

Improvement of Job Satisfaction Based on Teacher Leadership

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Abstract: *Teacher leadership has increasingly emerged as a critical aspect of education, particularly in the context of the evolving teaching landscape. This article delves into the intricate relationships between teacher leadership and job satisfaction, exploring the mechanisms through which teacher leadership can foster job satisfaction. Drawing on literature from various fields, including educational psychology, organizational behavior, and leadership studies, we argue that teacher leadership is not only a means to improve student outcomes but also a critical factor in enhancing teacher job satisfaction. The findings from the study illustrate a package of effective approaches of developing teacher leadership capacities. The significance of school leaders' role in promoting teacher leadership and their job satisfaction is highlighted in this research. The article concludes with suggestions for policy-making, teaching and learning practices in educational organizations and implications for future researches.*

Keywords: *Teacher leadership, Job satisfaction, effective approaches, school leaders*

1. Introduction

In the fast-paced and constantly evolving world of education, teacher leadership has emerged as a key factor in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. As the complexity of educational systems continues to increase, the role of teachers as leaders within their own classrooms and beyond has become increasingly important. Teacher leadership is not merely about assuming administrative responsibilities; it is about fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement in educational organizations [1].

Job satisfaction, on the other hand, is a crucial aspect of teachers' professional well-being. It refers to the positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of one's job or work experience, encompassing various dimensions such as job content, working conditions, salary and benefits, and the overall organizational climate [2]. Job satisfaction is not just a matter of personal happiness; it is also closely linked to teachers' effectiveness, motivation, and retention in the profession [3].

This article aims to provide a comprehensive review of the literature on teacher leadership and job satisfaction, exploring the mechanisms through which teachers' job satisfaction is influenced by the status quo of teacher leadership and searching for ways to promote both of them. We begin by defining teacher leadership and job satisfaction, discussing their theoretical frameworks and key dimensions. Then present findings from relevant studies were examined, illustrating the relationship between teacher leadership and job satisfaction from various perspectives. Additionally, we make close investigation into how to promote teachers' job satisfaction through their developed leadership capacities. Finally, we offer implications highlighting the need for a more holistic approach to boost teacher leadership development and job satisfaction enhancement in educational organizations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership has been defined in various ways, with scholars emphasizing different aspects of the concept. Broadly speaking, teacher leadership refers to the process by which teachers take on active roles in shaping the teaching and learning process, promoting positive change, and leading by example within their educational organizations [1]. This definition encapsulates both the individual and collective aspects of teacher leadership, emphasizing the importance of teachers' roles as agents of change and influencers of others.

Teacher leadership can be conceptualized along multiple dimensions. One such dimension is the nature of leadership roles assumed by teachers. Teacher leadership can involve leading instructional teams, developing and implementing innovative teaching practices, or collaborating with other teachers to improve teaching and learning outcomes [4]. These roles require teachers to assume responsibility for leading and guiding others, which can have a significant impact on their job satisfaction.

Another dimension of teacher leadership is the focus of leadership activities. Teacher leaders can focus on improving student learning outcomes, promoting professional development among their peers, or influencing school-level decision-making processes [5]. By engaging in these activities, teachers can have a direct impact on their work environment and job satisfaction would be improved, as they feel more valued and empowered within the educational organization.

York & Duke claim for the concept of collective teacher leadership, which has been widely regarded as the third dimension of teacher leadership [6]. It highlights the importance of collaboration and shared responsibility among teachers in schools. This theory emphasizes that teacher leadership is not solely the responsibility of individual teachers but rather a collective effort involving the entire teaching community. They emphasize the importance of collective efforts in teacher leadership, which involves teachers collaborating, sharing knowledge, and working towards common goals. Collective teacher leadership recognizes that teachers possess a wealth of knowledge, expertise, and experience that can be leveraged for the betterment of the school and its students. By working together, teachers can share their ideas, challenges, and solutions, create a supportive learning environment, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. In this framework, teacher leadership is seen as a distributed process, where teachers at all levels—from classroom teachers to department heads and school leaders—can contribute to school-wide decisions and initiatives. This approach encourages teachers to take ownership of their professional growth and development, while also recognizing the value of peer support and mentorship.

2.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a key indicator of teachers' professional well-being, reflecting their positive emotional response to various aspects of their job [2]. A high level of job satisfaction can lead to improved teaching quality, enhanced motivation, and better teacher retention. Job satisfaction is multifaceted, encompassing various dimensions such as job content, working conditions, salary and benefits, and the overall organizational climate [3].

