is required. This study explores the influence of societal and personal factors which affect the motivation of school teachers.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Thomas Sergiovanni (1967) in his study found that personal life and status were factors that contributed to job dissatisfaction. Thus they represented hygiene factors according to Herzberg's two factor theory. This finding was further augmented when Edward Holdway (1978) found that the attitude of society contributed to teacher dissatisfaction. Thus in both these studies social factors were found to be

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hygiene factors. Brunetti (2001) in his study interviewed 28 teachers and conducted a questionnaire survey among 169 respondents. His questionnaire was designed around a 4 point Likert scale and dwelled on 18 items of motivation. After a factor analysis the 18 items were classified into 3 broad areas; professional satisfaction factors, social factors and practical factors. Social factors scored in between the professional factors (3.37 < mean scores <3.77) and practical factors (1.76<mean scores > 3.10) in its impact on teacher motivation. Coolahan (2003) posited that the profession of teaching in Ireland enjoyed high social status and thus the profession was competitive and motivating. According to his study 76% of all educational expenditure in Ireland was related to teachers' salaries. Out of the 27 countries that were studied by him Ireland ranked 7th in terms of teachers' salaries. The fact that teachers in Ireland enjoyed high professional status and the profession was coveted was borne out by the fact in 1990 there were 20,321 teachers in Ireland while in 2000-2001 that figure rose to 21,850 (Student: Teacher ratio of 19.2:1) but during the period the number of students had declined from 540,572 in 1990 to 428,339 in 2000–2001. A reverse situation emerged in the study conducted by Bennel (2004) wherein it was posited that teachers in Africa and South Asia had low social status and were only considered 'slightly better educated than their students'. Thus the motivation of joining other professions like medicine and engineering was high in these countries. The study also found very significant differences in the levels of motivation between teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa and India. While the percentage of teachers who agreed to the statement "Teachers at this school are well motivated" was 9% in rural Ghana, 14 % in rural Zambia, 10 % in rural Sierra Leone; in rural India it was 90%. Anthony and Ord (2008) in their study in New Zealand found that the fact that teachers can give more time to their family was a motivator for teachers in the profession. Muller, Alliatta and Benninghoff (2009) in their study found that teachers are motivated by the satisfaction they derive from higher order needs such as social relations. They performed a multiple correspondence analysis on 204 respondents and summarized the responses. A hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted which divided the respondents into 4 groups: 'passionate' (37 % of respondents) who were motivated by the social dimensions of the teaching profession, 'engaged' (37 % of respondents) who were motivated by the same factors as the passionate group but to a lesser degree. Finally 'mitigated' (9% of the respondents) and disillusioned (7% of the respondents). In the last two groups the factors of demotivation were working conditions and humanistic values but the teachers in these groups said that teaching was not their preferred profession. Alam and Farid (2011) in their study in Pakistan observed that importance in society was a major factor that motivated teachers. They found that 49 % of the teachers who responded to their study said they were respected in society .They also found that 59% of their respondent teachers felt that they

were relied upon in family matters and were also made a part of important decisions in the family. Mansfield, Wosnitza, and Beltman (2012) sought to approach teacher motivation beyond it being a mere cognitive process and addressed the social dimension of teacher motivation. Joyce Nyam (2014) concluded that teachers 'like to feel needed by others' and good social status of teachers motivate them at work. She found that among private school teachers 90% wanted to be described as professionals.

Among studies conducted in the Indian context Ramachandran et al (2005) in their study found that 25-30% of teachers are significantly motivated to work 'regardless of their personal circumstances'. 30% of teachers while being regular and diligent have been 'worn out by the system'. The other 40 % was seen to be indifferent i.e. they are not motivated and they do not care about it. In another study though conducted among college teachers in India Ravi Kumar (2013) found that 80% of the respondents felt that their pay could be informed. Kremer, Chaudhury, Muralidharan et al (2005) in their study on teacher absence in India found that 25% of teachers are absent on any given day and even among those present only 50% actually teach. Higher pay was not associated with less absenteeism. Local teachers had less rates of absenteeism as opposed to those from outside the community. Locally controlled schools also had less absenteeism.

While many studies touched upon the social and personal factors in affecting the motivation of school teachers none of them really explored the social and personal factors in detail to examine the nature of the dimensions that these factors presented and the impact of these dimensions on the motivation of school teachers. This study seeks to bridge that gap and attempts to study the social and personal factors affecting teacher education in detail.

