

Job Satisfaction and Motivation of Primary School Teachers in Tanzania

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Abstract

Teachers are the most important resource for effective learning in schools. The quality of the teacher is closely linked to the quality of incentives the teacher receives. This paper presents findings of a study that examined the level of and factors associated with job satisfaction among primary school teachers in Tanzania. Data were collected from a randomly selected sample of 279 primary school teachers recruited from 23 regions of Tanzania through a mobile phone survey. The results show that most primary school teachers in Tanzania are extremely dissatisfied with their job, with more than half of them (57.7%) reporting that they are either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied. Large classes, number of teaching subjects and extra-curricular activities were mentioned as the most demotivating factors by the interviewed teachers. This implies that primary school teachers in Tanzania are very overworked. These results also indicate that most primary school teachers in Tanzania can be described as 'stuck' in a career that does not satisfy their curiosity or needs. The results suggest further that many teachers in Tanzania joined the teaching profession as a last resort. Overall, the results have provided important insights for education policy makers to consider when designing teacher education programmes, as well as in recruiting and deploying teachers.

Key words: Job satisfaction, motivation, primary school teachers

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Learning is a complex process and so are its determinants. When Governments talk about improving the quality of education, they often refer to providing quantifiable inputs such as financial resources, infrastructure and textbooks to schools and systems. As argued by Vegas and Petrow (2008), this approach is simple because such inputs can be tracked and controlled relatively easily. Additionally, given their high visibility, they are politically sellable. Nevertheless, studies show that the provision of school inputs alone does not guarantee that learning will take place. The literature shows that the quality of learning is influenced by an interplay of several factors, including, for example, the home environment, the family's socio-economic status, parents' engagement with their children's education and school-related factors, such as the infrastructure and quality of the teachers (Masino & Nino-Zarazua, 2015; Hungi, 2011; Vegas & Petrow, 2008).

Of the several school-related factors that influence students' learning, teachers matter more than any other aspect of schooling (OECD, 2005; Slater, Davies & Burgess, 2009; Craig, Kraft, & Plessis, 1998; Bruns & Luque, 2015). This is largely because factors relating to teachers and teaching are potentially more open to the influence of policy than other factors such as family background (OECD, 2005). Indeed, recent research shows that once children get to school, teacher quality becomes the single most critical factor in driving learning outcomes (OECD, 2005; Bruns & Luque, 2015). An analytical review of country-specific policies in attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers in 25 OECD countries estimated that teachers have two to three times the impact of other school factors in improving students' learning. A study by Slater et al. (2009) in the United Kingdom, which used a point-in-time fixed effects analysis

of primary school data drawn from 7000 students linked to their individual teachers, found that having a one-standard deviation better teacher raises the test score by (at least) 25% of a standard deviation.

While there is consensus in the literature about the centrality of effective teachers in influencing learning, the variables that contribute to teacher quality remain largely contentious. Among a multitude of factors that promote teachers' effectiveness (such as training and experience), their motivation emerges as one of the critical factors in attracting and retaining teachers in the teaching profession, as well as in ensuring that they perform their duties, notably engaging in classroom teaching (Guarjardo, 2011; Davidson, 2006). Research shows that teachers' lack of motivation results in absenteeism, under-utilization of class time, professional misconduct, reliance on traditional teaching practices, poor preparation and secondary income-generating activities that distract from teaching duties (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007).

Davidson (2006) summarised the central role of teachers' motivation in teaching and learning as follows:

“Classrooms can be built, additional teaching and learning resources can be provided, students can be taken to their lessons, school committees and communities can become actively involved in the teaching and learning process, inspectors and local education officials can offer adequate levels of support, and sufficient numbers of teachers can be employed to create learning-enabling environments. Further, efforts can be made to ensure that teachers are well-educated, highly trained professionals who are gender-sensitive advocates of child-friendly approaches and are able to work with large classes. However, none of these actions will ensure that teachers perform their duties” [without them being adequately motivated to undertake their functions] (p.3).

Theoretical basis of job satisfaction and motivation

There are two main classical theories that inform the subject of job satisfaction and teachers' motivation. These are Herzberg's motivation/hygiene (two-factor) theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory.

