15 Motivating teachers in times of change

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1   INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims

This study investigates teachers' motivation in Omani schools, with a view to providing insights into how this can be improved through the efforts of headteachers and educational managers.

1.2 Background and rationale

For the past 20 years, the education system in Oman has experienced waves of rapid change, some of which have encountered resistance from staff. From my experience as a teacher and supervisor in Omani schools, I am aware of deficits in motivation. Furthermore, I believe that while headteachers recognize the need for motivated teachers, they may not believe it is their role to motivate or believe they have the power to achieve this. Therefore, there is a need to research the motivation of staff experiencing change with a view to understanding how principles of effective management can help.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

According to Turner (1992), motivation involves arousal, direction and persistence, as people engage in complex instinctive behaviour. This raises the question of whether managers, in our case headteachers, can influence the direction and strength of these instincts. Theories of motivation may provide useful insights.

Many researchers (e.g.; Evans, 1998, quoted in Foskett & Lumby, 2003) have identified a strong connection between motivation, morale and job satisfaction, but do not necessarily agree on how they relate. Some argue that job satisfaction leads

to high morale, and high morale and job satisfaction in turn result in high motivation (Sim, 1990). However, if either morale or job satisfaction is low, low motivation may not necessarily result. For example, teachers may be dissatisfied with their pay and conditions of service and suffer low morale, but for reasons of professionalism and a concern for the interests of their students, remain highly motivated (Foskett & Lumby, 2003).

The popular interpretation that people are basically motivated by money is still influential (Evans, 2001), but since the 1920s a number of broad research-based theories have emerged about what motivates people at work. These include Maslow's (1954) needs hierarchy theory, Herzberg's (1968) two-factor theory, Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, and Adam's (1965) equity theory. These can be classified as 'content' and 'process' theories, according to their focus. Maslow's and Herzberg's content theories focus on intrinsic needs, which, if satisfied, result in motivation. Vroom's and Adams' process theories focus on how people evaluate the results of their actions. I discuss these theories in turn, below.

2.2 Content theories of motivation

2.2.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow (1954) argued that human motivation is determined by a hierarchy of needs. These are, in ascending order, physiological, safety, social, self-esteem and ego needs and self-actualization. The first two of these he calls primary needs. They are concerned with our basic physical requirements. The other three stages he calls secondary needs. They are learned, psychological needs.
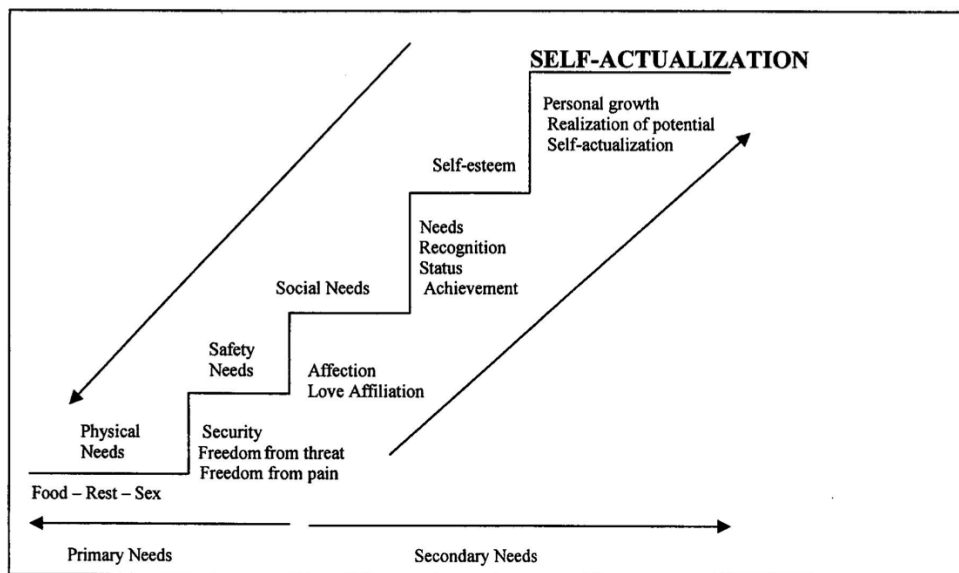

Figure 1: Maslow's (1954) hierarchal needs (adapted)

This hierarchy order rests on two assumptions; first, that "unsatisfied needs motivate behaviour and second, as a particular need becomes satisfied it becomes less of a motivator and the next in line takes on more importance" (Riches, 1994, p. 231). Thus Maslow's argument is that there is a cause and effect link between satisfying needs and achieving motivation: once primary needs (food, water, safety, acceptance by others) have been satisfied, secondary needs are likely to emerge. Conversely, when primary needs are not satisfied, secondary needs will remain passive until they are.