After a detailed study of literature it was decided by the researchers that a series of personal interview sessions should be conducted with teachers in order to collate the findings of the study of literature with the thoughts, perceptions and experiences of in-service teachers .This would help to short list the variables that would form the basis of the study and establish both face and content validity of the questionnaire that was to be administered. The interviewees were selected among local teachers who were known to the researchers and their friends. Amix of both close and open ended questions was asked to the interviewees in an informal setting. The duration of the interviews lasted from 30 minutes to an hour. After the study of literature and the series of five interview sessions with experienced school teachers the researchers concluded that ten factors affecting the personal and social lives of school teachers be chosen for the purposes of the study These factors were:-

1. Comfort of residence      2. Respect from Family      3. Respect from society      4. Happy and smooth family life

5. Quality of personal health 6. Quality of health of dependents 7. Ambition to do better 8. Vibrant social life, hobbies, entertainment and leisure hours 9. Opportunities for further studies 10. Financial Status

## METHODOLOGY

This study was as a descriptive research study. The researchers exercised no interventions on their part. A sample of school teachers from the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri in West Bengal (N=111) were participants in the study. The schools to be brought under the survey were chosen by convenient sampling and the teachers from those schools were chosen by random sampling so the sampling technique could be described as multi-stage sampling . A questionnaire with twelve items on a five point Likert-type scale, was administered to the respondents to rate their experiences. The first two questions required the respondents to rate their efforts to give their best at work in school and to rate their overall experiences with the various factors relating to their personal and social life. The scale used here was; 1= *Terrible 2= Not satisfactory 3= Satisfactory 4= Good   5= Excellent.* These two questions represented the dependent variables. The ten questions which followed elicited responses on the teachers' experiences with the various factors related to the personal and social lives of the teachers and were also rated

on a five point Likert-type scale. The ten questions which followed represented the various independent variables. The responses were analyzed using the statistical software SPSS 17.0. The reliability was checked using Cronbach's Alpha and found to be  .87 and .95 respectively which are  within the range of acceptability.

The face validity and content validity was established from the study of literature and also from the series of interview sessions with teachers. Construct validity of the questionnaire was established from the principal component analysis that was conducted on the data and brought forth three factors thus validating all the constructs that had comprised the present assessment. Subsequently quantitative and qualitative analysis was conducted and inferences were drawn.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

A correlation analysis was conducted with the dependent variable as given in question 1 on which the respondents rated their efforts to give their best at work in school and question 2 wherein the respondents rated their various personal and social factors at school yielded a correlation coefficient of .785. Thus the effort to give ones best at work in school every day is highly correlated to one's experience with factors that constitute the work itself.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Motivation to give one's best at work everyday | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.92 | 1.43 |
| Overall experience with social and personal life | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.67 | 1.26 |
| Comfort of residence | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.54 | 1.12 |
| Respect from Family | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.44 | 1.17 |
| Respect from society | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.18 | 1.37 |
| Happy & smooth family life | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.13 | 1.39 |
| Quality of personal health | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.52 | 1.158 |
| Quality of health of dependents and loved ones | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.61 | 1.11 |
| Ambition to do better | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.44 | 1.15 |
| Social life, hobbies, entertainment & leisure hours | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.15 | 1.42 |
| Opportunities for further studies | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.53 | 1.16 |
| Financial Status | 111 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.59 | 1.12 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 111 | | | | |

At the next step a principal component analysis was conducted with all the ten independent variables. The quantitative analysis of the data yielded that the KMO measure of sampling adequacy was .881, Chi-square was found to be 1956.846. Thus the KMO and Bartlett's test

showed that factor analysis was justified in this case`. The principal component analysis extracted three factors with eigenvalues which were greater than 1. After a principal component analysis with orthogonal varimax rotation 3 factors were extracted. The three factors which were

extracted explained 95.234 % of the variances. Table 11 shows that variables 1,5,6,10 loaded onto component 1 while variables 3,4,8 loaded on component 2 and variables 2,7,9 loaded on component 3.

**Table 2    Rotated Component Matrixa**

| Variables | Component | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| COMFORT OF RESIDENCE | .89 | .27 | .27 |
| RESPECT FROM FAMILY | .29 | .29 | .88 |
| RESPECT FROM SOCIETY | .31 | .89 | .26 |
| HAPPY AND SMOOTH FAMILY LIFE | .29 | .90 | .23 |
| QUALITY OF PERSONAL HEALTH | .88 | .28 | .31 |
| QUALITY OF HEALTH OF DE-PENDENTS | .89 | .27 | .24 |
| AMBITION TO DO BETTER | .31 | .25 | .89 |
| VIBRANT SOCIAL LIFE, HOB-BIES ETC | .27 | .88 | .30 |
| OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER STUDIES | .27 | .24 | .86 |
| FINANCIAL STATUS | .89 | .27 | .27 |
| Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.   Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.  a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations. | | | |
| | | | |

The three components were tagged as Physiological and safety factors, Happiness factors and Esteem factors.