Herzberg's two-factor theory focuses on the sources of motivation that are pertinent to the accomplishment of work (Hall & Williams, 1986, cited in Pardee, 1990, p. 7). According to this theory, job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not on the same continuum but are the products of two separate factors, namely *motivating factors* (satisfiers) and *hygiene factors* (dissatisfiers).

Herzberg identifies six satisfiers and eight dissatisfiers. The satisfiers (motivating factors) are *achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement* and *growth*. The dissatisfiers (also called hygiene factors) are *company policy, supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relations, salary, status, job security* and *personal life*. The motivating factors relate to those that are inherent to the work and motivate employees intrinsically by yielding positive satisfaction. The hygiene factors, on the other hand, are those that are essential for employees' existence at the workplace and do not necessarily lead to satisfaction in the long term.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory provides five needs that are arranged so that the lower-level needs are at the bottom, which must be satisfied first, before the higher-level needs are met. The lower-level needs are also categorised as deficiency needs, which must be met before addressing the higher-level needs, which are categorised as growth needs (Huitt, 2007). The lower-level needs are *physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness needs* and *esteem needs*.

The higher-level needs are *cognitive needs* (need to know, understand and explore), *aesthetic needs*, *self-actualization* and *self-transcendence needs*.

In the context of Herzberg's two-factor theory, the hygiene factors can be equated with lower-level needs in Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. This implies that the hygiene factors are critical for job satisfaction, which, in the language of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, must be met before addressing the motivational factors (or higher-level needs). Therefore, it is not feasible to draw a clear line between hygiene factors and motivational factors in examining what satisfies employees. The two work together and complement each other in giving employees the motivation to work and providing job satisfaction.

Job motivating factors can also be categorised as internal and external factors, which are commonly referred to as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, respectively. Intrinsic motivation refers to the motivation necessary to engage in an activity because that activity is considered enjoyable and satisfying (Deci & Ryan, 1985, cited by Gultekin & Acar, 2014). Thus, intrinsic motivation emanates from factors such as personal interest, curiosity, enjoyment and inherent feelings of satisfaction. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is derived from the influence of some external incentive factors, such as earning rewards or avoiding a negative consequence. In Herzberg's two-factor theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the extrinsic factors largely fall under hygiene factors and lower-level needs, respectively. The intrinsic factors, on the other hand, fall under the motivating factors and higher-level needs, respectively.

Clearly, although intrinsic factors are naturally the most effective and sustainable for motivating teachers, there is a minimum threshold of external support that teachers need below which they cannot reasonably be expected to perform their duties effectively (Voluntary Services Overseas, [VSO], 2005; Gultekin & Acar, 2014). Over time, therefore, inadequate support, such as poor remuneration packages in the form of, for example, salaries, will erode teachers' commitment to their vocation (Bennel & Akyeampong, 2007).

Purpose of the study

There is paucity of studies that have examined the level and factors of teachers' motivation in sub-Saharan Africa. The few studies available have mainly focused on secondary school teachers (Garett, 1999). In Tanzania, such studies are virtually absent. It is, therefore, unclear about the extent to which teachers are motivated to undertake their responsibilities. With this limited understanding of teachers' motivation in Tanzania, a firm basis for engaging education policy makers and practitioners is lacking to enable them to take appropriate measures to motivate teachers. The purpose of this survey was, therefore, to examine the current state of affairs concerning teachers' job satisfaction and motivation in Tanzania. Two key questions were addressed in the study: 1) What is the level of job satisfaction among primary school teachers in Tanzania? 2) What factors do teachers consider motivate them to do their work?

Method

Participants and sampling process

Data for this study came from Sauti za Wananchi (Voices of Citizens) survey. This is a monthly mobile phone panel survey conducted by Twaweza East Africa³ on a nationally representative random sample of 2000 adult citizens across regions in Tanzania Mainland. The sampling process for Sauti za Wananchi involves three stages. Firstly, 200 enumeration areas are randomly sampled countrywide. These survey areas are in rural and urban settings defined by the Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics. Secondly, in each sampled enumeration area, all households are listed, from which 10 are randomly selected. Thirdly, in each selected household, one adult respondent is randomly selected from all adult members.

