

IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION ON JOB COMMITMENT A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The 'teacher', who is dedicated to his job, deserves immense respect from students and due recognition of his abilities and commitment from seniors and administrators. The process may also be reversed in order to motivate an employee to become a respectful one. Recognition is considered as one of the motivating factors towards achievement orientation in the two factor theory propounded by Herzberg. Employers who are serious about maximizing productivity and worker retention do implement employee-recognition programs. Motivational factors are regarded as determinants of success of an employee and consequently the organization. The present study seeks to examine the impact of employee recognition on their job commitment as also to ascertain the differential effect of personal and institutional variables on employee's job commitment and on recognition. A sample of 360 teachers from selected colleges of Uttar Pradesh Technical University was chosen for the survey. Significant differences have been observed for the personal and institutional variables. The study revealed a direct impact of employee recognition on their job commitment.

Key Words: *Employee recognition, Job commitment, College teachers, Technical education.*

1. Introduction

If any behavior, activity, or response (positive or negative) was found common in all human beings it must be of its own importance and need attention of the researchers to evaluate its bearing on them. From a 5 year old child to an eighty-year old experienced professional, one thing common in all is the need for recognition. They all may have been caught, sometime or the other, talking about what good or different or new they have done. The urge to do something special is natural to humans for their self actualizing need, as founded by *Abraham Maslow*. This endeavor of doing the best and feel good inside may become a continuous process, if their efforts get true recognition. This is the reason behind all rewards and awards on formal and informal stages of life. Various government and private organizations offer "honour" to those people whose credibility need to be known and motivated. Motivation is a must for greater performances. It just accelerates the needed endeavor to get its fullest potential and that which make him or her feel complete. 'Recognition' can be defined 'as an act of accepting that something is true or important or that it exists'. According to William James, "The deepest human need is the need to be appreciated". A few years ago, 1500 employees were surveyed in a variety of work settings to find out what

they consider the most powerful workplace motivator. Their response was 'recognition, recognition, and more recognition'. (Stajkovic, Luthans 2001).

The Bob Nelson's doctoral study found evidence to support the link between the use of recognition and enhanced performance. Through the employee surveys, Nelson found it is very important for employees to receive recognition from their supervisors, to receive meaningful recognition, to receive feedback, and to feel valued. According to Internal Communications, "Employees prefer to receive information from their supervisors. They like to get the big picture information from the organisation's leaders, but they want to hear the impact on their work-group directly from the people to whom they report." Managers foster an environment for excellence for that they need to understand what motivates, supports employees thus the performance. "Motivation and engagement is truly a 50-50 relationship between the employee and employer. Employees are expected to come to the workplace with the intrinsic motivation and the desire to be successful, be value-added and contribute to the obtainment of an employer's vision. Conversely, it is incumbent upon the employer to provide resources, opportunities, recognition and a cohesive work environment for employees to be successful." Paying employees a competitive salary is essential, but it is only part of a total motivation programme. Assuming that a company already pays employees adequately, surveys indicate that workers value recognition for their contributions over all other work-satisfaction factors. Recognition programmes may be a spontaneous and private "thank you" up to widely publicized formal programs where specific types of behavior are encouraged. (Markham, *et al.*, 2002).

'Recognition' to Teacher

Work motivation plays an important role in the job of teaching because lack of same may cause teachers to be less successful in teaching and can affect the students' achievement and motivation adversely. An important motivating factor to improve teachers' commitment is recognition. "Research tells us that human behaviour is shaped by its consequences, and that one of the most powerful ways to enhance employee performance is by providing positive consequences for that performance. If the employer notices, recognises, and rewards specific behaviours and performance, for instance, excellent customer service - the behaviour will tend to be repeated" (Nelson, Bob, 2003). A fundamental reason for the use of recognition is that it has a measurably positive impact on the job performance of employees.

The present condition of education is known to all. There are many reasons behind it, like attitude of the both private player and the government, vision of the contributors, ethics and values involved during whole controlling, youths' motive, intention, goal towards education and society, perception of all involved in the process, parents, teachers, government, students, societal values and demand, university policies and many more. According to Bob Nelson, founder and president

of Nelson Motivation - "You get what you reward". Recognizing good work leads to high energy, great feelings, high-quality performance and great results. Not acknowledging good work causes lethargy, resentment, sorrow, and withdrawal. Recognition and appreciation were found to be the greatest contributors to employee engagement and retention. Almost all the sectors have such a planning to motivate their employees but except the education sector which still lacks due attention for the same.