Researchers have criticised this theory as reflecting middle-class values rather than universal truths about human psychology. Steers & Porter (1975) view Maslow's theory as being more focused on 'intrinsic' motivation and, thus, primarily individual. Herzberg (1968) argues that the fulfilment of the second need in the hierarchy is not necessarily determined by fulfilling the first and generally researchers argue it is difficult to establish a causal link between satisfying needs and achieving motivation. Nevertheless the theory may be of some value to the present study. Teachers, like all employees, have basic human needs that should be satisfied, which may help us identify which factors influence teachers' motivation.

2.2.2 Herzberg's Two-factor Theory

Herzberg (1968) assumes a continuum for human resource motivation, with two basic groups of factors, job satisfaction factors (motivators) and job dissatisfaction factors (hygiene factors). He places both sets at the same side of the continuum, not as opposites, because he views them as independent from each other rather than in a cause and effect relationship, as in Maslow's model.

Satisfiers (motivators)   Improve
Achievement
Recognition
Responsibility
Advancement
Growth

Dissatisfiers (hygiene factors)   Remove
Salary
Working conditions
Relationships with peers
Security
External demands

Figure 2: Herzberg's (1968) satisfiers and dissatisfiers (adapted)

Satisfiers (motivators) are intrinsic to the nature of work itself and are conducive to job satisfaction. Dissatisfiers are extrinsic and are associated with the working environment or context. Herzberg argues that "for satisfaction to increase, improvement to the satisfying factors is required" (Spear et al., 2000, p. 36) and at the same time diminution of the factors which dissatisfy.

The two-factor theory has been extensively tested (Rowland & Ferris, 1982) and in general the evidence against it seems greater than the evidence for it. In particular, it is argued that Herzberg over-generalized his hypothesis about motivator and hygiene factors by claiming they operate in the same way for everyone. Yet, in spite of such criticisms, the two-factor theory may help education managers focus on job content and on enriching the workplace environment. Moreover, the notion of improving satisfiers and reducing or removing dissatisfiers can help education managers see that the existence of dissatisfiers does not mean an end to motivation in itself.

2.2.3   Process theories of motivation

Content theories are concerned with identifying particular elements that need to be built into jobs to motivate staff. Process theories approach motivation from the angle of understanding how people look at things, how they evaluate the results of their actions and what determines their next behaviour, along with the relationship between different variables. Process theories of motivation include 'Expectancy theory' and 'Equity theory'.

2.3   Expectancy theory

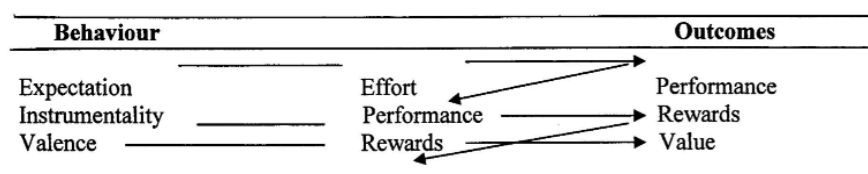| Behaviour		Outcomes
Expectation	Effort	Performance
Instrumentality	Performance	Rewards
Valence	Rewards	Value

Figure 3: Vroom's choice model (1964)

Vroom's (1964) Expectancy theory assumes that "each individual makes a personal calculation of the costs and benefits of choices of action, and responds accordingly" (Handy, 1993, cited in Middlewood & Lumby, 1998, p. 46). In other words, people are influenced by their expectation about what will happen as a result of certain actions. Figure 3 shows how Expectancy theory works: When deciding amongst behavioural options, individuals select the most motivating option. This is seen as a function of three perceptions; expectancy (the belief that effort will lead to the desired performance), instrumentality (the belief that if one meets performance expectations, one will receive a greater reward) and valence (the value one personally places on the rewards). According to Westerman & Donoghue (1989, p. 68) "high expectancy leads to more effort, and low expectancy leads to less effort".

