CHAPTER - III

JOB SATISFACTION AND COLLEGE TEACHERS – AN OVERVIEW

Importance of the Teacher

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan says, “The teacher’s place in society is of vital importance. He acts as the pivot of the transmission of intellectual traditions and technical skills from generation to generation and helps to keep the lamp of civilization burning. He not only guides the individual but also, so to say, the destiny of the nation.”

The importance of a teacher in the educational process is unquestionable. However, the entire edifice of education becomes shaky if the teacher is weak and ineffective. An effective teacher is amongst the foremost factors contributing to educational improvement, which we are trying hard to achieve. After independence, hundreds of crores of rupees have been spent to open new schools and provide them with adequate equipment and other facilities. Lakhs of rupees have been spent on committees and commissions to deliberate and recommend methods for bringing about qualitative improvement in education. As a result of those working in the field of education, we have endeavored to develop better curriculum, text books and teaching aids. Considerable efforts have been made to devise better means of techniques of teaching and assessing students’ achievements. But this is of no use and developmental targets are bound to remain unachieved unless schools are staffed with effective teachers. It is they who influence and shape the competence and character of boys and girls. If competent teacher can be obtained, the likelihood of attaining desirable educational out comes is substantial. On the other hand, although schools may have excellent material resources in the form of equipment, buildings and text books and curricula may be appropriately
adopted to community requirements, if the teachers are misfit or indifferent to their responsibilities, the whole programme is likely to be ineffective and largely wasted.

Improved physical facilities, teaching techniques, etc., no doubt, supplement a teacher’s efficiency, but these cannot be substitutes for effective teachers. The importance of an effective teacher in the educational process is indeed indisputable.

**Importance of Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction has some relation with the mental health of the people. Dissatisfaction with one’s job may have especially volatile spillover effects. For instance, people feel bad about many other things such as family life, leisure activities, sometimes even life itself. Many unresolved personality problems and maladjustments arise out of a person’s inability to find satisfaction in his life. Both scientific study and casual observation provide ample evidence that job satisfaction is important for the psychological adjustment and happy living of an individual. A classic study by Arthur Komhausen provides empirical evidence for the relationship between job satisfaction and mental health. In fact, job satisfaction and the life satisfaction are inextricably bounded.

Job satisfaction has some degree of positive correlation with physical health of individuals. Palmore, by a study, has come to the conclusion that people who like work are likely to live longer. Here, the logic behind such result is that people with greater satisfaction tend to have greater incomes and more education and thus coincidentally enjoy greater benefits which promote longevity. On the other side of the coin, it was contended that chronic dissatisfaction with work represents stress which, in turn, eventually
takes its toll on the organization. Emotional stress, as physicians contend, has been implicated as a contributory factor in the genesis of hypertension, coronary artery disease, digestive ailments and even some kinds of cancer. Therefore, job satisfaction is essential to maintain physical health also.

Job satisfaction spreads goodwill about the organizations from the point of view of an organization. People who feel positively about their work life are more apt to voice favorable sentiments about the organization to the community at large. When the goodwill of the organization goes up, new, qualified and dynamic entrants show their interest in joining organization. Organization thus will be in a position to enjoy the talents of people as job satisfaction fosters a pervasive residue of public goodwill towards the organization.

Individuals can live with the organization when they have job satisfaction. A happy and satisfied individual can find it easy to live with the organization as well as outside it. On the contrary, a chronically upset individual makes organizational life vexatious for others with whom he interacts.

Job satisfaction reduces absenteeism and turnover. These calculable cost-employee turnover and absenteeism are sufficient to accept the importance of the job satisfaction. Higher job satisfaction reduces labour turnover and absenteeism and the managers are compelled, if they are unconvinced about the merits of job satisfaction, to give priority, adequate weightages to job satisfaction. A serious consequence of job satisfaction can be the employee turnover.
Consequences of Job Dissatisfaction

1. Absenteeism

There exists a relationship between the job satisfaction and frequency of absence of employees whether unexcused absence due to minor ailments or total long absence. Absenteeism is inversely related to the level of job satisfaction. Job dissatisfaction produces a lack of will to work and this forces the employee to alienate from work as far as possible.

