



Main and Interaction Effects of Gender, Subject of Specialisation and Teaching Experience on Teacher Morale among Higher Secondary School Teachers in Kerala

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Abstract

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Education system has to provide the society with individuals capable of facing challenges. The increased demands may affect performance and morale of teachers. The purpose of this study is to find out whether gender, subject of specialization and teaching experience have significant main and interaction effects on teacher morale of higher secondary school teachers in Kerala. The study was conducted on a sample of 295 higher secondary school teachers of Malappuram district of Kerala state. The results of Three way ANOVA showed that the main and interaction effects of gender, subject of specialization and teaching experience on Teacher morale are not significant at 0.05 level.

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A society needs individuals who are capable of facing challenges of life, both at local and global levels. To attain this goal, the education system has to be structured for the emergence of a future generation as value cherished efficient individuals who can solve problems tactfully. The role of teachers has changed from building locally talented to globally competent individuals, from training for citizenship of a nation to global citizen, making each individual contribute to the global economy and lead a successful life in the 21st century. This shift in the purpose of education has increased teacher responsibilities which in turn altered the working environment in schools. The environment in the school has much influence on the performance of teachers as well as students. The response of student community, parents and other community members and the teachers' work attitudes influences the teacher performance and teacher morale. Studies on teacher morale have found that some variables like stress related to increased governmental and local demands, low pay, lack of administrative support, heightened discipline problems in class rooms, job security etc., contribute to low teacher morale (Covington & Chenda, 2010). The concept of teacher morale is not much popular as in the case of any other profession. Literature review shows that the concept of morale is approached differently by different authors. According to Oxford dictionary morale is the confidence, enthusiasm and discipline of a person or group at a particular time. Thanninayakam (2014) described morale as the individual's mood and spirit, professional loyalty, evident commitment, zeal and zest for their activities, attitude towards group values, team effort and willingness to work together for a common end. Bentley and Rempel (1980) defined teacher morale as the professional interest and enthusiasm that a person displays towards the achievement of individual and group goals in a given job situation. Shouramma (2008) has cited dimensions of teacher morale from Dekthawala (1977) as Individual characteristics, behavioural characteristics, group spirit, attitude towards job and community involvement. Though there is disparity in the dimensions of morale, all the studies on teacher morale agrees on its importance in determining teacher performance and student achievement.



The teachers with high morale can make cultured students who have better understanding of life and elevated moral conscience. They can inspire the students to develop good personalities, seek value directed life and mould them for current changes in society (Patnee, 2013). It is reported that low morale can lead to decreased teacher productivity and burnout which decreases quality of teaching (Sharma, 2012; Dedi & Kania, 2014). Houchard (2005) in his study found that all factors of Teacher morale as measured by Purdue Teacher Opinionaire had a positive correlation with students' End-of-Grade test scores. Rauf, Saeed, Iqbal and Malik (2013) have reported that when job satisfaction of higher secondary teachers increases, morale also increases. Higher teacher morale is described by (Washington & Watson, 1976) as eagerness to work, willingness for overtime work, supporting school and community programmes by active participation, initiation to take duties not assigned, strict adherence to school policies and orientation to school philosophy, pride to be an educator and effort to link school with community. Garin and Cooper (1981) found that high morale leads to high productivity. The teacher morale is determined by physical, social, emotional attitude of teachers. Emotional and physical illness reduces morale resulting in frequent absenteeism, physical and mental withdrawal, detachment, increased intra and inter conflicts, reducing teacher performance. Kiechel (1989) found that job avoidance, abuse of alcohol and drugs, defiance to rules may also result from low morale. Considering the significance of morale in teaching profession, as in any field, it will be relevant to study the extent of morale among teachers. Higher secondary level of education is a crucial period for students as it is a bridge between the undifferentiated school educations to highly differentiated higher education. The responsibilities and challenges of teachers in teaching and more than that in managing student behaviours are high in the higher secondary schools. The prevailing conditions of higher secondary education are such that when teachers are soothened by one hand, at the same time, they are blasted by the other hand. There are many factors that influence positively or negatively the teacher morale. It will be impracticable for an organization to make an environment which ensures high level of morale among all its members and it is purely hypothetical, but if we know the extent of morale among the group members, more focused, practicable and fruitful solutions can be made to improve morale among them. In the modern era of collective efforts on national development and women empowerment, the role of men and women in the society cannot be differentiated but gender difference in work attitudes is important. The present study attempts to find out the level of teacher morale among higher secondary school teachers and to compare teacher morale among subgroups based on demographic variables like gender, subject of specialization and teaching experience.