2 Review of Literature

The Ashridge Business School, one of the world's leading business schools, conducted a study on motivation from the employees' viewpoint (Holten, V. Dent, F. and Rebbetts, J. 2009). While financial rewards were often mentioned, the most common were intrinsic motivators. The top most important motivator was the work itself, followed by the need for work to be challenging and interesting as well as valued and recognized by the organisation.

A survey conducted by 'World at Work', April, 2008 found that approximately ninety percent of organisations continue all of their existing recognition programs from year to year and more than half of organisations say they plan for new programs every year. Employee recognition continues to be on the top of the mind as employers use their total rewards toolkit to differentiate themselves from others. Organisations have different needs but the common challenge is to satisfy a variety of intrinsic and extrinsic employee needs in order to attract, motivate and retain a talented, productive workforce, which is a key to business success. This survey took a closer look at the impact that individual recognition programs have on employee retention, in particular. Sales performance recognition was rated as the program having the greatest impact on retention with 90 per cent. It is clear that organisations are looking to achieve multiple goals with recognition programs. Creating a positive work environment, motivating high performance and creating a culture of recognition, were found to be the most common recognition program objectives.

Teacher motivation is not only about the motivation to teach but also about the motivation for selecting the teaching profession as a lifelong career. The teacher's motivation has naturally to do with teacher's attitude to work. It is therefore, anything done to make teachers happy, satisfied, dedicated and committed in such a way that they bring out their best in their places of work so that the students, parents and the society get greatly benefit from their services. Job satisfaction of teachers is also increased when they are intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. Few important factors been identified on the basis of the review of literature (Silver 1982, Hawley 1985, Latham, 1998) are, intrinsic factors, which presents tasks that are more enjoyable, interesting and psychologically rewarding. Among intrinsic factors, achievement, advancement of knowledge, students' response, recognition, growth possibilities that takes place in the group, Class sizes, school resources and facilities, classroom management, the standard

activity structure within the institution, responsibility, and public image of teachers were noted as great importance. Among extrinsic factors, factors in terms setting where the work is performed, were Organisational policy and administration, status, interpersonal relations with superiors, peers and sub-ordinates in that group, technical supervision, job security-tenure of job and institute, salary, amount of work, the school's reward contingencies, feedback, and school's leadership and decision making structure.

Maslow's two highest levels of needs proposed a basis for doing acts of work for their own sake. A person gets motivated by his need to work toward his highest potential and in the service of developing his positive self picture. The teachers poor work motivation is reflected in the primary stage of a student's unsatisfactory learning achievement (World Bank, 1997). Empirical studies in various work settings have shown that autonomous motivation of teachers is associated with desirable outcomes of students (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Teacher motivation acts as a major factor for classroom effectiveness and school improvement. Buch and Buch (1987) reviewed 228 research studies on determinants of performance at the primary stage and identified 3 sets of variables, contributing to learners' achievement namely pupil characteristics, home-family characteristics and school related factors. School facilities were found to be substantially influencing learner's achievement in the Indian schools. Teaching in primary and upper primary schools continues to be teacher centered. The classroom climate is influenced by professional characteristics of teachers like attitude towards teaching profession, commitment, job motivation and job satisfaction. The perceptual component 'self-esteem' refers to the teacher's appreciation of his/her actual job performances "how well he is doing in his job as a teacher?" The task perception constitutes the normative basis for teachers' judgments and decisions, all of which have moral consequences since they affect the lives and needs of youngsters for whom the teacher is and feels responsible (Hargreaves, 1995, p. 14).

Beheshifar and Safarian (2013) defines 'employee commitment' as the degree to which an employee identifies with the organization and wants to continue actively participating in it. Commitment is usually stronger among longer-term employees, those who have experienced personal success in the organization, and those who are working with a committed employee group. HR maintenance is a main factor to promote employee commitment. Mart C.J (2013) concluded that teacher commitment deeply contributes to future of students and schools and committed teachers make a difference to the success of the school and the learning of the students. Ebmeier and Nicklaus (1999) define commitment as a part of teachers' effectiveness or emotional reaction to their experience in an institutional setting. Job commitment is most important because only committed employees lead an organization towards success. Nierhoff *et al.* (1990) found that the overall management culture and style driven by the top management actions strongly influence the degree of employee commitment.

For educators and researchers the degree of teacher's commitment is one of the most important aspects of performance and quality of staff (National Centre for Education Statistics, US 1997). Teacher commitment is associated with job satisfaction, morale, motivation, and identities (Day 2004). The quality of teaching is not only governed by the qualification, knowledge and skill competencies of teachers but also their passion, enthusiasm, dedication and commitment to teaching. Hrebick and Alutto (1977) pointed out that the women have consistently been found to be more committed than men to their employing organization.

