

SUPERVISORY SUPPORT AND JOB INVOLVEMENT: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOL TEACHERS IN AMRITSAR

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Abstract *This paper attempts to examine the influence of supervisory support on job involvement of government school teachers. The paper also aims to measure the level of job involvement among school teachers and examines the difference in their job involvement with respect to demographic variables. Data were obtained from 211 government school teachers of Amritsar. The posited hypotheses were tested using regression analysis, descriptive statistics, and ANOVA. Results revealed that supervisory support has a significant positive influence on job involvement of government school teachers. In contrary to the common perception about teachers in government schools, the study found that these teachers have quite high level of job involvement. Further, the study asserted that significant difference exists in job involvement of school teachers with respect to demographic variables namely, gender, age, and experience whereas insignificant difference was observed with respect to marital status, income, and educational qualification. Findings of this study will be beneficial for the policy and decision-makers in school organizations for enhancing job involvement of teachers.*

Keywords: *Supervisory Support, Job Involvement, Government School Teachers*

INTRODUCTION

It is a common saying that students are the pillars of any nation and the task of shaping them resides in the safe hands of teachers (Sharma, 2016). A teacher acts as a catalyst for change, and promotes understanding and tolerance in students (Rubagiza et al., 2016). A teacher is regarded as a compass that triggers curiosity in his students and provides a steady platform to develop knowledge and gain wisdom; that's why, whatever a man achieves in his life is greatly attributed to his teachers. Even in this era of online coaching, a teacher cannot be replaced with any other type of instructional material (Hanif & Saba, 2000). Despite being such a noble profession on which lies the responsibility to steer next generation in the right direction, the overall respect and status of teaching faculty have declined over the years especially that of government school teachers in India (Sinha, 2013). In this context, a widespread perception is that they often lack motivation and enthusiasm towards their job and, on the whole, have a relaxed attitude towards their profession and are mainly interested in the financial benefits out of their job (Dogra, 2012). Also, it has been reported that whenever they get posting in rural or remote areas then either they mostly remain absent from duty or make suitable

arrangements (by hiring services of the third party and paying little amount per month), and also directing efforts towards immediate transfer to the most privileged location (Murali, 2016).

However, considering the recent developments in the structuring of government school, the education system has made the job profile of a government teacher more taxing and affected their job involvement. As per a survey, government schools in India are found to be over packed, which results in low teacher-student ratio, which is approximately 1:50 (Kaur, 2014). A single teacher has to tackle a large number of students, which leads to work over-load. Moreover, the government school teacher's duties are not limited to teaching hours only. They have to fulfil a good number of non-teaching duties as well like acting as election invigilators during election days, collecting NSSO data, etc., that will keep them away from schools for many days. Besides, they also have to face a lot of political meddling in their regular duties and lack of coordination among themselves adds to their woes (Suleman et al., 2012).

Thus, in this type of environment, the teaching staff require a proper support system at the workplace so that they can focus well on their core task, i.e., teaching along with

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fulfilling additional duties whenever assigned to them. In other words, the support of headmaster becomes extremely crucial to ensure that the expectations of teachers are met. It is essential to have a supportive headmaster who creates such a supportive climate in the school that allows teachers to realize their potential (Dabbs, 2012). A headmaster can create a learning environment in which teachers can experiment with new ideas and practices for teaching and exercise creativity (Bredeson, 2000). Therefore, to encourage and boost the morale of teachers, headmaster ought to look into their sense of fulfilment of their needs, which will let them focus on their work and, hence, improve their job involvement (Hung, 2008). Thus, the aim of the present paper is to explore the relationship between supervisory support and job involvement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job Involvement

Research studies on job involvement came into limelight during the mid 1960s with the pioneering work of Lodahl and Kejner (1965) who, for the first time, explored the concept of job involvement (Khan & Nemati, 2011). They defined job involvement as “the degree to which a person’s work performance affects his self-esteem” (p. 25). In other words, job involvement refers to “individual employee’s level of psychological identification with the specific job in which he or she is engaged” (Kanungo, 1982, p. 97). It can be inferred that if an employee has a positive insight about his organization’s support, then he is likely to have a positive attitude towards his organization (Shore & Wayne, 1993).

Evidence suggests that there are several constructs associated with job involvement. For instance, the high level of job involvement is associated with reduced absenteeism and lower turnover rates (Chen & Chiu, 2009), enhanced job performance and organizational citizenship behaviour (Jung & Yoon, 2016), improved organizational commitment, increased level of job satisfaction (Lambert & Paoline, 2010), and enhanced employees’ personal growth and satisfaction at the workplace (Brown, 1996). Numerous studies (Mann, 2013; Rajkumar et al., 2016; Bhatia & Srilatha, 2016) reported job involvement as a dependent factor to a wide variety of constructs. Yan and Su (2013) found that social support has a significant positive influence on job involvement of nurses in China. Shaheen and Farooqi (2014) also conducted a study on 200 teaching employees of the University of Gujrat in Pakistan and revealed that employee motivation has a significant positive impact on job involvement.