When applied to education, the theory assumes that if teachers work hard, achieve high performance and are rewarded, their level of motivation will be determined by the degree of valence i.e. whether the reward is highly valued by them or not. If hard work and high performance are not appropriately rewarded, staff morale may decline, as high performance will not be perceived as being instrumental in bringing valued rewards. Thus, managers should attempt to

establish clear relationships between effort, performance and rewards and establish clear appraisal procedures for evaluating levels of performance (Riches, 1994).

2.3.1 Equity Theory

| Group one | working hard | = | recognition | + | higher salaries |
| Group two | working hard | = | recognition | + | higher salaries |

Figure 4: Adam's Equity Theory (1965)

According to Equity theory (Adams, 1965) motivation is influenced by the extent to which individuals perceive they are treated equitably when compared with others in the same domain. The theory proposes that, if two individuals in the same domain are doing equal work, they should be given equal pay, treatment and promotion. If not, one individual will experience distress and this distress will lead to efforts to restore equity in the relationship (Evans, 1998). The theory focuses on determining whether distribution of resources is fair to both individuals. Individuals or groups do not have to receive equal benefits or make equal contributions, as long as they perceive the ratio between benefits and contributions to be similar.

When applied to schools, Equity theory considers staff inputs (what staff believe will contribute to their position) and outputs (the benefits they perceive the school or Ministry will give in return) (Riches, 1994). It argues that if teachers encounter inequity in the workplace, they may seek to change the inputs they are required to make (e.g. time, effort, hard work, commitment, etc.) or outcomes (benefits such as salary, recognition, job-security, etc.) or the basis of comparison (e.g. grade responsibility, position, etc.) or they may choose to leave the job, as "a way of restoring balance between perceived inputs and outcomes" (Evans, 2001, p. 150) in an attempt to "influence the outcomes side of the equation" (ibid). According to Equity theory, good pay would be an effective motivator (Evans, 1998), but other researchers, for example Johnson (1986) and Chapman (1983), have found that recognition and approval are more powerful motivational factors.

2.4   Summary

Content theories (e.g. Maslow, 1954; Herzberg, 1968) can be said to answer the 'what' of the motivation process, i.e. what are the needs, and in what order do these needs affect the teacher's behaviour (Kanungo & Mendonca, 1994). They explain motivation as an attempt to satisfy needs. Maslow sees higher and lower order needs as operating in cause and effect relationships, whereas Herzberg believes that satisfiers and dissatisfiers operate independently of each other. These theories suggest that a person's behaviour is initiated and sustained by an unfulfilled need and that the behaviour stops when the need is satisfied. Process theories (Vroom, 1964; Adams, 1965; Locke, 1969), on the other hand, deal with the 'how' of the motivation process, i.e. how a teacher perceives an action and relates it to their expectations (expected outcomes). These theories all assume that motivation is influenced by the extent to which needs are pursued for job satisfaction.

3   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study aimed to answer the following three questions:
- What are the factors that influence teachers' motivation in five Omani schools?
- What motivates male and female teachers in these schools?
- How can headteachers improve teachers' motivation?

The research described here is a case study, "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (Yin, 1994, p.15) or "the study of an instance" (Adelman et al., 1990, cited in Cohen et al., 2000, p. 181), the 'instance' in this research being teachers in five schools. Case studies "provide a unique example of real people in real situations" (ibid). The present research may be described as an 'instrumental' case study (Stake, 1994), aimed at investigating a particular case in order to gain insight into how teachers' motivation can be improved.

Five schools in Oman formed the focus of the study and all teachers in these schools were selected as participants. In addition, four of the headteachers and two staff from the Ministry of Education in Oman were interviewed to enable the researcher to compare the views of these three groups on the motivation of teachers in Omani schools.

Two research tools were used to collect data; questionnaires and interviews. A questionnaire was developed, comprising 40 statements, which required responses on a five-point Likert scale. Based on piloting, amendments were made to improve its reliability and validity. Two hundred questionnaires were then distributed to teachers in the five selected schools, 170 were returned, of which 20 were excluded for reasons of inconsistency, leaving 150 for analysis.

The second method of collecting data was interviews. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with two Ministry of Education officials studying in Leeds. Semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with four headteachers (2 males and 2 females); a fifth was unable to participate in the study. Telephone interviews were used due to time constraints and distance and were conducted after the 150 teachers' questionnaires had been analysed. Nine main questions were asked, derived from my understanding of the literature, questionnaire responses and my own experience of the situation. The findings provided me with a clearer picture of teachers' motivation in schools. For ethical reasons, total anonymity and confidentiality were assured all those taking part in the research.