The majority (72%) of adult citizens in Tanzania own mobile phones. At the household level, 84 percent of adult citizens have at least one mobile phone (80% in rural areas and 92% in urban areas). To ensure that the lack of a mobile does not affect participation in the study, every sampled respondent is provided with a mobile phone and a solar charger, thereby ensuring that the survey reached all the sampled respondents.

This paper reports on the survey conducted in December 2016 covering parents and teachers, but it focuses only on teachers' data. A total of 279 teachers were interviewed from 23 regions of Tanzania Mainland (see the distribution of respondents in Table 2).

Table 1: Distribution of Teachers Who Participated in the Teacher Motivation Survey by Region

<i>Region</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
1. Arusha	5	1.8
2. Dar es Salaam	9	3.2
3. Dodoma	14	5.0
4. Geita	13	4.7
5. Iringa	5	1.8
6. Kagera	31	11.1
7. Kigoma	24	8.6
8. Kilimanjaro	18	6.5
9. Lindi	10	3.6
10. Manyara	3	1.1
11. Mara	24	8.6
12. Mbeya	8	2.9
13. Mtwara	12	4.3
14. Mwanza	16	5.7
15. Njombe	8	2.9
16. Pwani	11	3.9
17. Rukwa	7	2.5
18. Ruvuma	9	3.2
19. Shinyanga	5	1.8
20. Simiyu	12	4.3
21. Singida	5	1.8
22. Tabora	28	10.0
23. Tanga	2	0.7
Total	279	100

Participants were primary school teachers in public schools. Their mean age was 39 (minimum 22, maximum 60, SD 11.33). Table 2 presents other demographic characteristics of the teachers

³Twaweza is a non-government organisation focusing on promoting children's learning and citizens' agency for positive change through their active engagement and accountability. It operates in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.

who participated in the study with respect to their teaching experience, qualifications and education level. The majority of teachers (71.8%) had a teaching experience of six to ten years (17.6%) or over ten years (54.2%), which shows that the majority of primary school teachers had a lot of teaching experience. Teaching experience is one of the factors strongly associated with teaching effectiveness (Goe, 2007; Boyd et al., 2008; Kini & Podolsky, 2016). The majority of teachers (85.7%) had a certificate in education as their teaching qualification. Additionally, the education level of the majority of teachers (93.6%) was secondary education.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Responding Teachers

Category	N	%
Teaching experience in years		
a) <1	17	6.1
b) 1 to 5	60	22.1
c) 6 to 10	48	17.6
d) >10	147	54.2
Teaching qualifications		
a) Certificate in education	233	85.7
b) Diploma in education	28	10.3
c) Bachelor's degree in education	11	4
Level of education		
a) Primary education	10	3.7
b) Secondary education	255	93.6
c) Bachelor's degree	6	2.2
d) Master's or higher	1	0.37

Measures

Participants responded to a 35-item questionnaire, with 28 items on teacher motivation elements; three items measuring job satisfaction and four items measuring the demographic characteristics of teachers, such as age, teaching qualification, education level and teaching experience. The interview items were adopted from various similar instruments measuring teacher motivation and job satisfaction in different settings. The reliability of the survey items was very good with an average Cronbach's Alpha of 0.89.

Results

Job satisfaction level

When teachers were asked about the extent to which they were satisfied with their job as teachers, the majority (57.6%) of them indicated that they were either very dissatisfied (35.3%) or dissatisfied (22.3%). About two percent of the teachers indicated that they were either satisfied (0.74%) or very satisfied (0.74%). When asked whether they believed that the teachers they worked with were motivated, more than half (50.7%) of them reported that they did not believe so compared with 47.8 percent who responded affirmatively. Nevertheless, two-thirds (66.5%) of them indicated that they would choose to become teachers if they had the opportunity to start all over again in a new career. This indicates that, although teachers may like their profession, they may be dissatisfied with the working conditions associated with the job. Figure 1 indicates teachers' job satisfaction level.

