

The Role of Passion in the Attainment of Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Public Secondary Schools in the South West and Littoral Regions of Cameroon

Nguma Gwendoline Bi^{1*}, Rosemary M. Shafack², Nekang Fabian Nfon³

¹PhD Research Student in Curriculum Studies and Teaching, Faculty of Education, University of Buea, Cameroon

²Professor of Library, Archival and Information Science, Faculty of Education, University of Buea, Cameroon

³Associate Professor of Curriculum Studies and Teaching) Faculty of Education, University of Buea, Cameroon

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*Corresponding author: Nguma Gwendoline Bi

PhD Research Student in Curriculum Studies and Teaching, Faculty of Education, University of Buea, Cameroon

Abstract

Teachers' job satisfaction has continued to be a call for concern in contemporary society and lack of passion is alleged to be responsible for this situation. This study investigated the role of passion in the attainment of teachers' job satisfaction. One research question guided the study. The correlational research design was used to determine the relationship between the two variables. *The targeted population of the composed of 22,133 teachers and 904 principals from 904 schools. The sample constituted 379 respondents derived through the purposive and convenient sampling techniques.* The instruments for data collection composed of structured questionnaire and an interview guide. Quantitative data were analyzed using the frequencies percentages mean and standard deviation while qualitative data were analyzed using the thematic analysis approach. Findings revealed that there exist a correlation between teachers' passion and job satisfaction. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the government should promote teachers' passion by adequately addressing teachers' financial concerns because inadequate remuneration accounted for teacher's inability to sustain their passion in teaching leading to low job satisfaction.

Keywords: Motivation, Passion, Job Satisfaction.

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INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is the ultimate goal of all employees in all sectors of the economy and the teaching profession is not an exception. Satisfied workers devote their time and energy to the success of an organization. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that every employee is satisfied. Teachers' dissatisfaction can result in a lack of interest in teaching, leading to non-coverage of the syllabus, high failure rate of student, truancy, delinquency and poor academic results. Researchers have asserted that passion is a powerful intrinsic motivational tool that energize teachers to exert more effort in the discharge of their duties (Harackiewicz and Hulleman, 2010). It follows that passion may be a requirement for teachers to derive job satisfaction. In this light, promoting teachers' passion may guarantee a more engaged and motivated teaching staff that facilitates the attainment of educational. The observable picture of teacher

behaviour in most of our secondary schools today is that of absenteeism, late coming, and poor mastery of subject matter, physical and psychological abuse of students and general laxity at work. It is common to hear teachers make statements like; "how much am I being paid to be suffering like this?" "Whether I teach or not I will still receive my meagre salary at the end of the month". Teacher attrition and brain drain is on the rise, engagement in secondary income generating activities is common and some simply reduce their productivity. The question that comes to mind is, what could be the cause of this trend. There seems to be something missing in the teaching profession to guarantee teachers' job satisfaction. It is alleged that inadequate passion amongst other factors might be responsible for this situation. It is against this backdrop that this study is pursued.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Passion

Vallerand, Blanchard, Mageau, Koestner, Ratelle, Leonard and Marsolais (2003) defined passion as, a strong inclination towards a self-defining activity that one loves, values and invests time and energy over a long period of time. For example, playing tennis, playing a musical instrument, teaching, pleasure trips to name but these. Day (2004), Liston and Garrison (2004) defined teaching passion as the teachers' love towards the subject, students and the belief that they can significantly influence the lives of their students. Within educational settings, scholars have primarily studied the concept of passion from two perspectives: (1) the passion that students may feel toward a particular topic and (2) the passion that teachers have for their profession. Vallerand *et al.*, (2003) proposed a Dualistic Model of Passion (DMP) composed of two types of passion: Harmonious and obsessive passion which are associated with different outcomes and experiences. Harmonious passion as a bond that comes from an autonomous internalization of the activity into the person's identity. Thus, harmonious passion comes from an intrinsic tendency of the self and produces a motivational force to engage in the activity willingly (Deci and Ryan, 2000, 2002). While obsessive passion is the controlled internalization of an activity into individual's identity. For example, individuals can experience an uncontrollable urge to partake in the activity. Although individual with obsessive passion may display task persistence, such persistence is rigid and individuals risk experiencing conflicts and other negative affective, cognitive, and behavioural consequences during and after the activity engagement. Although both types of passion are very powerful and instrumental in goal achievement, harmonious passion is hypothesized to be more adaptive than obsessive passion and should therefore lead to more optimal outcomes. Consequently, most studies on passion within the educational context and teaching in particular have focused on harmonious passion (Bonneville-Roussy, Vallerand, and Bouffard, 2011, 2013; Ruiz-Alfonso and León, 2016). According to the DMP, there are three processes involved in the transformation of an interesting activity into a passion. These include: 1) Activity valuation which refers to the importance one gives to an activity which serves as a base for interest. 2) Activity identification refers to the bond and similarity individuals attach to an activity which defines them. 3), activity internalization is the process through which the activity becomes part of the person's sense of self and identity. According to Deci, Eghrari, Patrick and Leone (1994), an activity is likely to be internalized when it is highly valued and meaningful to the individual undertaking the activity.