Similarly, Davani (2016) has concluded that job nature and its components significantly impact job involvement of teachers. In one another study in India, Kalpana and

Dharmaraj (2018) have asserted that demographic factors namely, age, gender, marital status, experience, and salary influence the level of job involvement of bank employees. These studies have examined the role of human resource practices, social support, family support, etc., in influencing job involvement; but, limited studies have examined the influence of supervisory support on job involvement of employees.

Supervisory Support

Numerous researchers have strived to explore the possible antecedents that foster job involvement of employees. Supervisory support is one of the important factors that lead to employees’ high job involvement. It is defined as the extent to which the supervisors care about the well-being of their employees and value their contribution (Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). Supervisors are the agents who govern and evaluate the performance of their subordinates. The employees are quite aware that the evaluation by the supervisor is often communicated to the higher authorities, so that they would always seek their support. As the employees develop their career with an organization, they have some expectations from it. If the supervisor succeeds in catering to those expectations and supports them, they will have more positive organizational outcomes.

Various studies have examined supervisory support as an independent variable. For instance, in their study on 1949 health centre employees in the United States, Yang et al. (2015) reported that supervisory support has a significant negative effect on job stress. Gok et al. (2015) found that supportive supervisor leads to increased job satisfaction. Mohamed and Ali (2016) conducted a study on 109 telecommunication employees in Malaysia and asserted that supervisor support has significant impact on job satisfaction and affective commitment. Ho (2017) revealed that supervisor support has positive and significant effect on employee voice behaviour. All these studies shows that high supervisory support leads to increased job satisfaction, organizational commitment and career satisfaction, employee voice behaviour, and reduced job stress of employees in various sectors.

It can be concluded that a number of studies have examined job involvement of employees and supervisory support separately but there are very limited studies that investigated the influence of supervisory support on job involvement (Babin & Boles, 1996; Elias & Mittal, 2015; Liu et al., 2016). Thus, the present study is an endeavour to bridge this critical gap in research.

So, the literature review proposes the following hypothesis:

H₁: High levels of supervisory support will enhance job involvement of employees.

Thus, the school teacher's deep involvement in their jobs is very much essential for the holistic growth of children. This is more desired in the case of teachers in government schools, as these schools in India have most of the students from underprivileged families. In these schools, a teacher is required to fully justify his teaching job along with providing extra care for needy students. Although various factors can affect job involvement of teaching staff in schools, the most crucial is the support of headmaster of the school. The present study is an effort in this direction. With the above background, the present study intends to:

- Study the influence of supervisory support on job involvement.
- Measure the level of job involvement among school teachers.
- Examine the difference in job involvement of school teachers with respect to demographic variables.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample

Data were collected from government school teachers in Amritsar district of Punjab state of India. In total, 300 questionnaires were distributed; however, out of these only 224 questionnaires were received back. Out of 224, only 211 questionnaires were found to be filled entirely, representing 84% response rate. Thus, the analysis of data is based on 211 questionnaires. Table 1 shows that male respondents represented 39.8% while female respondents were 60.2%. 35.1% respondents belonged to the age group of more than 35 years to 45 years. Majority of the respondents were postgraduates and married. 48.3% teachers had teaching experience of more than 10 years. 56.9% teachers had annual income of more than 5 Lakhs.

Table 1: Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents

Variables	Percent
Gender	
Male	39.8
Female	60.2
Age (in years)	
<25	5.7
> 25–35	31.2
>35–45	35.1
>45	28.0
Marital Status	
Married	90
Unmarried	10
Experience(in years)	
0–5	30.3

>5–10	21.4
>10	48.3
Income(annual)	
Below 2 Lakhs	5.7
>2–5 Lakhs	37.4
Above 5 Lakhs	56.9
Educational Qualification	
Graduates	28.4
Post-Graduates	63.5
PhD.	8.1

Source: Primary data

Job involvement of teachers was measured by taking 18 items from job involvement scale by Lodahl and Kejner (1965). The responses were scaled on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Scoring was done as per the procedure recommended by the authors. Supervisory support was measured by using 6-item Supervisor Support Scale, which was included in the Generations of Talent Survey (Catsopoulos & Sarkisian, 2014) with Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.93$. Four statements were adapted from Greenhaus et al. (1990), one from Barak (2005), and one was taken from Scarpello and Vandenberg (1987).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the present study, the influence of supervisory support on job involvement was examined using regression analysis. For measuring the level of job involvement of school teachers, descriptive statistical methods were used. Further, ANOVA was applied to examine the difference in job involvement of school teachers with respect to demographic variables. These statistical tests have been applied by using SPSS software.