2. Turnover

Research has clearly established that the satisfied worker is less likely than his dissatisfied counterpart to quit the job over time. In other words, satisfied worker tends to stay and dissatisfied tends to leave. It is infinitively reasonable that since workers derive levels of satisfactions from their work roles, job dissatisfaction forces an individual to leave the job and seek satisfaction else where.

3. Negative Publicity

Another frequently noticeable consequence of job dissatisfaction is ‘bad mouthing’ the organization. That is, disgruntled employee verbalizes his discontent to others in the community and makes the organization unpopular. Such negative publicity can lead to difficulty in recruiting new employees. It may also result in loss of business to a certain extent.

Job Satisfaction and Productivity

‘A satisfied worker is a productive employee’ is a popular but discredited view. Does the dissatisfaction in jobs result in curtailment of output? Does increased job satisfaction lead to higher output and hence productivity. These are haunting questions that have been nagged both industrial psychologists and managers in organization without discrimination
for nearly five decades. Briefly let us review some studies pertaining to this controversial topic.

1. The above results are substantiated by two other studies— one regarding the three hundred rail road workers and second one that of six thousand workers at a tractor factory.

2. A review of about twenty studies by Victor Vroom in 1964 disclosed only the barest evidence supporting a direct link between satisfaction and productivity. While job attitudes bear a discriminable relationship such as absenteeism and labor turnover, the valuable evidence, suggests that strong positive relationship with productivity is lacking virtually.

Determinants of Job Satisfaction

Many factors influence job satisfaction of employees. Review of research reveals the following important determinants of job satisfaction.

1. Supervision

The first and foremost important determinant of job satisfaction is supervision and the style of leadership. Generally, employee- centered leadership style enhances a great amount of job satisfaction as the leader looks after the subordinates carefully, displays friendship, shows respect and warmth, etc., towards employees. On the other hand, production-oriented leader may cause low job satisfaction to employees and may affect the turnover and absenteeism adversely. Of course, it all depends on the situation. For instance, Trow and Sanford have found that authoritarian subordinates are likely to be more satisfied under supervision of high status and strong leaders.
2. **The Work Group**

Perhaps one strong human characteristic is the man’s desire to be continuously associated with other, according to Elton Mayo. It has been found empirically that isolated workers dislike their jobs. In other words, the work group also exerts a tremendous influence on the satisfaction of employees at work place. In one study by Richards and Dobryns, it was found that morale of a group in an insurance company was significantly lower by a physical change which restricted the opportunity of their members of social interaction.

3. **Job Content**

Another influential factor of job satisfaction is the job content. Job content refers to the factors such as recognition, responsibility, advancement, achievement etc., in the jobs employee perform. Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman contend that job content factors like achievement, responsibility, etc., lead to greater job satisfaction, they had postulated this theory after interviewing a large chunk of accountants and engineers. Some research studies have shown that security, supervision, social relationships were job content factors leading to job satisfaction. In one study by Walder and Guest, it has been found that atleast one job content factor is very significant from the view point of job satisfaction They found that repetitive nature of task is the most dissatisfied factor and pay and security were satisfying factors.

4. **Occupational Level**

Ample research suggests that people in higher level jobs experience the highest levels of satisfaction. One significant reason for this is that high level jobs carry most prestige and self esteem will be enhanced to the extent that other people view our work is important. High level jobs are satisfying for many other reasons too: (i) They offer excellent opportunities for the
expression of the needs for power and autonomy, (ii) They reduce financial stringency of the employees, and (iii) They offer task diversity and job enrichment.

According to Glimmer, professional people receive the greatest job satisfaction, followed by salaried workers. Factory workers are the least satisfied with their jobs. Porter substantiated the same fact when he made a study on job satisfaction of managers at various levels in the hierarchy. He found that, at each successive lower levels, the managers were less satisfied. Anecdotal evidence from a variety of sources also continue to suggest that blue-collar workers are often the victims of severe dissatisfaction.