Hall (2009) emphasizes the important for teachers to grow and sustain passion through professional development. According to Fried (2004), passion is not a personal feature which is found in some

people and not found in others; passion is discoverable, teachable and reproducible. He further noted that passion can be increased or decreased depending on personal and social status. Passionate teachers are characterized by enthusiasm, emotional energy and commitment (De Cooman, Gieter, Pepermans; Manuel and Hughes, 2006). Fried further listed 10 essential characteristics of passionate teachers as follows: 1) Passionate teachers love to search for new knowledge and ideas. 2) They respect students despite their differences and diversities. 3) They pay attention to slow learners. 4) They are aware of world affairs. 5) They are enthusiastic. 6) Tolerant. 7) They avoid criticizing ideas and strive to create mutual respect. 8) They take risks and are ready to learn from their mistakes. 9) They try to create an effective learning environment where students learn from their own mistakes and lastly they encourage hands on and cooperative learning. Thus Renninger and Hidi, (2016) recommends education stakeholders to make good policies which can harness teacher motivation and develop passion in case it was not inborn.

Job Satisfaction

Locke (1976, p, 130) as cited in Mohammed, Mohammed, Mustajab and Magsood (2012) defined job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experience". According to Shann (2001.p.68), "teacher job satisfaction has proven to be a predictor of teacher retention, determinant of teacher commitment, and in turn, contributor to school effectiveness". Research has also documented that the source of motivation and job satisfaction does not only accrue from the job and its related payment scale, but also results from psychological forces like, the working conditions, supervision style, interpersonal relationship, and organizational culture. In this light, Njiru (2014) opines that teachers' job dissatisfaction may result from, poor working conditions such as, low pay, high workload, lack of in-service training, promotion, lack of accommodation among others. These factors can either positively or negatively affect teacher's job satisfaction depending on individual evaluation and perception of organizational justice. The fairness in promotional opportunities has a positive effect on job satisfaction. The level of job satisfaction is likely to be high if teachers are provided better scope for promotions. For example, Dinham and Scott (2000) found that teachers who had earned promotion in their schools were more satisfied with their job than those who have not been promoted. The high expectation of teachers from administration, students and the society at large affects teachers' level of job satisfaction. For example, teachers are expected to be twice as good, twice as altruistic, twice as flexible but not twice their salary (McClay, 1995) as cited in Makolle (2015). These extra demands from society and other stakeholders' couple with the low status of the profession, contribute to job dissatisfaction and accounts for high teacher attrition

(Hargreaves *et al.*, 2006). Government policies and imposed curriculum on teachers have also been cited as variables that inhibits teachers' job satisfaction and possible attrition (Crossman and Harris, 2006). The manner and attitude in which the principal monitor and follow up staff can determine teacher's satisfaction. For example, if principals' acts congenially with their subordinates like giving positive criticism, empathetic and gives room for creativity, the subordinates will feel motivated to work. On the other hand, if a principal is not supportive, the morale of the staff is affected. When teachers are given some autonomy and freedom to take certain decisions, they derive high job satisfaction. This is because such autonomy gives them a feeling of worth and competence.