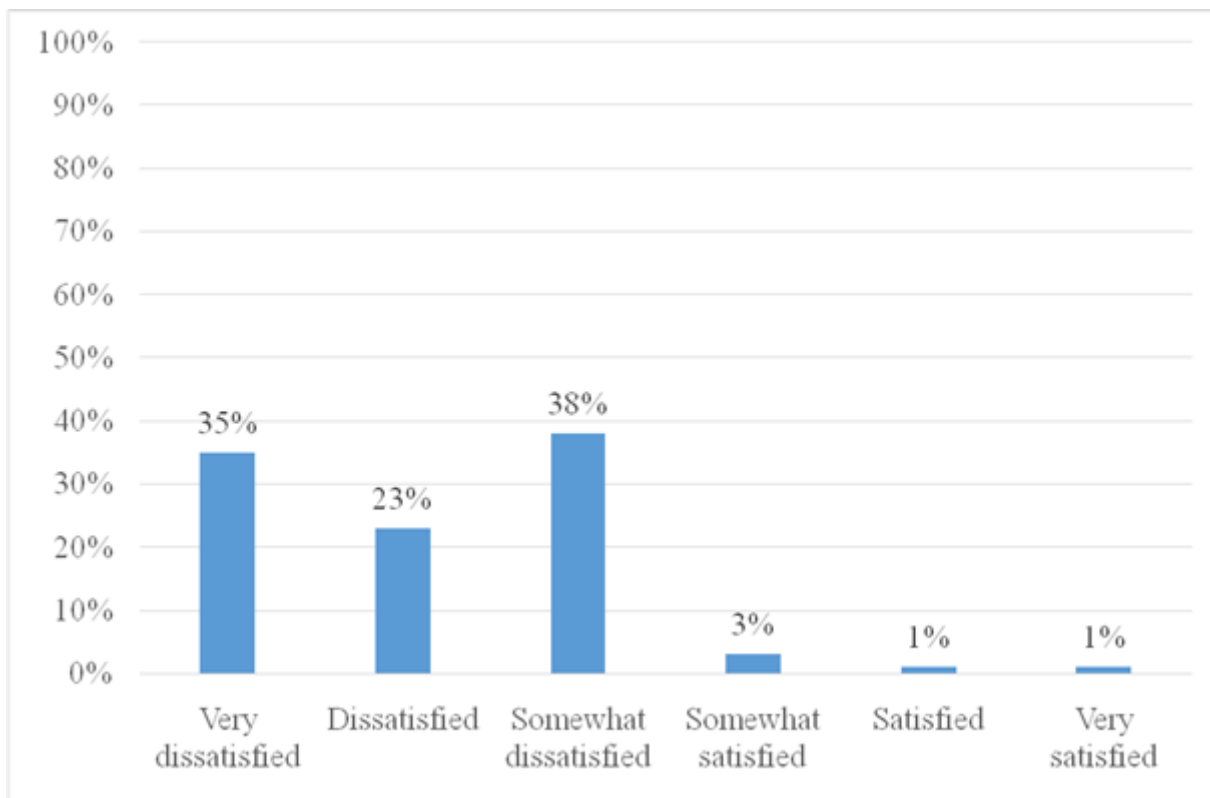


Figure 1: Percentage of teachers indicating the level of satisfaction with their job

Chi-square tests were conducted to examine the association between the demographic variables (teaching qualification, education level and teaching experience) and job satisfaction. The results show that there was no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and teaching qualification $X^2(10, N=272) = 5.27, p = .87$. There was also no statistically significant relationship between education level and job satisfaction: $X^2(20, N=272) = 16.42, p = .69$, nor between teaching experience and job satisfaction: $X^2(40, N=272) = 34.82, p = .70$.

Factors associated with teacher motivation

The respondents were provided with 28 items assessing various factors that motivate them. They were asked to indicate the degree to which each of the items would be motivating or demotivating giving one of the following four responses: *highly unmotivating*; *unmotivating*; *motivating*; and *highly motivating*. The results are shown in Table 3.