**Table 3: Extracted Components from Principal Component Analysis**

| Physiological and Safety Factors | Happiness factors | Esteem factors |
|---|---|---|
| Comfort of residence | Respect from society | Respect from family |
| Quality of personal health | Happy and smooth family life | Ambition to do better |
| Quality of health of dependents | Vibrant social life, hobbies, entertainment and leisure hours | Opportunities for further studies |
| Financial status | | |

A principal component regression was conducted after the principal component analysis using the components they were extracted as inputs.  The regression analysis was done by taking the variable 1 which represented the motivation of the teachers to give their best at work in school as the dependent or predicted variable and the three components as extracted by the principal component analysis as independent variables.  The results of the principal component regression conducted using the component scores as the predictor

variables and the enter method a significant model emerged ($F_{3,107}$ = 207.164, P <.0005, Adjusted $R^2$ =.849). Durbin-Watson statistics = 1.582 .Thus no significant auto-correlation was observed.  The conditionality Index was 1 signifying no multicollinearity among variables. According to Figure 1 the residuals are approximately normally distributed.
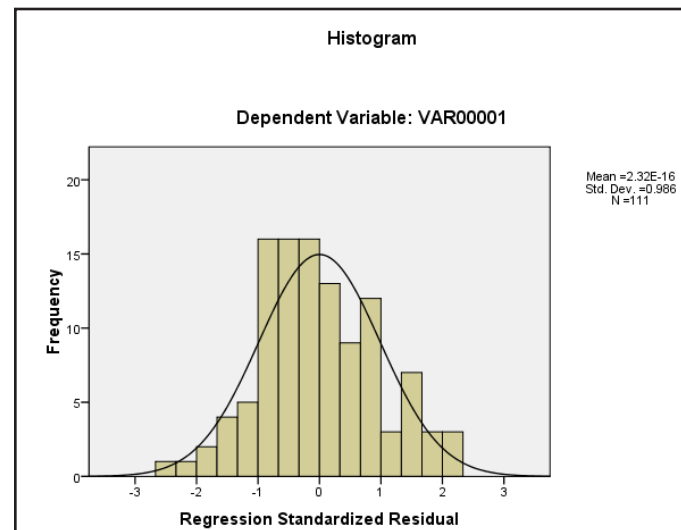


**Figure 1: Histogram for Regression Standardized Residuals**

The principal component regression brought forth the fact that all the three factors viz. the Physiological and safety, Happiness   factors and Esteem factors are significant predictors of workplace motivation of school teachers. The Table shows the relevant Beta ($\beta$) values for the factors.

**Table 4: Beta Values**

| Predictor variables | Beta( $\beta$) | P |
|---|---|---|
| Physiological and Safety     Factors | .57 | P<.0005 |
| **Happiness Factors** | .49 | P<.0005 |
| **Esteem Factors** | .52 | P<.0005 |

It is to be noted that only variable 1 which represented the motivation of teachers to give their best at work everyday was chosen as the dependent variable. Variable 2 which represented the teachers' overall experience with their social and personal life was taken to test whether variable 1 was correlated to variable 2; in other words whether the workplace motivation of teachers was correlated to their overall experience with their personal and social life.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Question 1, as a dependent variable was tasked to obtain the levels of workplace motivation of the teachers. Question 2 was a dependent variable which was sought to obtain the respondents experience with his or her social and personal factors. A Correlation analysis that was conducted between the responses of these two variables showed significant

correlation. Thus the motivation of the teachers was taken to be correlated to their experiences with their personal and social factors.

A principal component analysis of the ten independent variables which constituted the social and personal factors that teachers experience extracted three components.

- The first component was termed *Physiological and Safety Factor*. It comprised of 4 items, which were related to an individual's physical and mental wellbeing and safety. These factors affect teacher motivation because financial security, physical comfort, good health of an individual teacher and his or her family is essential for motivation at work. These factors act as hygiene factors in the sense that if any of these are compromised it leads to a decreased motivation at work.

- The second component represents *Happiness Factors*. These factors include variables which lead to a happy family and social life for an individual. These factors augment workplace motivation and teaching efficacy.

- The third component represents *esteem factors*. This component includes variables which are connected with the self-esteem of a teacher. Enhanced self-esteem augments the motivation levels of teachers by acting as a springboard to do better and go higher in one's profession.

The results of the principal component regression that was conducted illustrated that the dependent variable which was the motivation of the teachers to give their best at work in school was predicted by the component scores from the *three* components that were extracted by the principal component analysis while adhering to all the assumptions of a multiple regression analysis on model fit, autocorrelation, multicollinearity and normality of residuals.