The results of the previous studies related to employee work recognition and job commitment, suggest that there is evidence of recognition being significant enough. Despite the increased importance, critics argue that employee recognition programs are highly susceptible to political manipulation by management (Nelson, 2003). However, in most of the job the criterion for good performance is not self-evident, hence allowing managers to manipulate the system and recognize their favorite employees. When abused, this can undermine the value of recognition programs and lead to demoralizing employees. Essence lies in the trustful implication of these programs which comes when managers values the simple guidelines as said – recognize individual differences, use goals and feedback, allow employees to participate in the decisions that affect them, link rewards to performance, and check the system for equity. Hence, there is a need for additional research in order to determine whether such programmes are practiced across educational institutions and whether they fulfill teachers' recognition need to the desired level.

3. Research Objectives and Hypotheses

The study was conducted with the following objectives:

- i. To ascertain the influence of personal/ institutional variables on teachers' job commitment.
- ii. To observe the influence of personal variables on teachers' work recognition.
- iii. To examine the impact of work recognition on the teachers' job commitment.

4. Research Methodology

In light of given objectives of the study the following hypotheses are formulated:

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the job commitment of various groups of teachers, classified according to personal / institutional variables.
- H₀₂: There is no significant difference in opinion towards recognition among various groups of teachers classified according to personal / institutional variables.
- H₁: Teachers' recognition does affect their job commitment.

4.1 Sample

A sample of 360 employees from entry level to professor level working with top private and government institutions in the state of Uttar Pradesh was selected for the study.

4.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The data for the survey was obtained through personal interview using a self-structured questionnaire for job commitment and employee work recognition. The statistical tools such as frequency distribution, cross tabulation, analysis of variance, t-test, and various other tools of MS Office were employed for the analysis of data.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Analysis of Recognition

Analysis based on t-Test and ANOVA: To study the significance of difference in opinion regarding recognition, the following null hypothesis is used.

H_0 : There is no significant difference in opinion towards recognition among various groups of teachers classified according to personal / institutional variables. (Refer Table 1 and 2)

As far as the classification (involving two groups) of teachers based on personal variables is concerned the significant difference observed in with respect of all personal variables are illustrated in Table 1 to 2.

It is evident from the table that there was a significant difference in opinion regarding recognition at 1 per cent level between

the teachers working in government and self financed colleges. The values show that the teachers from government and/or aided colleges felt more recognized than teachers working in self financed colleges.

It is evident from the table that there was a significant difference in opinion regarding recognition at 1 per cent level between the teachers working on ad-hoc and on permanent basis. The values show that the permanent teachers felt more recognised than teachers working on ad-hoc basis.

Classifying teachers on the basis of personal/ institutional variables (involving more than two groups) produced test result are as follows.

From the table it is evident that there are significant differences in the opinion of teachers grouped on the basis of age, salary, qualification, designation, teaching and industry experience. It shows that all personal variables have own significance for teachers' recognition aspect among the selected institutions. On the basis of descriptive of collected opinion regarding recognition system implementation 30 per cent of the institutions do not have any such practices but have a great deal of attention on student motivation schemes.

Hence, we may conclude that the null hypothesis assumed has been rejected with respect to age, salary, qualification, designation, teaching and industry experience along with aid status, type of employment and accepted with regard to all other personal/ institutional variables (i.e. Gender, accreditation status). It indicates that teachers with higher qualification, teachers on senior designation, and who are

Table 1

Recognition among Government and Self-financed College Teachers: t – test

| Institution's Aid Status | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | t | df | Sig. |
|--------------------------|-----|--------|----------------|--------|-----|-------|
| Govt. and aided | 121 | 3.8264 | .58863 | -2.136 | 357 | .033* |
| Self financed | 238 | 3.9545 | .50863 | | | |

Note: * Significant at 0.01 level

Table 2

Recognition among Permanent and Ad-hoc Teachers: t – test

| Nature of Employment | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | t | df | Sig. |
|----------------------|-----|--------|----------------|--------|-----|-------|
| Ad-hoc | 172 | 3.7762 | .53299 | -4.684 | 358 | .000* |
| Permanent | 187 | 4.0357 | .51638 | | | |