Objectives

1. To find out the extent of Teacher morale among Higher Secondary School teachers in Kerala.
2. To find out the main and interaction effects of Gender, Subject of Specialization and Teaching experience on Teacher Morale of Higher Secondary School teachers of Kerala.

Hypotheses

1. Higher secondary School teachers of Kerala have high level of Teacher morale.
2. The main effects of Gender, Subject of Specialisation and Teaching Experience on Teacher Morale are not significant.
3. The interaction effects of Gender, Subject of Specialisation, and Teaching experience on Teacher Morale are not significant.

Method

Participants

Population of the study is Higher Secondary School teachers of Kerala. The study was conducted on a sample of 295 Higher Secondary school teachers of Malappuram District in Kerala selected through stratified sampling technique. Malappuram district is the largest

district in Kerala state and the teachers working in this district are a real cross section of the entire state. Hence the sample selected will be a true representation of the population.

Instruments

1. Teacher Morale Rating Scale: Teacher Morale Rating Scale developed by Salini and Vijayakumari (2015) was used to measure teacher morale and it consists of 55 items based on Individual characteristics, behavioural characteristics, group spirit, attitude towards job and community involvement, the dimensions included in Dekthawala's Teacher Morale Inventory (1977). It is a five point Likert type scale, the responses being Always, Often, Sometimes, rarely and Never. Reliability of the scale was estimated using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient which is obtained as 0.93. The criterion related validity of the scale was tested by correlating the scores of the scale for 30 teachers with that of Teacher Morale Rating Scale developed by Kumar (2004). The correlation coefficient obtained is 0.63. Hence the scale can be considered as valid to measure teacher morale.
2. Personal Data Sheet: Information about Gender, Subject of specialisation and Teaching Experience were collected using this instrument.

Results and Discussion

To know the nature of distribution of Teacher morale, descriptive statistics was calculated. The values of Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis obtained for a sample of 295 higher secondary school teachers were 235.39, 238, 242, 21.78, -0.86 and 0.67 respectively. Though the value of Mode was slightly greater than Mean and Median, a value of skewness -.86, less than 2 indicates a non skewed distribution. The value of kurtosis, .67 indicates that the curve is Mesokurtic. The value of standard deviation is 21.78, a comparatively large value, indicating that individual scores deviate considerably from the mean score.

For testing the hypotheses, parametric tests are used and hence the assumptions of independence of individual scores, Normality of the distribution, and homogeneity of variances are to be satisfied.

As the sample elements are selected through probability sampling method, the individual scores are independent to each other. The descriptive statistics of the distribution of teacher morale among the sample shows that the distribution is almost normal. Homogeneity of variance was also assumed as the values of standard deviation for the sub groups in each case are almost the same. As these assumptions are satisfied by the set of values one sample t test and ANOVA were used for testing the hypotheses.

The mean score of Teacher morale (235.39) was compared with the scale value 220 (4×55) using One sample t test for N= 295. The critical ratio obtained is 12.13, greater than 2.58, the value required for significance at 0.01 level. That is, the mean Teacher Morale score of higher secondary school teachers significantly differ from the scale value 220, the minimum value obtainable if the responses for all the 55 items in the scale are higher than the neutral level. Hence it is concluded that Higher Secondary school teachers in Kerala are high in their morale. This finding supports the hypothesis of the study 'Higher secondary School teachers of Kerala have high level of Teacher morale'.

