

Motivating Factors Related To The Retention Of Agriculture Teachers In Swaziland

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Abstract

A descriptive correlational study was designed to describe the motivating factors related to the retention of agriculture teachers in Swaziland. Motivating factors were administrative and work place-related. Respondents' demographic characteristics of gender, age, level of education, marital status and confirmation were eliminated as confounding characteristics. Nationality of the teacher showed a significant difference on how teachers perceived the domains "social" and "administrative" related factors. Nationality (Swazi or non-Swazi), level of education, age, and tenure were found to be the best predictors of motivation to stay in a teaching job.

Introduction

Research on turnover of teachers and job satisfaction has been conducted in developed countries. Knight (1978) found that reasons for turnover of secondary school teachers were: inadequate salaries, inadequate advancement opportunities, and lack of interest for higher academic qualifications. According to Blezek (1978), reasons for turnover of teachers include excellent offers from business and industry and a return to farming and ranching. Burgess (1981) and Musaaazi (1982) stated that turnover of teachers results from poor working relations between teachers themselves and between teachers and principals. There is a strong relationship between job turnover and job satisfaction (Grady, 1985). In addition, Grady (1985) indicated that some teachers may remain in the teaching profession even though they are relatively dissatisfied but not to the point of leaving. Some of the reasons for which they may remain in teaching include the type of job security in the teaching profession, family ties and obligations, and lack of available jobs in their home geographical areas.

Van Tilburg (1989) indicated that improved environment, working conditions and opportunities for promotion of the teacher who performs well at work could motivate

teachers to stay in the teaching profession. Dlamini and Nyoni (1992) found that the reason officers left their jobs were related to poor working conditions, inadequate opportunities for further training and study leave without pay. Mothabeng (1990) in a study on job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction of agricultural teachers in secondary schools and high schools in Lesotho found that agricultural teachers were dissatisfied by work-related factors, promotion-related factors, interpersonal relations, responsibility-related factors, administrative-related factors, working conditions, recognition of professional advancement, and remuneration-related factors. Etuk (1983) cited examples of overall poor pay (including Fringe benefits), late monthly salaries, nonpayment of leave bonuses, lack of facilities and other equipment at work, and absence of motivational incentives as reasons for Ohio vocational teachers to lack commitment to the teaching profession. Also, Bowen (1981) found policy and administrative-related variables were the only factors that explained a significant amount of the variance in a job satisfaction study of teacher educators in agricultural education. Kotrlik (1985) found that the level of satisfaction with work increased as age, salary, years teaching experience, and number of organization involved in increased.

Research has been conducted in developing countries on the motivating factors related to job satisfaction and teacher retention. Motivation of teachers was studied in terms of: job redesign, teacher motivation, self confidence and self motivation in teachers. Research concerning motivating factors related to agriculture teachers and their retention in the teaching profession has been lacking, hence, such investigation was important.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to inquire into the motivating factors that make agriculture teachers remain in teaching. Once the factors that are related to teacher retention in Swaziland are known, this information will help employers improve working conditions and provide conditions that favor retention of teachers such that even those teachers (particularly master teachers) who had

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already left may be attracted back into the profession. Motivated teachers produce successful students. The specific objectives of this study were:

1. describe the perceptions of agriculture teachers regarding motivating factors that make them stay in the teaching profession
2. determine significant differences in teachers' perceptions by demographic characteristics
3. identify the independent variables that best explains and predicts the dependent variable(perception of agriculture teachers regarding motivation towards retention in their jobs).

Methodology

Descriptive correlational research was conducted in this study. The study population consisted of all High school agriculture teachers(N=150). The frame for the study was obtained from the Ministry of Education. A random sample size of 106 agriculture teachers was drawn, using the Krejcie and Morgan(1970) table for determining sample size. The list of participants in the study was screened to avoid duplications.

A mail questionnaire was designed to gather the information. The research instrument consisted of eight domains: reward and job security(with eight items), teachers' own achievements(nine items), training (five items), feedback on work performance (four items), supervision (nine items), conditions at work (six items), work environment (six items), social related factors (four items), and eight demographic characteristics of the respondents.

A six-point scale was used to identify the degree of agreement as follows: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly agree, 5=agree, 6=Strongly agree. Content validity of the questionnaire was established by a panel of experts. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of the instrument was found to range between .53 and .93.

A series of follow-up procedures to the initial questionnaire mailing suggestions provided by Dillman (1978) was conducted. Of the 106 teachers surveyed, 86(81.13%) returned useable survey instruments. Early respondents were compared with late respondents to estimate the nature of nonresponse bias (Miller and Smith 1983). The results showed no statistically significant difference. Thus, results were generalized to the target population.