Overall, the majority of teachers who responded to the items indicated several factors that motivated them. The most motivating factor was ‘observing a vast improvement in the achievement level of one’s students since the beginning of the year’. Almost all teachers (97.4%) indicated that this factor was either highly motivating or motivating. This shows that the majority of teachers view their students’ academic achievement as the most important attribute in their job and is the basic measure of their performance in the job.

Other factors that most teachers rated as either highly motivating or motivating were *job security* (94.5%), *status* (90.4%), *potential for professional growth* (91.9%), *attending instructional workshop/training course* (90.8%), and *interpersonal relationships* with colleagues, administrators and students (94.2%).

While the majority of teachers indicated that they were motivated by several attributes of their job, three elements relating to working conditions stood out as exceptional, namely *condition*

of the building (e.g. classrooms, teacher houses, toilets, library), amount of work (class size, number of subjects to teach, extra-curricular activities), and the availability of teaching and learning materials. Only 58.5 percent of teachers indicated that the conditions of the building was a motivating factor, while only 62.5 percent indicated the availability of teaching and learning materials as a motivating factor. Just about a quarter (24.6%) reported that the amount of work was a motivating factor. On average less than half (48.5%) of the respondents rated working conditions (the three elements mentioned above) as motivating. These results indicate that working conditions in schools are the most significant demotivating factor for teachers and that the current state of affairs in this regard is generally poor (demotivating).

Table 3: Factors that Tanzania Primary School Teachers Consider to be Motivating

<i>Factor</i>	<i>% of respondents indicating that it is either highly motivating or motivating</i>
1. Recognition (e.g. receiving praise from the administration, parents, students or others)	84.6
2. Being selected as the best teacher of the month/year	83.1
3. Being awarded a plaque by students/school committee/parents	82.7
4. Financial compensation (e.g. salary)	81.3
5. A one-time monetary award based on students' learning performance	84.6
6. Provision of housing	86.4
7. Provision of microfinance products such as health insurance and small-income generation loans	86.0
8. Potential for professional growth (e.g. possibility of improving one's professional skills)	91.9
9. Potential for advancement (e.g., possibility of assuming different positions in the organisation)	89.7
10. An instructional workshop offered and paid for by the district	90.8
11. Being given the opportunity to participate in teacher projects (e.g., research, curriculum development)	86.8
12. Interpersonal relationship with colleagues	94.1
13. Interpersonal relationship with administrators	93.0
14. Interpersonal relationship with students	95.6
15. Status (professional status of teaching)	90.4
16. Responsibility (autonomy, authority and responsibility for own work)	89.3
17. Work itself (e.g., aspects associated with the task of teaching, giving tests, etc.)	83.8
18. Factors in personal life (e.g., effects of teaching on one's personal life)	87.1

Factor	% of respondents indicating that it is either highly motivating or motivating
19. Sense of accountability (being directly responsible for students' learning)	89.3
20. Sense of achievement (e.g., experiencing success)	95.6
21. Having students thank the teacher for aiding in understanding a difficult concept	91.2
22. Observing a vast improvement in the achievement level of one's students since the beginning of the year	97.4
23. Supervision by superiors (e.g. overall competence of superiors, WEC, inspectors, head teacher, District Education Officers)	86.8
24. Job security	94.5
25. Building condition (e.g. classrooms, teacher houses, toilets, library)	58.5
26. Amount of work (class size, number of subjects to teach, extra-curricular activities)	24.6
27. Teachers' evaluation (e.g. appraisal of classroom instruction by evaluator)	89.7
28. Availability of teaching and learning materials	62.5

Interpersonal relationships emerged as the most motivating factor for teachers, with an average of 93 percent of teachers reporting that interpersonal relationships with administrators (93%), colleagues (94.1%) and students (95.6%) were motivating factors in their job. This indicates that teachers may like their job but they are demotivated by poor working conditions associated with their job.

The 28 items were put into seven categories, namely recognition and prestige; remuneration and incentives; professional growth and career development; interpersonal relations; job significance; sense of achievement; and working conditions. These factors were further categorized as hygiene factors (lower-level needs) and motivating factors (higher-level needs). The results for these items are summarized in Figure 2.