Empirical Review

Investigating the role of passion for teaching in intrapersonal and interpersonal outcomes in Quebec City, Carboneau, Vallerand, Fernet and Guay (2008) used an explanatory survey to examine the effect of harmonious and obsessive passion in Quebec teachers. The sample of the study constituted 494 teachers from French-Canadian schools in Quebec City. The instruments for the study composed of questionnaire and an interview guide based on the passion scale of Vallerand, Blanchard, Mageau, Koestner and Ratelle (2003). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings revealed that increase in harmonious passion led to an increase in job satisfaction and decreases in burnout symptoms over time, whereas an increase in obsessive passion led to a decrease in job satisfaction. The findings further revealed that increases in both types of passion led to increases in teacher-perceived adaptive student classroom behaviour. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended that education stakeholders should design laws and policies in addition to already existing rewards programmes to promote harmonious passion in teachers since it is more sustainable than obsessive passion. They further cautioned that students will develop passion towards education based on their teacher's behaviour thus teachers should be an ideal example for students to emulate.

Moe (2016) examined the relationships between passion for teaching and teachers' well-being: Distinguishing between harmonious passion (HP) and obsessive passion (OP). The study was carried out in the University of Padua, Italy. The study had as main objective to assess the relationships between teachers' passion and self-efficacy, subjective happiness, positive and negative affect and teacher praxes. The study utilized the descriptive survey design. A convenience sample of 379 teachers from 11 Italian schools participated in the study. Data were collected with questionnaire and interview guide and analyzed descriptively using the ANOVA and SPSS. Based on the analysis, findings indicated that HP in teaching is positively link to job satisfaction, perceived job support,

and reduced burn-out. HP was also positively linked to affect, self-efficacy, subjective happiness and teaching praxes. The Findings further revealed OP correlated negatively with job satisfaction teacher's wellbeing. The researcher therefore recommended that stakeholders should endeavour to promote harmonious passion in teachers since teachers who are passionate harmoniously are more motivated than those obsessively passionate.

Theoretical Review

Self-determination theory (SDT) of Deci and Ryan (1965) is based on the proposition that all humans have the fundamental need to be autonomous, competent and related to others. The theory proposes that satisfaction of these basic needs leads to autonomous motivation, psychological wellbeing and healthy development. Conversely, thwarting of these fundamental needs promotes controlled forms of motivation which are externally regulated. The theory states that, individuals need to feel that they are competent and capable in interacting, have multiple choices and feelings of control over their lives to connect with others as part of a social group. The theory stresses the fundamental role of autonomy for motivational processes. According to the SDT, motivation is based on three psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Ryan and Deci (2000) declared competence to be one of the three basic psychological needs as it provides energy for human activity and must be satisfied for the attainment of long-term psychological health. Autonomy involves the experience of integration and freedom and is an important aspect of healthy human functioning. While relatedness refers to the desire to feel connected with others, to both love and care for and be loved and cared for by others. The need for autonomy is satisfied when, at the deepest level of reflection, individuals believe that what they do has been freely chosen and is consistent with their core values. The theory stipulates that personality factors can predict teacher motivation and that the satisfaction of basic needs is positively correlated to intrinsic teacher motivation in school (Hanfstringl, Andreitz, Muller, and Thomas, 2010). This theory is relevant to the current study due to its emphasis on the development of intrinsic motivation which passion is an intrinsic indicator of motivation.

Research Hypothesis

Ho₁. There is no significant relationship between teachers' passion and job satisfaction in secondary schools in the South West and Littoral Regions of Cameroon.

Ha₁. There is a significant relationship between teachers' passion and teacher's job satisfaction in secondary schools in the South West and Littoral Regions of Cameroon

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a correlational research design which was deemed relevant for this study because it explores the relationship between variables. This is in line with the view of Creswell (2012) who posited that a correlational research design determines the tendencies and patterns of two variables. The adoption of this research design provided a comprehensive description of how teacher’s passion affected the attainment of teacher job satisfaction in the study area. This design is also advantageous because it is quicker, cheaper and easier to manage.

Area of Study

The study was carried in the South West and Littoral Regions of Cameroon. The South West Region is made up of six Divisions with Capital Buea and covers a surface area of 25,410km. It is located at latitude 41.16 North and 9.23 east of the equator (Faizefu, 2016). The littoral region has as headquarter Douala and divided into four divisions and covers a surface area of 20,248km and located at latitude 4.061536 North and longitude 9.786072 east of the equator (Amambua, 2017). The choice of these two region was motivated by the fact they are very influential in terms academics and they host many educational establishments ranging from basic to tertiary. The choice was also motivated by proximity and convenience.

Population of the Study

The total population of the study was made up of 22,133 teachers and 904 principals from 904 schools. The target population was made up of 15,520 teachers and 556 principals. The sample size composed of 379 teachers and 19 principals from 21 schools. The sample was drawn using the purposive, snowball and convenient techniques.