5. Specialization

The relationship between job specialization and job satisfaction is complex. Specialization leads to greater efficiency in general, but at the same time it lowers the job satisfaction to some people, while increasing initially after a particular point, it starts falling. That is to say, after a certain point, specialization leads to dissatisfaction. In one study by Walker and Guest, it has been found when people have worked on a number of operations they were satisfied. Of the workers who performed only one operation and repeated it quite a number of times in a work study, two thirris reported their jobs to be uninteresting. Enlarging the job by adding diverse, totally unrelated activities or job rotation of workers from one job to another, unrelated job may not produce intended positive consequences of job satisfaction.

6. Age

The relationship between age of the employees and their satisfaction from the job is both complex and fascinating. Research reveals that old workers are satisfied workers.
Job satisfaction tends to be high when people enter the work force; it plummets and then plateaus for several years after which there will be gradual increase in satisfaction. Finally, many due to pre-retirement apprehension, job satisfaction may have a slight dip at the end with their experience over a period of time, they realize their disillusionment and have accurate expectations because of which job will be seen in a positive perspective resulting in higher job satisfaction.

Another plausible reason could be people, when they begin their job life, have a tendency of over estimating themselves and seek flexibility and want to be placed in good organizations. After some period when they get settled down in a particular job, they become realistic and may be content with it, but certainly just before retirement, satisfaction may fall due to the fear of future. A retiring person may feel that he is treated like a machine and discarded as obsolete and useless. These feelings make him dissatisfied at work. Dissatisfaction is more evident when his application for extension is rejected.

7. Educational Level

Keeping the occupational level as constant, a negative correlation was found between the level of education of employees and their satisfaction. One plausible explanation could be that people with higher educational level have a tendency to set higher expectations from their jobs. Dissatisfaction will be more when educated persons are employed in lower rungs. In practice, since many people with high background of education are usually placed in respectable higher positions, the conflict resolves itself.
How to Improve Job Satisfaction?

To mitigate dissatisfaction or to improve job satisfaction, a number of interventions can be undertaken. Some of the most important of them are:

1. Improving the Working Conditions

One simple prescribed solution to increase job satisfaction is to improve those conditions which are organizational sore parts. In one company, job enrichment raised the morale of electronic technicians. Thus by identifying the root cause of job dissatisfaction, the management can evolve a strategy for remedial action.

2. Transferring Discontented Workers

In some cases, it is also possible to mitigate dissatisfaction by transferring the disgruntled employee to another job matching his tastes and preferences. This transfer achieves a better fit between individual job characteristics and promotes job satisfaction. This kind of transfer may not be without certain constraints. The dissatisfied person may be unwilling to move from the existing position or he may be incompetent to hold other challenging job.

3. Changing the Perceptions of Dissatisfied Employees

Employees sometimes have misconceptions about many aspects of job. Dissatisfactions stem from the misperceptions about the organization. Employees may be misinformed about certain issues. The management can change the perceptions of dissatisfied employees and restore job satisfaction by furnishing the correct information, and because of this the discontent gets subsided over a time.
4. Initiating Morale Building Programmes

Organization conducts programmes of development wherein morale building becomes a major part. Even the successful organizations also conduct new programmes to keep the morale and job satisfaction at higher level. For instance, in USA, the effective organization from the view point of profitability and having record of good service to public and with high morale among employees has introduced a programme called ‘Van Pooling’ which increased job satisfaction of a larger number of employees.

Quality of Work Life

Today’s employees are looking for more humanized jobs, better work environment, challenging jobs, and also satisfaction of higher order needs such as autonomy, participation, corporate status, etc. Through his two factor theory of motivation, Fredrick Herzberg advocated that organizations should pay increasing attention to job content factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility and work itself as key motivators for employees. If a job contains these enriching elements, Herzberg believed, it would improve the job satisfaction in particular and quality of work life in general for the individual employees and improve performance.

But, when compared with job satisfaction, the meaning and scope of the term “quality of work life” (QWL) has wide variation and implications while some consider it as an extended version of job satisfaction, some other equate QWL to a philosophy of corporate working life encompassing numerous functions ranging from those that may affect the personal life of employees to those that affect corporate working life in a society.

According to Richard E. Walton, the term quality of work life has come to mean far more than the needs satisfied by 40 hour week, workmen’s compensation laws, and job guarantees through collective bargaining even more than equal employment opportunity and job enrichment schemes. The term also includes other human needs and aspirations.