Assessing teachers' contentment under various conditions is the goal of job satisfaction surveys. Various studies examined the factors that influenced teachers' job satisfaction. Teachers' relationships with students are the source of their job pleasure [7]. The achievement of a teacher's students may also have an impact on the teacher's job satisfaction. Furthermore, the impact of performance rewards on job satisfaction is significant [8]. However, increasing duties and a lack of rewards have been widely cited as threats to teachers' job satisfaction in recent years [9]. The rapid changes and major challenges that confront the society, educational environments, and the expectations of parents, students, and administrators could also be taken as the reasons for the decrease of teacher job satisfaction. Furthermore, new legislation pertaining to teachers and educational practices may also have an impact on how satisfied teachers are with their jobs. Generally speaking, Numerous factors can affect a teacher's job satisfaction, including organizational factors like school culture, leadership style, and resource allocation, interpersonal factors like relationships with colleagues and students, and intrapersonal factors like teachers' personal values and expectations [10].

2.3 The Relationship between Teacher Leadership and Job Satisfaction

There are numerous factors that can bring about influences on teachers' job satisfaction. While most researches investigated the contribution of teacher leadership to classroom atmosphere, student achievement, student engagement, teachers colleagues growth and school decisions, some researchers tried to look into the relationship between teachers leadership and teachers' job satisfaction, arguing that teachers' leadership responsibilities can also bring considerable personal rewards, such as increased self-efficacy, increased influence among colleagues, the ability to share school leadership, etc. O'Connor observed 42 teacher leaders who claimed that leadership practice had increased their confidence, expanded their knowledge, made them more dynamic in their work, and even changed their bad views of teaching. Teachers generally believe that teacher leadership increases their confidence in their personal abilities and teaches them how to motivate, lead, and inspire other teachers and students [11]. Other findings also suggest that empowerment and leadership roles improve self-esteem and positive feelings

about work [12]. Teacher leaders have a strong sense of purpose and satisfaction, when they feel that they will enjoy their own autonomy and the right of being leaders in the reform of the leader's school more often [13].

In addition to these positive feelings reported from formal teacher leaders (teachers with official leading positions or titles), non-formal teacher leaders (teachers without any official leading positions or titles) make favorable comments on teacher leadership practices, too. Studies suggest that leadership activities can allow teachers to improve their teaching practices, learn more about teaching methods, and continue their professional growth. These positive feelings will also increase teachers' satisfaction with the job to a large extent. Some studies shows that apart from teacher leaders involved in the program, other teachers' job satisfaction will be affected by teacher leadership activities as well. A teacher in Harris and Townsend's research mentioned: "Because of a teacher's leadership activities, my teaching improved, I always hope to be better, and looking forward to the next challenge" [12]. One and a half years after the start of the chemical coordinator project, the non-leading teachers who participated in the project said that the skills they learned helped them establish a better working relationship with their colleagues. As a result, colleagues cooperated more frequently, and proactively. They are willing to contribute to new ideas for the development of the whole school and the teaching team [14].

Recent studies have explored teacher leadership as one of the most important factors that exert significant impact on job satisfaction. Teacher leaders who assume influential roles in educational organizations and engage in impactful leadership activities often report higher levels of job satisfaction [12]. This is because teacher leadership allows teachers to shape their work environment, participate in decision-making processes, and influence school culture and practices, which in turn enhances their sense of value and belongingness. Moreover, teacher leadership can provide opportunities for professional growth and development. By leading professional development sessions, collaborating with peers, or implementing innovative teaching practices, teacher leaders can improve their own teaching skills and knowledge, which can lead to increased job satisfaction. The emphasis on collective teacher leadership also promotes the idea of shared decision-making, where teachers are involved in discussions and decisions that affect their classrooms and schools. This approach ensures that teachers' voices are heard and their needs are addressed, leading to more effective implementation of educational policies and practices which undoubtedly contribute to the boost of job satisfaction of the whole teacher community.

3. Approaches that can be Applied to Foster Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership can affect job satisfaction in that it provides teachers with opportunities for growth, development, and participation in decision-making processes. A number of authors have described strategies for enhancing teacher leadership potential.

In their definition of teacher leadership, Sinha and Hanuscin provided a didactic understanding of the type of leadership that teachers can exhibit as well as project implementation strategies that provide them the chance to put their leadership abilities on show. The teacher leaders received encouragement, constructive criticism, acknowledgment for their work, and all the resources they required to finish their projects successfully during their learning and project implementation [15].

In other works, educators have provided guidance on how administrators might foster teacher leadership within their own institutions. The authors argued for the establishment of particular structures and procedures as well as supportive environments for teacher leadership development. For instance, Katzenmeyer and Moller claimed that principal actions, adult relationships within the school, and school organizational structures all had an impact on the growth of teacher leadership [16]. One specific example of the recommendations made by the authors is the use of an inventory to start a dialogue among educators about their pedagogical philosophies. This will eventually lead to in-depth discussions about the goal of educators' work and a stronger commitment to the education of all students, not just those in the classrooms of individual teachers. According to *Crowther et al.*, teacher leadership is actually distributed leadership. Teacher leaders are created by principals who establish parallel leadership contexts in which formal leaders lead alongside teacher leaders, providing support for problem-solving and project management, among other things [17].