Note: * Significant at 0.01 level

Table: 3

Recognition of Teachers
(Personal/Institutional variables: F-test)

| Personal Variables | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|--------|
| Age | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 6.144 | 4 | 1.536 | 5.545 | .000** |
| Within Groups | 98.061 | 354 | .277 | | |
| Total | 104.205 | 358 | | | |
| Qualification | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 3.596 | 4 | .899 | 3.163 | .014* |
| Within Groups | 100.609 | 354 | .284 | | |
| Total | 104.205 | 358 | | | |
| Salary | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 5.967 | 6 | .994 | 3.563 | .002** |
| Within Groups | 98.238 | 352 | .279 | | |
| Total | 104.205 | 358 | | | |
| Designation | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 5.544 | 5 | 1.109 | 3.967 | .002** |
| Within Groups | 98.661 | 353 | .279 | | |
| Total | 104.205 | 358 | | | |
| Teaching Experience | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 3.884 | 5 | .777 | 2.733 | .019* |
| Within Groups | 100.322 | 353 | .284 | | |
| Total | 104.205 | 358 | | | |
| Industrial Experience | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 3.222 | 5 | .644 | 2.253 | .049* |
| Within Groups | 100.983 | 353 | .286 | | |
| Total | 104.205 | 358 | | | |

Note: ** Significant at 0.01 level, * Significant at 0.05 level

having rich experience, who are in government colleges, who are permanently employed, who are in high age groups have a feel of recognition and these factors do affect the level of their recognition in some ways.

5.2 Analysis of Job Commitment

This analysis identifies the difference in perception between any two of the subgroups of the sample. To study the significance of difference in perception of teachers regarding job commitment, the following null hypothesis was used.

H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the job commitment of various groups of teachers classified according to personal/institutional variables.

As far as the classification (involving two groups) of teachers based on personal/institutional variables is concerned, the significant difference in perception was found in respect of gender only and the test result is produced in Table 4.

Notably, there exists a significant difference between male and female teachers in their perception of job commitment at 1 per cent level. However, this was not the case between the categories of teachers classified on the basis of accreditation status. The female teachers were more committed than male teachers towards their job.

As far as classification (involving more than two groups) of teachers based on personal/institutional variables is concerned, the variances in perception found among different groups of teachers based on age, qualification, teaching experience, industry experience, designation, salary, and institution's aid status are produced below in Table 5.

From the table, it is clear that there were significant differences in perception of the teachers at 5 per cent level between groups classified on the basis of qualification, teaching experience and institution's aid status. It is also shown that there was no significant difference in perception of the teachers with regard to age, industrial experience, designation and salary.

Hence, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis stated earlier has been rejected with regard to *gender, educational qualification, teaching experience, and aid status*. On the other hand it has been accepted with regard to remaining personal and institutional variables such as age, industrial experience, salary, designation, and institution's accreditation status.

5.3 Impact of Recognition on Job Commitment

Independent Samples Test examines the impact of recognition on teacher's job commitment. Alternate hypotheses formulated for the same is as follows.

H₁: Teachers' recognition does affect their job commitment.
Analysis based on t-test: The independent samples t-test compares the means for two groups of cases.

Table: 4
Job Commitment of Male and Female Teachers (t-test)

| Personal/Inst. variables | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | t | df | Sig. |
|-----------------------------|-----|--------|----------------|--------|-----|--------|
| Gender | | | | | | |
| Male | 254 | 3.6988 | .60280 | -2.595 | 358 | 0.010* |
| Female | 106 | 3.8774 | .57565 | | | |
| Accreditation status | | | | | | |
| Non accredited | 209 | 3.7735 | .58904 | .824 | 358 | .411 |
| Accredited | 151 | 3.7208 | .61480 | | | |

Note: *significant at 0.01 level

Table: 5
Job Commitment of Teachers
(Personal/Institutional variables: F-test)

| Personal / Inst. Variables | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---------------------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------|
| 1. Age | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 1.784 | 4 | .446 | 1.244 | .292 |
| Within Groups | 127.326 | 355 | .359 | | |
| Total | 129.110 | 359 | | | |
| 2. Qualification | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 5.546 | 4 | 1.386 | 3.983 | .004* |
| Within Groups | 123.565 | 355 | .348 | | |
| Total | 129.110 | 359 | | | |
| 3. Teaching Experience | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 5.073 | 5 | 1.015 | 2.896 | .014* |
| Within Groups | 124.038 | 354 | .350 | | |
| Total | 129.110 | 359 | | | |
| 4. Industrial experience | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 1.379 | 5 | .276 | .764 | .576 |
| Within Groups | 127.732 | 354 | .361 | | |
| Total | 129.110 | 359 | | | |
| 5. Designation | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 2.402 | 5 | .480 | 1.342 | .246 |
| Within Groups | 126.709 | 354 | .358 | | |
| Total | 129.110 | 359 | | | |
| 6. Salary | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 4.116 | 6 | .686 | 1.937 | .074 |
| Within Groups | 124.994 | 353 | .354 | | |
| Total | 129.110 | 359 | | | |
| 7. Aid status | | | | | |
| Between Groups | 4.378 | 2 | 2.189 | 6.265 | .002* |
| Within Groups | 124.732 | 357 | .349 | | |
| Total | 129.110 | 359 | | | |