Instrument for Data Collection

Data were collected using structured questionnaires and interview guides. These instruments were constructed in conformity with research questions.

The questionnaires composed of 10 items, 8 open ended and 2 close ended. Closed ended items were ranked in a likert scale of four options: strongly Agreed (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D). SA =4, A=3, D=2 and SD=1. The interview consisted of 6 set of questions.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

The validation of the instruments were ascertain in two phases including: internal and external validity. In order to ascertain internal validity, the items in the questionnaire were examined by experts in relation of the variables under study. After the process, unsuitable items were eliminated and ambiguous ones rephrased thus guaranteeing internal validity. In order to ensure external reliability, a pilot study was carried out with 10 secondary school teachers from 5 schools in the study area and these pilot schools were not considered for the final study. A test re-test method was used to ensure that same or similar results were obtained. The gap between the first and second test was two weeks. This gap is thought to be enough for respondents to forget the first test responses.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher worked with four research assistance trained by the researcher. The instruments were administered in the staffroom, classrooms and some teachers took them home. The interviews were conducted face to face by the investigator. During the interview sessions, the researcher made use of an audio tape and notes for later transcription. The interview session typically lasted from 10 to 20 minutes. Quantitative data were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistical analysis using the SPSS while qualitative data were analyzed using the thematic analysis approach.

Findings

It is important to note that preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity.

Table 1: Relationship Between Passion in Teaching and Teachers’ Job Satisfaction

SN	Passion in Teaching	\bar{X}	S	Decision
1	My love for teaching is natural thus with or without reward I derived satisfaction.	3.09	.81	A
2	I derive satisfaction from effectively carrying out my teaching activities.	3.37	.64	A
3	I got into teaching because I wanted to live my dream of impacting lives.	3.35	.67	A
4	I support slow students who are struggling to cope.	3.37	.57	A
5	I love to be a role model to the children.	3.45	.55	A
6	I attend to students even out of the classroom to ensure they succeed.	3.39	.62	A
7	I teach because I want to contribute to society.	3.37	.58	A
8	My love for teaching sustains my energy in the face of difficulties.	3.08	.73	A
	MRS	3.31	.65	A

MRS = Mean Response Score \bar{x} = Mean Score S = Standard Deviation

Table 1 shows that teachers’ love for teaching is natural and satisfying for the following reasons: teachers want to impact lives and contribute to the society, they support slow students who are struggling to cope and love to be role models to learners, they attend to students even out of the classroom to ensure that they succeed, and their love for teaching sustains their energy in the face of difficulties. Thus, passion in teaching has a strong relationship to teachers’ job satisfaction in the South West and Littoral Regions of Cameroon ($\bar{x} = 3.31 \pm .65$).

In some open ended items, respondents’ were asked if they will quit teaching if given a better alternative in a different profession. Majority of the respondents (264, 71%) were of the opinion that they will quit teaching for the following reasons: “Yes, I will love to improve my standards of living” “If I see a better pay package” “Teaching is mentally too demanding”. Meanwhile a minority (106, 29%) will stay in the teaching profession for the following reasons: “I derive satisfaction from teaching” “molding young minds means a lot to me”. Thus majority of teachers are passionate about teaching but ready to quit due to job low satisfaction. Respondents were also asked to

suggest what the government could do to promote teachers passion and according to them, the government should: “pay teachers well”, “provide good working conditions”, “motivate teachers”, “and pay their dues on time”. Interviews were conducted with principals to verify what they have been doing to promote teachers passion in their respective schools. The respondents enumerated different strategies used in their institutions to develop passion in teachers. Some of these strategies included: Being a role model “I am the first to arrive this campus and the last to leave” “even with my busy administrative schedule I still teach”. Being democratic in taking decisions “we have an open door policy where teachers are free to come in at any time and talk to me about their teaching activities and we also debate on some decisions before I implement them”. I motivating my staff and give them incentives”. Principals also attest that the outcomes of passionate teachers in terms of students’ performances were more encouraging than unpassionate teachers

Ho₁. There is no significant relationship between passion in teaching and job satisfaction in public secondary schools in the South West and Littoral Regions of Cameroon.