The profession of teaching unlike many others has a potent emotional and human aspect to it. This is unlike many other professions. A teacher can give his or her best at work only when he or she has a certain level of mental and physical security, a happy family and social life and self-esteem. If teachers face dysfunctional situations in their personal life it will definitely show in their classroom interactions and will lead to a lower level of workplace motivation. The three components that were extracted in the course of this study work as a system, each one affecting the other. Thus if teachers are not satisfied with their physiological and safety factors it will also affect their happiness factors and then in turn their esteem factors. This will in turn affect their motivation to give their best at work each day. A teacher who is not happy and motivated to teach will in turn affect their children negatively and will lead to unsatisfactory teaching-learning outcome. Thus it is important to have teachers having functional, normal and happy personal lives working

in school. This is tricky because it may not be possible for the school management to create interventions for teachers but regular counseling support, good salary and perks, career enhancement programs, training and development, and respect for teachers in school can help to a large extent to create happy and motivated teachers.
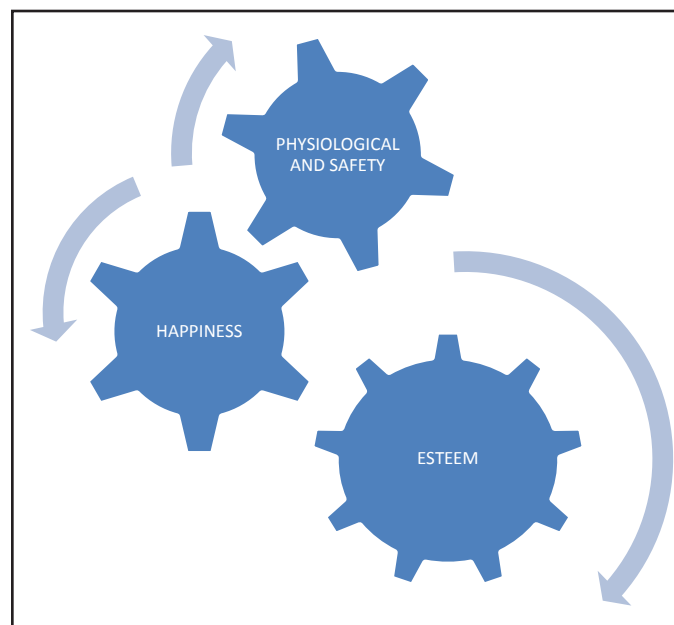


**Figure 2: Relationship Between the Three Factors**

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study explored the impact of personal and social factors on the motivation of school teachers. It was a descriptive research survey, conducted among a random sample of 111 teachers from Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts of North Bengal. The study was conducted among a wide range of schools. These schools consisted of Missionary run English medium schools, rural village schools, schools in tea estates and elite private schools. The teacher student ratio in the range of schools studied varied greatly. While some schools had a Student-Teacher ratio of 20:1 some others had Student: Teacher ratios as high as 55:1. The teachers were chosen at random from these schools and given a choice to participate in the study. A fair mix of both male and female teachers participated with females being more in number. The younger teachers (age<35) were more in terms of participation than their older colleagues. It was observed that the motivation of teachers to give their best at work in school had a positive correlation with their experience with their personal and social factors . A principal component analysis was conducted; it extracted three components which were named Physiological and safety factors, happiness factors and esteem factors. Subsequently a principal component regression was conducted which showed that all the three factors were significant predictors of teacher motivation. A system model was drawn up using these factors and their

impact on the motivation of teacher. The present study is an in-depth study which analyzed the influence of the various personal and social factors on the motivation of school teachers. Earlier studies have confirmed that the motivation of teachers is very important for student's performance (Brumback, 1986). In an era of tough competition the motivation of students are a top-most priority and thus motivated teachers are also very important foreffective outcome. Schools have to be developed and designed as a behavioral system to ensure optimal teacher motivation thus leading to high levels of student motivation. School systems built around this core philosophy    turn into motivating systems wherein the systems automatically motivate organizations without regular interventions.

In order to design such self-motivating school systems all aspects of teacher motivation and its influences have to be taken in to account. This includes the factors related to the personal and social life of teachers which have the potential to influence workplace motivation of teachers in a great way.

This study  had its limitations of size in terms of a relatively small sample size, and was restricted to only two districts in India. Translation bias arising when the respondent had to verbally translate some words or sentences into a local language from the English questionnaire and some inherent bias of the respondents might have had some influence too. A wider study with a larger sample size is thus proposed for further research in the area.

## LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE

The study was a descriptive research study without any interventions from the part of the researchers. While face, content and construct validity of the questionnaire was checked and established the criterion validity was not checked for. The study was conducted to explore the various factors that affect the motivation of school teachers. In this context a wide range of schools and a diverse population of teachers were asked to respond to the questionnaire. All the factors taken were found to be relevant to the study. Thus the researchers feel that the variables as established by this model can be broadly generalized for a wide range of schools. The range of impact of the variables on teacher motivation might differ depending on socio-economic and even geographic factors but no variablecan be termed redundantbut  should be considered when designing a teacher motivation system inall types of schools.

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