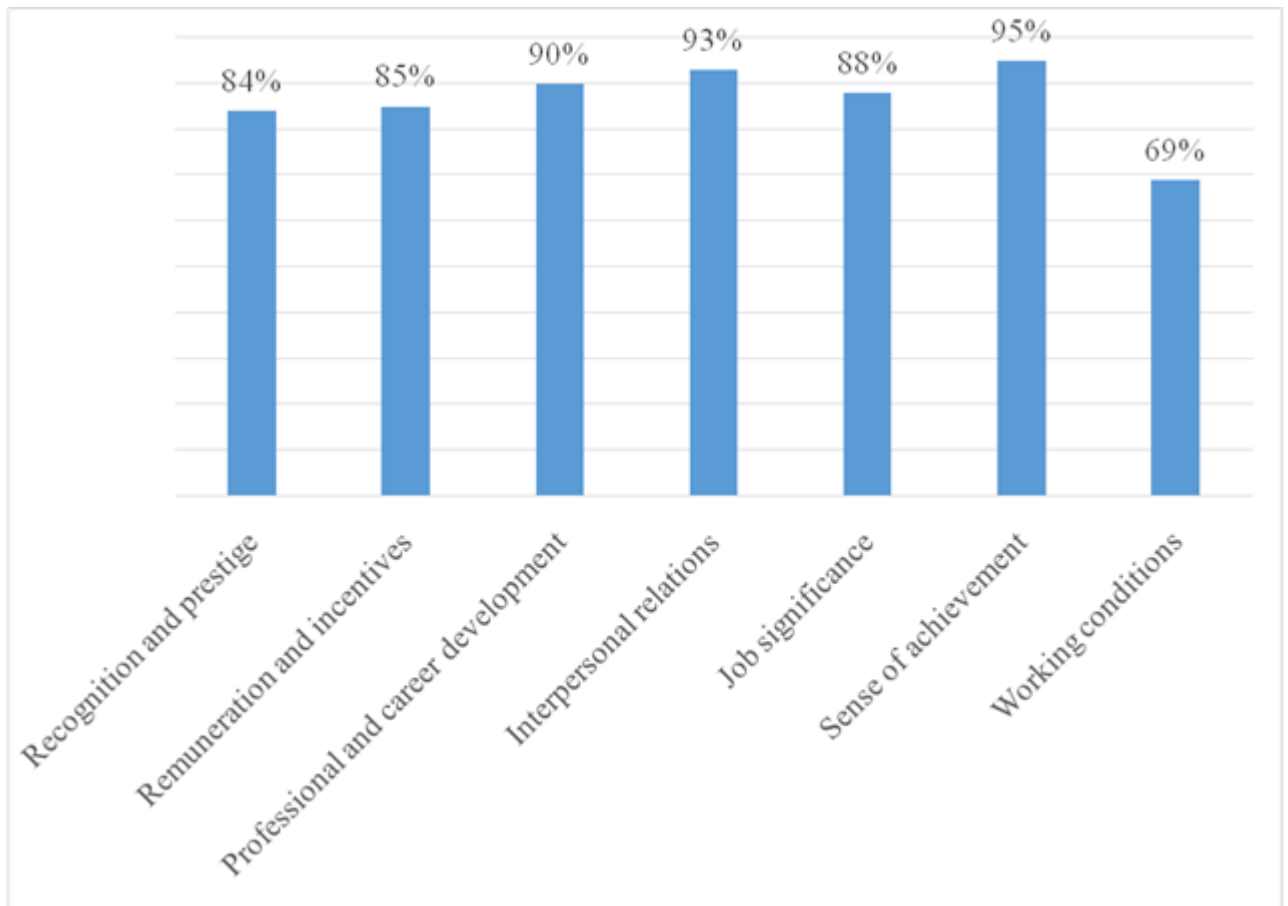


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents indicating various motivating factors

As figure 2 shows, teachers indicated that almost all the seven factors are motivating, with *sense of achievement* and *interpersonal relations* having the highest proportion of teachers citing them as motivating factors.