Influence of Supervisory Support on Job Involvement

The overall model is found to be significant (F value = 347.95, p value = 0.000) and supervisory support explained 62.5% variance in job involvement. Results revealed that supervisory support had a significant positive influence on job involvement with $\beta = 0.79$ and $p < 0.05$. This means that supervisory support plays an important role in determining the level of job involvement of employees. In other words, higher the support received from school headmaster, higher will be the job involvement of school teachers. Thus, H_1 is accepted. The results of present study are in line with the findings of Elias and Mittal (2015) and Liu et al. (2016), who reported that supervisory support was positively related to job involvement of employees.

Measuring the Level of Job Involvement

From Table 2, it is clear that most of the respondents (71.6%) have a high level of job involvement whereas 28.4% of respondents showed a low level of job involvement. It is evident from these findings that despite the common perception about government school teachers' lack of interest in their duties, the majority of them are found to be highly involved in their jobs. In contrast, to present findings, Ishwara's (2010) study reported a moderate level of job involvement among university teachers.

Table 2: Teachers' Level of Job Involvement

S. No.	Score Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	25–49	Low	60	28.4
2	50–80	High	151	71.6

Source: Primary data

Job Involvement and Demographic Variables

In order to examine the difference in job involvement of government school teachers with respect to demographic variables, the following hypotheses were drafted:

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in job involvement of teachers with respect to gender.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in job involvement of teachers with respect to age.

H₀₄: There is no significant difference in job involvement of teachers with respect to marital status.

H₀₅: There is no significant difference in job involvement of teachers with respect to experience.

H₀₆: There is no significant difference in job involvement of teachers with respect to income.

H₀₇: There is no significant difference in job involvement of teachers with respect to educational qualification.

Table 3 shows the results of ANOVA for various demographic variables. Results reveal that there is a significant difference between job involvement of male and female teachers ($p = 0.017$). Thus, the null hypothesis H₀₂ is rejected. It states that the job involvement of female teachers is very different from that of male teachers. It was found that job involvement of male teachers is more than the job involvement of female teachers. The female teachers also have other responsibilities at home which lead to lower job involvement as compared to male teachers. The findings are well supported by the studies conducted by Mehta (2011) and Kalpana and Dharmaraj (2018).

Further, a significant difference has also been found in job involvement of teachers concerning their age ($p = 0.012$) and experience ($p = 0.029$). By applying Tukey's post-hoc test, it was found that job involvement of the age group greater than 25 to 35 years is significantly different from the rest age groups. On the other hand, job involvement of all the experience groups differs significantly. Anitha and Muralidharan's (2014) study also reported similar findings. Data in Table III show that no significant difference between job involvement of teachers concerning marital status, income, and educational qualification ($p > 0.05$). These findings are equally supported by Adham (2014).

Table III: Results of ANOVA for Various Demographic Variables

Variable	F value	Sig. level (p value)	Hypotheses accepted/ rejected
Gender	5.75	0.017	H ₀₂ is rejected.
Age	3.73	0.012	H ₀₃ is rejected.
Marital status	2.19	0.140	H ₀₄ is accepted.
Experience	3.58	0.029	H ₀₅ is rejected.
Income	1.79	0.169	H ₀₆ is accepted.
Educational qualification	0.28	0.756	H ₀₇ is accepted.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In summary, the present study found that supervisory support has a significant positive influence on job involvement, thus suggesting that higher the supervisory support, higher will be the job involvement. Thus, it implies that in determining job involvement level of employees, supervisory support plays a significant role. In an organization, it is crucial to ascertain the feelings of support from supervisor among the employees for effective job involvement. Moreover, having the supportive supervisor will also allow the employees to

have high job involvement by formulating and implementing appropriate policies and strategies in a timely manner.

Also, most of the government school teachers in Amritsar were found to have high job involvement. Further, it was found that significant difference exists in job involvement of school teachers with respect to demographic variables namely, gender, age, and experience whereas insignificant difference in job involvement is found with respect to marital status, income, and educational qualification. As the job involvement of female teachers found to be less than that of male teachers, thus female-oriented policies should

be formulated so that the female teachers can manage work life balance.

Prior studies fall short of explaining the influence of supervisory support on job involvement; therefore, the findings of this study hold crucial implications for the government school education system, especially for the headmasters. They are required to provide a supportive climate in the school premises so as to foster job involvement in teachers. For instance, the headmaster can support teachers by acknowledging their value to school and reminding them how significant their work is for the proper growth of students as well as that of school.

Limitations are inevitable from even best work completed. The present paper also has some limitations, which provide an opportunity for future research. Firstly, this research involved a cross-sectional study in which data of all variables were collected at the same period of time. Future studies can adopt a longitudinal research approach to conduct measurements at different time periods. Secondly, data were collected only from one district of Punjab state and that too from a limited number of respondents. The limited sample size and area constraint may make accurate generalizations problematic. So, future research can take a larger sample size and include other districts of the state also. Thirdly, the sample was chosen by means of convenience sampling, which may not be the representative of the whole population. So, simple random sampling can be used for future research. Moreover, the sample of the study was obtained from government school teachers only. It can be extended and include the private schoolteachers also. A comparison can also be made between the job involvement levels of government and private school teachers.

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