4   FINDINGS

4.1   Questionnaire findings

4.1.1   Recognition

To find out how recognition affects teachers' motivation, the questionnaire examined teachers' perceptions of recognition by headteacher, parents and Ministry staff. Table 1 presents a summary of the results. The key to Tables 1-3 is as follows:

Key: 5 = Strongly Agree,   4 = Agree,   3 = Neutral/ no opinion,   2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

Table 1: Teachers' perceptions of the extent to which their contributions are recognized

No	Statement	5		4		3		2		1	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	I get good recognition from my headteacher.	26	14	40	26	16	14	6	3	2	3
2	My work as a teacher is always valued by parents.	5	5	27	16	39	26	16	10	3	3
3	I receive recognition from employees in the Ministry of Education.	6	2	21	15	32	17	17	17	14	9

Recognition by headteachers ranked first, followed by that of parents and then Ministry staff. There is thus a decline in the level of recognition teachers feel they receive, as they move from the school to the outside community, as Figure 5 illustrates.
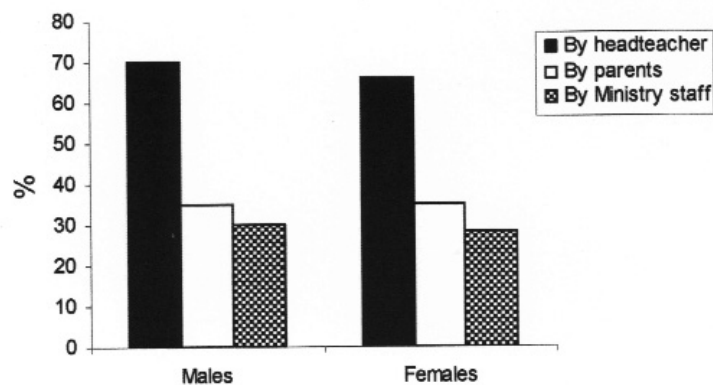

Figure 5: Teachers' perceptions of the extent to which their contributions are recognised

4.1.2 Opportunities for promotion

Table 2 and Figure 6 (below) show teachers' perceptions of their opportunities for promotion, where the term promotion refers to four elements; professional development, advancement, rewards and future career.

Table 2: Teachers' perceptions of their opportunities for promotion and self-improvement

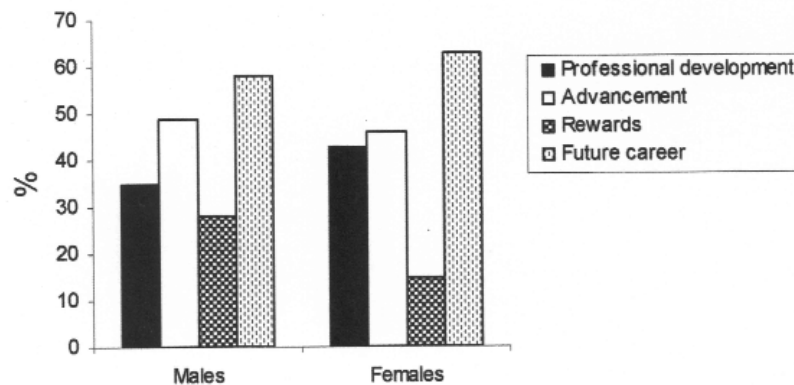| No	Statement	5		4		3		2		1	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	My Department of Education is always concerned about my professional development.	9	6	18	20	18	13	26	13	16	8
2	I get enough opportunities to advance from being a teacher to higher posts.	8	9	36	19	21	15	18	13	7	4
3	I get sufficient rewards for the hard work I do.	11	2	14	7	15	12	26	20	24	19
4	I expect a good career in education.	9	2	62	19	26	19	21	12	8	8

Figure 6: Teachers' perceptions of their opportunities for promotion and self-improvement

The responses did not show significant differences between males and females except in their responses to the rewards they get. Almost a third (28%) of male teachers said they feel rewarded for the work they do, whereas only 15% of females felt this. Overall just over half the teachers felt they did not have sufficient opportunities for advancement to higher positions. Under half seemed satisfied with professional development opportunities available to them.