Table 2: Summary of Computed Values for Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient for the Relationship between passion in teaching and job satisfaction (N=370)

Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	Γ_{xy}	p-value
Passion in Teaching (X)	9793	262079	217048	.074	0.154
Job Satisfaction (Y)	8194	183340			

p < 0.05; df = 368; Critical $\Gamma_{xy} = .074$; (N= 370)

Verification of Hypothesis

Table 2 shows that that $p < 0.05$ alpha (α) level of significance with a degree of freedom 368, since the computed correlation coefficient value (Γ_{xy} – computed = .074) is less than the critical value (Γ_{xy} -critical = 0.154), thus the null hypothesis was retained. This implies that there is a weak linear relationship between passion in teaching and job satisfaction in secondary schools in the South West and Littoral Regions of Cameroon. The positive sign means that if passion in teaching increases, job satisfaction would increase and if passion decreases, job satisfaction will also decrease. Since Γ^2_{xy} – computed = .00548 (approximately 0.55%), this implies that passion in teaching contributes only 0.55% to teachers’ job satisfaction in the study area.

DISCUSSIONS

The study investigated the role of passion in the attainment of teachers’ job satisfaction in the south west and littoral regions of Cameroon. Findings revealed a positive relationship between passion and teachers’ job satisfaction in the study area. This implies that an increase in teachers’ passion would lead to an increase in job satisfaction and conversely a decrease in passion like lead to a decrease in teachers’ job

satisfaction. These findings are consistent with those of Carbonneau, Vallerand, Fernet and Guay (2008) who studied the role of passion for teaching in intrapersonal and interpersonal outcomes in Quebec and findings revealed a linear relationship between passion and job satisfaction. This finding also agrees with the findings of Moe (2016) who examined the relationships between passion for teaching, teachers' well-being and job satisfaction and found out that passion in teaching is positively linked to teachers’ wellbeing and job satisfaction. The findings revealed that more than three quarters of teachers were passionate about their job, ironically this same fraction was ready to quit when a better alternative presents itself. This seems contradictory given that passion is an intrinsic factor and under normal circumstances should be sustained by the satisfaction derived from the activity. The study seems to indicate that passion is not as independent as “we” thought as per the definition. Due to this dilemma, teachers’ harmonious passion has been converted to obsessive passion which puts them at logger heads with their instincts (Vallerand *et al.*, 2003).

The phenomenon of “brain drain” is very much a negative display of passion, teachers stated their

best option is travelling abroad for greener pastures which ties with the statistics from the Regional Delegation for Secondary Education in the South West Region that reported that about one third of teachers quite teaching in the first five years and more than one third who take study leave do not return to the classroom. This is not a good indicator for a nation like Cameroon that aspire to emerge by 2035 and whose emergency vision lies in quality education for sustainability. Researcher have insisted on the role of passion in teaching. For example, Day (2004) posited that passion is not an option but a necessity in the teaching profession because it creates motivation. From the observation of the investigators, teachers are doing much sacrifices to impact learning. Teachers especially in the South West Region brave many odds to discharge their duties even putting their safety at risk. Teachers were desperate to get some attention and their situation normalized such that they can without divided attention exercise their harmonious passion. Thus it is thought that if teachers are given the attention they deserved especially economically, they will be harmoniously motivated and thus derive job satisfaction. Passion is at the center of effective teaching as reiterated by Hargreaves (1997, p.17) as cited in Serin (2017) when he noted that “all pedagogical approaches will fail unless passion is created in teachers since they are at the center of students learning and implementation of all educational decisions”. It is the existence of passion that energizes every other characteristics in the teacher. This observation is consistent with the SDT that emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation. If the government makes efforts to sustain teachers’ passion by satisfying their basic needs which is passion, there will be a great improvement in educational outcome in the study area and Cameroon at large.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

There exist a positive relationship between passion and job satisfaction in the study area. The findings revealed inadequate finances to be the main problem that stands between teachers’ passion and job satisfaction. For example, teachers’ passion, could not be sustained due to economic reasons. This revelation ties with the views of Krishnan (2003) who noted that employees are more attracted to work that offer them financial stability than the polite nature of the employer thus financial motivation is often preferred by most workers and teachers are no exceptions. The findings also showed that even though passion is an intrinsic indicators of motivation, it still depends on external factors for sustainability contrary to the assumption that passion is inborn and can function in full capacity without regards for external reward. Based on this findings, the study recommends that the government should promote passion in teachers by adequately addressing their economic difficulties.

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