Other researchers believe that teacher leadership could also be developed through graduate courses in universities that involved a lot of face-to-face time. For instance, six fundamental courses in teacher leadership were listed by Ross et al.: guided inquiry, curriculum transformation, data-driven decision making, culturally responsive classroom management, teacher leadership for school change, and differentiated instruction [18]. These methods necessitate significant time and resource commitments

from all parties. In search for a way to improve job satisfaction of the entire teacher community, based on the three-dimension conceptualization of teacher leadership and other previous account of literature review, this study concentrates on figuring out a set of affective approaches which help to promote teacher leadership.

3.1 Empowering Teachers with Decision-Making Roles

Among all the recommended approaches, one of the most effective ways to motivate teachers to engage in leadership business is to officially empower them with the role of teacher leaders. Findings from some empirical studies show that empowerment can help teachers develop leadership skills and take ownership of their practice. Schools can involve teachers in school-level decision-making processes, such as curriculum development, scheduling, and resource allocation. This not only gives teachers a voice in shaping their work environment but also helps them develop the skills and confidence to lead change. Listening to teacher voice is also crucial for fostering a culture of teacher leadership. Schools can create opportunities for teachers to share their ideas, concerns, and suggestions for improvement. This can be done through regular teacher meetings, surveys, or anonymous feedback systems. By actively seeking teacher engagement in these activities, schools can ensure that teachers feel valued and that their leadership contributions are recognized.

3.2 Investing in Leadership Development Activities

Ongoing investment in professional development and training activities is crucial for enhancing teachers' leadership skills. Specific measures that can be taken to boost professional development include workshops, conferences, and online resources focused on leadership topics such as decision-making, team-building, and conflict resolution. By getting them involved in these activities, teachers can be provided with the necessary knowledge and skills of leading change and improving practice. Meanwhile, schools should provide the necessary resources and support to enable teachers to take on leadership roles. This can include providing access to professional development courses, funding for leadership conferences or workshops, and releasing time for teachers to participate in these activities. By providing these resources, schools send a strong message that they value teacher leadership and are committed to investing in its development.

3.3 Advocating Collaborative Learning Environments

Collaborative learning environments promote teacher leadership by encouraging teachers to work together, share ideas, and solve problems with joint effort. Schools can create teacher learning communities where teachers can meet regularly to discuss teaching strategies, challenges, and successes. These communities foster a culture of mutual support and learning, enabling teachers to learn from each other and grow as leaders. Schools should provide the necessary resources and support. This can include providing access to professional development courses, funding for leadership conferences or workshops, and releasing time for teachers to participate in these activities. By providing these resources, schools send a strong message that they value teacher leadership and are committed to investing in its development in a collective way.

3.4 The Role of School Leaders in Promoting Teacher Leadership and Job Satisfaction

Data show that school leaders, especially principals play a crucial role in promoting teacher leadership and job satisfaction as well. By modeling effective leadership behaviors, school leaders can demonstrate the value of teacher leadership and create a supportive environment where teachers feel encouraged and supported to take on leadership roles. Thus, a culture of teacher leadership is fostered. Celebrating teacher leadership successes is another important way to recognize and encourage teachers to continue developing their leadership skills. Leaders in Schools can explore effective ways to recognize teachers who have made significant contributions to school improvement, student learning, or teacher collaboration. This can be done through awards, public recognition, or by sharing their stories and practices with other teachers. By celebrating these successes, schools create a positive feedback loop that encourages more teachers to take on leadership roles. This includes exhibiting a commitment to continuous learning, fostering a positive learning environment, and promoting teacher voice and agency.

In summary, by providing opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles, engage in influential leadership activities, with the collaborative learning environments and the exemplary role of school

leaders, a culture of collaboration and innovation can be fostered within a school. This culture can enhance teachers' sense of value and belongingness, leading to increased job satisfaction. In addition, school leaders can provide ongoing support and feedback to teacher leaders. This support can help teacher leaders navigate challenges and overcome obstacles, enabling them to remain engaged and effective in their leadership roles. By providing this support, school leaders can foster a positive work environment that is conducive to job satisfaction.

4. Conclusion

Teacher leadership and job satisfaction are essential for improving teaching quality and enhancing the professional well-being of teachers. By understanding the relationship between these two concepts and the role of school leaders in promoting them, we can create more effective and satisfying work environments for teachers to develop their leadership capacities, thus boost their job satisfaction that lead to positive outcomes for students and schools alike. However, it is important to note that the relationship between teacher leadership and job satisfaction is not always linear. Factors such as leadership style, teacher motivation, and organizational support can moderate this relationship. Just as Guskey stated: a transformational leadership style that focuses on inspiring and motivating teachers can have a stronger impact on job satisfaction than a transactional leadership style that focuses on rewarding teachers for their efforts [5].

This article is a condensed version on the topic of teacher leadership and job satisfaction. It provides an overview of the key concepts and relationships involved, but does not include in-depth analysis or empirical evidence. Future researches are needed to examine these issues and to inform practice in educational organizations. They may proceed with the exploration of the mechanisms that underlie the relationship between teacher leadership and job satisfaction, identifying even more comprehensive strategies that would promote both within educational organizations.

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