The 28 factors were further grouped and analysed with respect to hygiene factors (lower-level needs) and motivating factors (higher-level needs). The results show that the majority of teachers (an average of 93%) indicated that both of these factors were either motivating or highly motivating (see Figure 3).

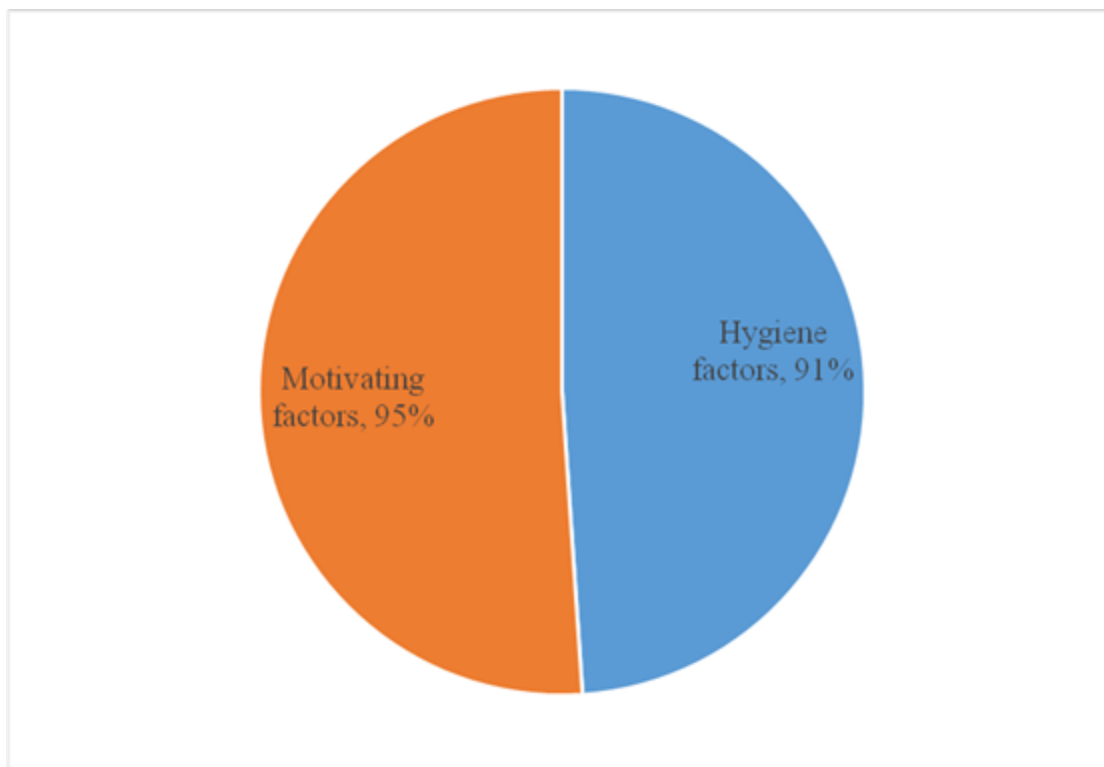


Figure 3: Proportion of teachers indicating that hygiene and motivating factors are motivating factors in their job

The relationship between hygiene and motivating factors was investigated using Person product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure that there was no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity or homoscedasticity. The results showed a moderate, positive correlation between the two variables, $r=.48$, $n=272$, $p<.0005$. This implies that hygiene factors are associated with motivating factors and the two work together to bring about job satisfaction in teachers.

Discussion

Job satisfaction and motivation is a well-researched area in the field of work (occupational psychology). Nevertheless, the focus on education professionals is relatively new, especially in developing countries. The results of this study, therefore, make an important contribution to furthering our understanding of teachers' job satisfaction and motivation in the context of sub-Saharan Africa in general and Tanzania in particular.

The results of this study have shown that primary school teachers are extremely dissatisfied with their job, with more than half of them (57.7%) reporting that they are either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied. Only about a third of teachers reported that they would choose to become teachers if they had the opportunity to start all over again. This indicates that the majority of primary school teachers in Tanzania can be described as being 'stuck' in a career that does not satisfy their curiosity or needs. The results suggest that many teachers in Tanzania are in the teaching profession because they do not have anything else to do that is better than their current profession.