Means, standard deviations, correlations, analysis of variance and multiple regression were used to analyze the data with the statistical package for social sciences(Microsoft

co., 1991). An a priori alpha level of .05 was used to determine statistical significance.

Results

Perceptions of agriculture teachers on the motivating factors that lead to retention in their jobs

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement regarding the factors that lead to the motivation of Agriculture teachers in Swaziland. Teachers rated all domains low (Table 1). Teachers' own achievement received the highest mean rating of 3.31, and both training, and reward and job security-related domains received the lowest mean ratings of 1.52 and 1.88, respectively.

Difference among selected characteristics of the respondents and their perceptions on the motivating factors related to retention in their jobs.

One way analysis of variance($p < .05$) was used to determine if there was a significant mean difference between selected demographic characteristics (gender, nationality, marital status and tenure) and the motivating factors associated with the retention of agriculture teachers in Swaziland' high schools. Results showed no significant mean difference between demographic characteristics of gender, marital status, and tenure in all domains of the dependent variable. However, results indicated a statistically significant difference between nationality and the administrative and social-related domains. Non-Swazis rated both administrative and social- related domains higher than Swazis. Non- Swazis agreed that the factors under these domains are motivating, and thus, related to the retention of agriculture teachers.

Regression analysis on factors related to the retention of agriculture teachers with selected demographic characteristics

Step-wise regression was used to determine if the demographic variables were significant predictors of the motivating factors related to teachers' retention. The variables were: location of the school, age, gender, years of teaching experience, qualification, marital status, and whether the teacher was tenured. Results shown in Table 3 indicated that age and whether a teacher was tenured explained 15% of the variance in the domain of work environment. The variable nationality explained 5% of the variance on the domain, work related-factors. Highest level of education explained 6% and nationality explained(additional

6%) on the domain, administrative related-factors. The demographic characteristics found to be significant appear to have the greatest potential for further research on the topic.

Conclusions and Implications

The retention of agriculture teachers was due to the teacher's own achievement, effective teachers' work, effective supervision, effective administration and work environment. There were no statistically significant mean differences with respect to gender, marital status, location of the school and confirmation (tenured or not tenured). Gender, marital status, location of the school and confirmation did not influence how teachers rated the factors related to the retention of agriculture teachers in Swaziland. The only statistically significant difference observed was with regard to the nationality (Swazi or non-Swazi) of the teacher with regard to the domains "administrative" and "social" related factors. The conclusion drawn was that nationality influenced the way teachers ranked motivating factors related to their retention in the teaching profession.

Results of the study parallel those reported by VanTilburg (1989). The results were also found to be consistent with those reported by Pheneti (1995) in the study of turnover of Agriculture teachers in Lesotho where turnover was associated with lack of involvement of the teacher in decision making, poor reward system, inadequate facilities for teaching, heavy teaching loads, poor working relations between the teachers and the head teacher, failure to recognize outstanding performance, lack of inservice training, and teachers of other subjects undermining Agriculture teachers. The results were also consistent with those of Grady (1985) on job satisfaction of vocational teachers in Ohio. He found that Ohio vocational teachers were concerned about comfortable working conditions, competent supervision, job security and amount of pay they received. In general the findings seemed to be consistent with results reported by earlier investigators.

Results of the study suggests the following implications: Policy makers and administrators should give attention to the salary of teachers. Salaries should be determined by consideration of the job tasks and time requirements peculiar to teaching Agriculture as compared to other disciplines. Agriculture teachers should be provided with the following fringed benefits: bonus 13th check at the end of the year, hardship allowance and good pension scheme on retirement. Agriculture teachers should be provided with additional allowance for working on weekends. Supervisors should provide educational opportunities such as inservice training and graduate courses to assist administrators and supervisors to enhance their

competence in supervision. Agriculture teachers should be allowed to attend training programs to acquire both theoretical and practical skills and this could be achieved through workshops, seminars and conferences. Schools should be provided with adequate teaching equipment and the Ministry of Education should provide support service units to maintain the equipment. A study needs to be conducted to determine if factors related to retention of agriculture teachers have any relationship with the performance or effectiveness of an agriculture teacher.