4.1.3 Working conditions

Questionnaire responses showed interesting differences of opinion between males and females with regard to working conditions in the five schools.

Table 3: Teachers' perceptions of working conditions in their schools

| No	Statement	5		4		3		2		1	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	I have an intensive workload.	20	33	45	20	13	9	18	6	4	2
2	My salary is less than I deserve.	20	11	24	19	16	6	16	18	14	6
3	The teaching profession is secure and safe.	25	13	30	25	14	13	15	5	6	4
4	As a teacher, I have an adequate amount of free time for other school related work.	4	--	15	2	6	5	31	23	34	30
5	If I get a highly paid job, I will leave teaching.	24	10	18	3	23	13	13	18	12	16
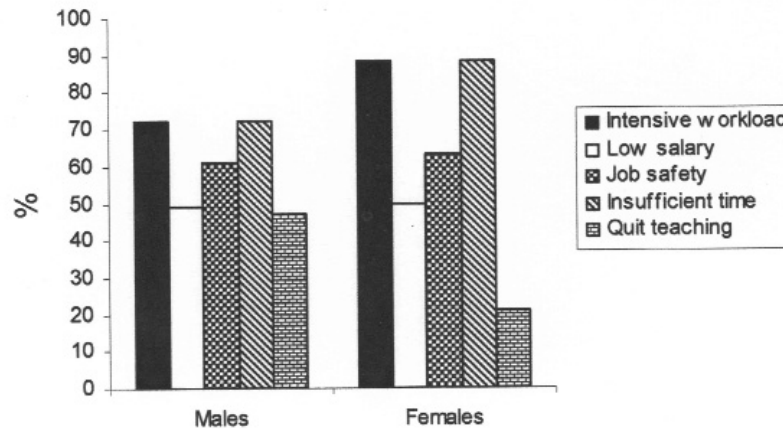
Figure 7: Teachers' perceptions of working conditions in their schools

A large majority of teachers, particularly females, felt they had heavy workloads, and there was a general feeling that the time allocated for carrying out school tasks was insufficient. Around half the teachers perceived monthly salaries as low. A similar proportion (49%) of males said they were considering leaving the profession, in contrast to only a fifth of the females who reported this.

4.1.4 Years in teaching

Levels of job satisfaction of the experienced teachers were compared with those of their inexperienced colleagues. 64 male and female teachers of different levels of experience were randomly selected from the overall sample and their responses to five statements (see Table 4) analysed. Of these 64, half had over 10 years' experience and the other half less than five.

Table 4: Levels of job satisfaction according to years of teaching

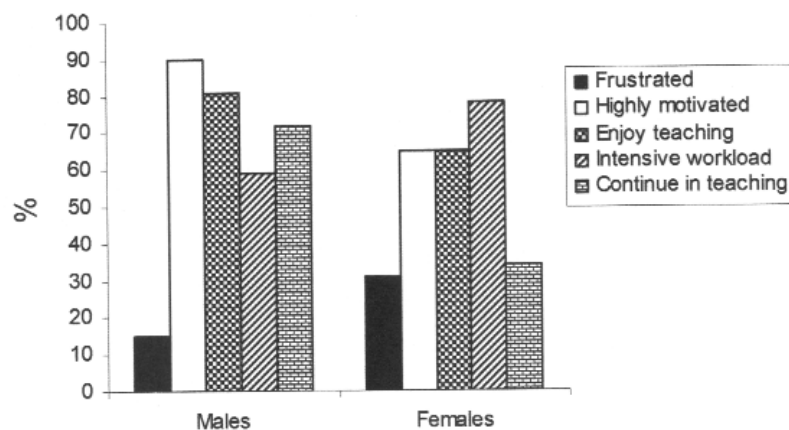| No	Statement	5		4		3		2		1	
		10+	5 -	10+	5 -	10+	5 -	10+	5 -	10+	5 -
1	I am highly frustrated.	2	1	3	9	1	7	9	11	17	4
2	I am highly motivated at work.	16	6	13	15	2	4	1	6		1
3	I enjoy teaching.	10	2	16	19	3	7	3	2	1	2
4	I have an intensive workload.	5	12	14	13	7	3	5	3	1	1
5	I would like to continue in my job for ever.	10	2	13	9	3	10	4	6	2	5

Figure 8 : Levels of job satisfaction according to years of teaching

Figure 8 reveals significant differences between the two groups. Inexperienced teachers tended to feel more frustration and find the workload more intensive, while experienced colleagues seemed more satisfied.