Indeed, primary school teachers in Tanzania have very low academic qualifications, which would hardly get them a job in another professions. The majority of them hold a certificate of education. The entry qualification for this training is a certificate of ordinary secondary

education with a marginal pass described as Division Three (an average of C grade in four subjects). The entry qualifications for other professions such as health, engineering and agriculture are higher than those for teaching.

The literature puts the teacher motivation factors into two main groups: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Gultekin & Acar, 2014). Intrinsic motivation factors relate to those that are necessary for teachers to engage in the teaching profession because they feel that teaching is enjoyable and satisfying. The intrinsic factors involve personal interests and inherent feelings, such as curiosity and enjoyment (Gultekin & Acar, 2014). According to Gultekin and Acar, intrinsic motivation is the primary source of motivation in teaching.

Extrinsic factors, on the other hand, relate to those that influence teachers to engage in the teaching profession because of external incentives but do not relate to the inner desire to engage in the profession for its own sake. Thus, teachers would have joined the teaching profession for the purpose of receiving external rewards, such as a salary, job security, interpersonal relations and better working conditions.

The results of this study (as indicated in Figures 2 and 3) suggest that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors play an equally significant role in motivating teachers to join and remain in the teaching profession. Although intrinsic factors are naturally the ones most effective and sustainable for motivating teachers, there is a minimum threshold of external support that teachers need below which they cannot reasonably be expected to perform their duties effectively. This means that extrinsic factors serve as key ingredients for intrinsic motivation. To encourage young people to join and remain in the teaching profession requires improving the status of the profession in the eyes of the public.

The results of this study are largely comparable to those of previous studies conducted in similar contexts. For example, a recent qualitative study examining the typology of student teachers' commitment to teaching in Tanzania found that most students join the teaching profession as a 'fall-back' career (Moses et al., 2017). The authors describe student teachers in Tanzania as 'committed compromisers' in that they 'chose teaching because of external circumstances such as financial difficulties or not being selected for their first preference courses' (p. 452). This finding is supported by data from this study, which suggest that teaching has always been taken by most young people as a last resort profession.

A poor attitude towards teaching is not only true in developing countries. A recent study in Estonia that explored students' perceptions of and attitudes towards the teaching profession found that the majority of young people in the country do not find a career in teaching attractive enough to pursue it, hence ranking the teaching profession among the least preferred and third bottom after shop assistant and manicurist (Saks, Soosaar, & Ilves, 2016). The authors also found that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors were important for motivating or demotivating young people to join and stay in the profession.

Conclusion and recommendations

Teachers are the most important resource for effective learning in schools. The quality of the teacher is closely linked to the quality of incentives that the teacher receives. Thus, teachers require a certain level of job satisfaction for them to be able to function optimally.

Several factors are associated with teachers' motivation, which can be put into two major categories: intrinsic motivators and extrinsic motivators. The results of this study have reaffirmed those of previous studies indicating that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors are

needed to motivate teachers. Nevertheless, in line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, a certain threshold of extrinsic motivation needs to be provided first before teachers can be satisfied by intrinsic elements of the job.

In the context of the results of this study, some of the critical elements of extrinsic factors that are needed for job satisfaction for primary school teachers include financial compensation (salaries), housing, interpersonal relationships with fellow teachers, administrators and students, and job security. The amount of work measured by class size, number of subjects to teach and extra-curricular activities was mentioned as the most demotivating factor by most teachers who completed the questionnaire. This implies that primary school teachers in Tanzania are overworked.

These results provide important insights for education policy makers to consider when designing teacher education programmes and recruiting and deploying teachers. This study was largely quantitative using a questionnaire as the main source of data, which meant that we did not ask teachers to provide their views on the concept of job satisfaction and what motivated them to join and remain in the teaching profession. This kind of analysis would require a qualitative study. Consequently, future studies could focus on exploring teachers' conception of job satisfaction and how this could be achieved.

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