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Table 1. Perceptions of agriculture teachers regarding motivating factors that lead to retention in their jobs

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
I. Reward and job security		
1. The pay is reasonable	1.22	1.27
2. There is a reasonable pay in comparison with other countries	0.98	1.15
3. The hardship allowance is reasonable.	0.29	1.15
4. There are many holidays in relation to other jobs	2.91	1.63
5. There is accessibility to teaching facilities in the work place.	2.46	1.31
6. My department values my contribution.	2.73	1.29
7. The school values my contribution.	2.82	1.47
8. There's a reasonable pension scheme plan on retirement.	1.66	1.35
Domain	1.88	0.76
II. Teachers' own achievement		
9. I am able to share my accomplishment with others in my school	3.00	1.33
10. I am able to offer solutions to the problems in the department	3.34	1.02
11. I am able to successfully execute all my tasks related to my job	3.15	1.14
12. I am able to see the results of my job.	3.73	1.14
Domain	3.31	0.83
III. Training		
13. Attend in service training programs.	1.49	1.33
14. Organize workshops.	1.20	1.09
15. Attend training programs necessary for building my technical capacity arranged by the ministry.	1.73	1.45
16. I'm able to attend training programs that built my practical skill capacity.	1.68	1.49
17. I'm able to apply for promotion to higher positions.	1.48	1.36
Domain	1.52	1.01
IV. Work -related factors		
18. I'm a good communicator at school.	2.73	1.33
19. There's good performance appraisal used to justify promotion.	1.91	1.24
20. There's feedback on performance appraisal results.	2.40	1.42
21. I am allowed to exercise independent control over the subject I teach.	3.55	1.20
Domain	2.65	0.85

V. Supervision

22. My supervisor takes an interest in me and tries to understand my problem.	2.69	1.57
23. My supervisor tries to understand my problems.	2.66	1.56
24. My supervisor uses individual differences in trying to achieve department goals.	2.34	1.52
25. My supervisor stimulates professional growth and development.	2.71	1.48
26. My supervisor thinks of teachers as human beings rather than as tools for getting work done.	2.91	1.65
27. My supervisor is competent in decision making.	2.73	1.51
28. My supervisor has a democratic style of supervision.	2.74	1.51
29. My supervisor is able to lead the department as a team towards achievement of departmental objectives.	2.89	1.45
30. My supervisor is objective.	2.81	1.40
Domain	2.72	1.23

VI. Administrative- related factors

My supervisor:

31. promotes co-operation among departments.	2.89	1.42
32. promotes efficiency.	3.25	1.15
33. promotes good working relationship among members of my department.	2.96	1.27
34. makes policies that promotes fair and equal opportunities for all teachers to get rewarded for outstanding work performance.	2.34	1.31
35. promotes good working relation among members of my department.	2.71	1.27
36. has professional roles that are clearly defined.	2.61	1.37
Domain	2.79	1.00

VII. Work environment

37. Comfortable working conditions.	2.14	1.49
38. Necessary infrastructure available.	2.54	1.48
39. Housing for teachers' at work place.	2.58	1.66
40. Classes are scheduled at the right time.	2.98	1.30
41. Work is challenging.	3.11	1.35
42. The community support school activities.	2.11	1.44
Domain	2.57	0.99

IX. SOCIAL RELATION.

43. I work with a honest head teacher.	2.79	1.46
44. The head teacher takes suggestions from me.	2.59	1.51
45. The inspector promotes professional growth and development.	2.32	1.47
46. The inspector is fair in evaluating my performance.	2.34	1.54
Domain	2.52	1.14

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly agree, 5=agree, 6=Strongly agree.

Table 2. Difference between the nationality of the respondents and their perceptions on the motivating factors related to their retention in the teaching profession

Independent Variable	Dependent Variables			
	Administrative Related Factors			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	F-value	Probability
1. Nationality				
Swazi	2.74	.99	.75	.04
Non-Swazi	3.56	.75		
	Social Related-Factors			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	F-value	Probability
2. Nationality				
Swazi	2.47	2.50	.94	.03
Non-Swazi	3.50	.94		

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4=Slightly agree, 5=agree, 6=Strongly agree.

Table 3. Step-wise regression on the motivating factors that lead to the retention of agriculture teachers in Swaziland (p<.05)

Significant Independent variables ^b	R ²	R ² _{change}	bk	t-value
1. Work related- factors^a				
a) nationality	.05	.05	-.97	-2.27
adjusted R ² = .05				
constant =2.74				
For model, F = 5.2				
2. Administrative- related factors^a.				
a) highest level of education	.06	.06	.37	2.40
b) nationality	.12	.06	.39	2.59
adjusted R ² = .10				
constant =2.74				
For model F, =5.43				
3. Work environment^a				
a) age	.11	.11	.05	3.14
b) tenure	.15	.04	.54	3.55
adjusted R ² = .14				
constant = 1.17				
for mode, 1F= 7.50				

^aIndependent Variable

V1=Nationality (0= Swazi; 1= Non Swazi), V2=Highest level of education (0= Diploma in agriculture; 1= Diploma in agricultural education; 2= Bachelors degree; 3= Masters degree), v3=Tenure (0= yes; 1= no), V4=age (Interval),

^aDependent variable: Rating of motivating factors toward retention of agriculture teachers (interval scale)