Note: *significant at 0.05 level

Table 6

Group statistics for impact of recognition on job commitment

| | Variable Recognition | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|-------------|----------------------|--------|--------|----------------|-----------------|
| variable JC | >= 3.90 | 187 | 3.9447 | .53484 | .03911 |
| < 3.90 | 172 | 3.5368 | .59448 | .04533 | |

Table 7

Independent samples test for impact of recognition on job commitment

| | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference |
|-------------|-------|-----|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| variable JC | 6.844 | 357 | .000 | .40792 | .05961 |

Group statistics gives the mean job commitment of recognition greater than or equal to 3.90, is 3.94, with a standard deviation of .534 and for recognition less than 3.30, the mean job commitment was 3.53 with standard deviation of 0.594.

The result of Independent sample test provided the t-value of 6.844 at 95per cent confidence interval for the mean for 357 degree of freedom (for two tailed test) is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, we accept the alternate hypothesis, i.e., teachers' recognition does affect their job commitment. The finding indicates towards the need to give importance to a teacher's intrinsic need of motivation for better teaching-learning environment and development of innovative methods to make them feel recognised. It would certainly impact their commitment level and thus their resourcefulness towards quality.

6. Conclusions and Policy Implications

A moderately high recognition was reflected in the study of selected college teachers. The teachers are motivated in the form of good grades, promotion, and paid leaves. It is not that recognition is lacking totally in the selected colleges but there are no such declared programmes and if it were there, probably their implementation was placed in a wrong manner. It is complex to rectify all wrong activities but it is very much imperative to motivate teacher fraternity to accomplish their job honestly and competently. For that, off course many more dimensions need to be explored to take care of, such as continuous appraisal, fair recognition, and state-of-the art facilities for growth and development.

The differential analyses (t-Test and ANOVA) revealed that except gender, almost all personal variables do have an effect on recognition. These personal factors include age, salary, qualification, designation, teaching and industry experience along with aid status, and type of employment. No significant difference in perception was found between male and female teachers on the part of feeling recognized. While in the case of institutional factors, teachers from government colleges felt more recognized than their counterpart. It may be due to the job security aspect among government college teachers.

Although the analysis reflected a good opinion for the feeling of recognition among teachers but their response about consideration of their suggestions and implementation of 'Recognition Programmes' in their present organization was dissatisfying. Majority of the teachers openly accepted the sharp pinch of politics at different levels which is swallowing their morale. The higher authorities' "psycho fanciness" was blamed for this distortion. It is not easy to eradicate it, and at the same time they felt it is increasing day by day and stated it as a tool of weak people, in terms of deserving ability, qualification, and honesty. It is important to mention this issue of psycho fanciness because it has taken a form of open corruption-corruption of exchange of selfish motives. It is polluting the whole system and throws the main objectives of education aside. They find least scope for their ideas and suggestions both in government and private institutions. Moreover, in private institutions, only one way communication flows are enforced.

The test results revealed impact of recognition on teacher's job commitment as positive one. We may conclude that teachers who receive relevant recognition show commitment to their job and confirmed the value of these programmes in terms of growth of the organization. They admitted that it is not just a 'want', but a need which is not apparently visual. Many of the teachers reported personal factors that sustained their levels of commitment and other teachers suggested that a balanced life outside teaching and being well rounded and social beings themselves help to sustain their levels of commitment. So, we may say that for upgrading the teaching profession, the administration needs to improve the motivational methods and hence the commitment, which will lead to teachers' improved performance and this, will ultimately help to improve students' learning.

As per the report of Uttar Pradesh Technical University, 2010, it has launched an 'Academic Excellence Model' to provide the quality implementation road map to its all affiliating colleges. Accordingly, the administrators of the colleges should also recognize their teachers' achievement in the same way.

Anticipating that these suggestions may be considered by the management, they would promote and acknowledge teachers participation in decision making too.

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