To find out the main and interaction effects of demographic variables viz., Gender, Subject of Specialisation and Teaching Experience, three-way ANOVA (2×4×3) was used. The details are given as Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of ANOVA of Teacher Morale by Gender, Subject of Specialization and Teaching Experience (2×4×3)

Source of variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F
Gender	284.640	1	284.640	0.607
Subject	260.743	3	86.914	0.185
Experience	515.531	2	257.765	0.550
Gender * Subject	742.320	3	247.440	0.528
Gender * Experience	1179.596	2	589.798	1.258
Subject * Experience	1957.284	6	326.214	0.696
Gender * Subject * Experience	3049.076	4	762.269	1.626
Error	127975.998	273	468.777	
Total	1.6480000	295		

The Main effects of Gender, Subject of Specialization and Teaching Experience on Teacher Morale are found to be not statistically significant even at 0.05 level (F value, .607, .185, .550 respectively). This shows that the mean score of Teacher morale do not differ significantly between male and female higher secondary school teachers; do not vary significantly among higher secondary school teachers with different subjects of specialization, viz., Science, Languages, Humanities, and Commerce; and also teacher morale of Higher Secondary school teachers do not differ significantly among teachers with experience below 5 years, between 5 and 15 years and beyond 15 years. These findings support the second hypothesis 'The main effects of Gender, Subject of Specialisation and Teaching Experience on Teacher Morale are not significant'.

The interaction effects of Gender and Subject of Specialisation, Gender and Teaching Experience and Subject of specialization and Teaching Experience are found to be not statistically significant even at 0.05 level (F value, .528, 1.258 and .696 respectively). This can be interpreted as Teacher Morale of Male and Female teachers teaching Science, Languages, Humanities or Commerce do not vary significantly; Mean scores of Teacher Morale of Male and female teachers with Teaching Experience below 5 years, between 5 and 15 years and above 15 years do not differ significantly; and the teacher morale do not differ significantly at different levels of Subject of Specialization for the respective levels of Teaching Experience ($p > .05$).

The three way interaction of the variables, Gender (Male and Female), Subjects of Specialization (Science, Languages, Humanities and Commerce) and Teaching Experience (<5years, 5-15years, 15years>) on Teacher Morale is not significant even at .05 level. That is, Teacher morale does not differ significantly among groups at different levels of one variable for the different levels of other two variables. Hence the third hypothesis 'The interaction effects of Gender, Subject of Specialisation, Teaching experience on Teacher Morale are not significant' is also accepted.

To get a clear idea of teacher morale among subgroups, mean and standard deviation of the variable for each group were calculated and is presented as Table 2.

Table 2

Mean and Standard deviation of Teacher Morale for Different levels of Gender, Subject of Specialisation and Teaching Experience

Variable	N	Mean	S D
Sex			
Male	134	235.61	23.64
Female	161	235.20	20.18
Subject of Specialisation			
Science	123	234.08	23.15
Languages	97	235.04	21.96
Humanities	44	235.16	17.98
Commerce	31	242.00	20.24
Teaching Experience			
< 5years	93	237.59	16.57
5-15years	149	232.87	24.31
> 15 years	53	238.62	21.82

Though the mean scores are found to be different for some subgroups, the differences are not statistically significant, may be due to the large values of standard deviation. Comparatively low values of standard deviation are found in the case of teachers with less than 5 years of experience and teachers of humanities.

Conclusion

Teacher Morale of Higher Secondary school teachers is found to be high. It is not affected by Gender, Subject of Specialization and Teaching Experience of teachers as there is no evidence of statistical significance of difference between groups based on these variables in teacher morale. But relatively higher values of standard deviation show that there are teachers who have teacher morale remarkably less than this mean score. Special care must be taken in this regard as high difference in teacher morale among teachers may affect the entire system negatively. Higher Secondary school teachers in Kerala suffer from setbacks due to lack of infra structure, work load, stipulated time schedule, lack of non teaching staff, low achievers, class room disciplinary problems etc. This may in course of time reduce morale which may affect overall performance. So there should be some measures to improve and boost teacher morale frequently. Empowered teachers will have high morale. But to get teachers empowered, they should have the opportunity to recognise, reassess their state of morale. Performance indices may help them in this regard. Teachers should be given due attention to replenish their self to be dynamic, sensitive and perceptive. Providing facilities, reducing workload, organizing orientation programmes timely, subject updating programmes, restructuring of curriculum, value oriented workshops in schools for students, appointing supporting staff, providing teachers hand book to simplify the concept, improving interpersonal relations by get together programmes, may help them to sustain their morale and improve their performance. The principals are the key source of reinforcement for teaching, hence their attitude is believed to be a good booster for teacher morale. The teacher morale is a decisive component contributing to quality education. Sustaining high morale can be a reality only if it is inculcated systematically and sincerely. Government and community should create conditions that will inspire teachers and motivate them for perfection.

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