4.2   Interview findings

Four headteachers and two Ministry of Education staff were interviewed and the following summarise their responses, as derived from interview transcripts.

4.2.1 Do you think that teachers in your school have enough opportunities for promotion?

All respondents said promotion opportunities were very limited. Three headteachers explained this was due to the huge number of teachers in schools, compared to the relatively small number of senior posts available. With regard to

rewards, the four headteachers agreed that these were also very limited, though one mentioned that the Ministry of Education tries to reward outstanding teachers during annual 'Teachers' Day' celebrations.

4.2.2 Do you think teachers in your school are satisfied with teaching?

Headteachers agreed that most teachers did not enjoy teaching, and different reasons were given. When asked if they thought teachers wanted to leave teaching, the headteachers answered affirmatively.

4.2.3 Can you please describe the working conditions in your school?

All interviewees agreed that teachers are overloaded. Female headteachers reported that females have heavier workloads than males and one drew a comparison with neighbouring Arab countries (UAE & Kuwait), saying that teachers in these countries have comparatively less work than Omanis. Ministry staff felt that teachers' salaries are reasonable and headteachers agreed that teachers were not complaining about salaries but workloads. Male headteachers reported teachers lacked sufficient time to finish their work at school, while female headteachers felt time was sufficient.

4.2.4 Do you think that teachers receive satisfactory recognition from the community?

All six interviewees emphasized the low level of recognition teachers receive from the community. The two Ministry staff said that teachers get more recognition from former teachers amongst the Ministry staff than from the Ministry in general.

4.2.5 To what extent do changes in education have an impact on teachers' morale and / or motivation?

Headteachers agreed that there have been many changes in education, and that some of these have not necessarily been welcomed by teachers for different reasons. However, the two Ministry staff felt these changes helped teachers improve their work. Overall, all interviewees were in favour of change as long as it is not heavily imposed.

4.2.6 As a headteacher, what do you feel are the most important motivators for teachers?

The headteachers mentioned recognition, feeling respected and trusted. One headteacher mentioned that teachers need to experience 'justice'.

4.2.7 What are the things that you think may demotivate teachers?

Injustice in the way teachers are treated, absence of recognition, low performance of pupils and intensive workload were perceived by headteachers as the main demotivating factors.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

In this section, I use findings from questionnaires and interviews to focus on four key factors that influence motivation; recognition, opportunities for promotion, working conditions and years of teaching, which I discuss in relation to gender factors. I thus address my first and second research questions, leaving the third to the next section.

5.2 Recognition

To summarize, questionnaire responses revealed sharp differences between the levels of recognition teachers perceived they received from schools and from the outside community. Teachers seemed relatively satisfied with the recognition received from their schools, possibly because they are able to build good relationships with management and staff. This finding supports a large-scale survey conducted in Oman (Ministry of Education, 2005), which found that experienced teachers tended to have stronger relationships with school management. Higher levels of recognition result from this.

Unfortunately, though, only a minority of teachers felt they received appropriate recognition from parents (Figure 5, above). Headteachers supported these claims and one Ministry official contrasted their lack of recognition with the greater recognition accorded teachers in traditional religious schools, who were mostly older and more established in the community. Teachers felt they received least recognition from Ministry of Education staff, though it was pointed out by one of these staff that those Ministry officials who had taught probably showed more recognition.

These findings suggest the need for greater formal and informal contacts between teachers and Ministry officials, and between teachers and parents. Arroba & James (1987, p. 24) suggest "too little contact itself can be a source of distress (and) can cause additional pressure because it is through contact with others that the basic need for recognition is satisfied". If the need for recognition is not satisfied, teachers may not be able to reach the next level of needs identified by Maslow (1954); self-fulfilment. Teachers' responses showed they want more recognition and status from the outside community in order to develop higher self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. If this need is not satisfied, teachers may lack confidence, which may negatively affect their motivation and ability to motivate pupils. It is clearly necessary to encourage the wider community and the Ministry to show teachers more recognition.

5.3 Opportunities for promotion

In this sub-section, I consider opportunities for professional development, advancement and rewards. Considering opportunities for professional development first, Herzberg (1968) classified lack of training as a hygiene factor, a cause of dissatisfaction which needs to be removed. Overall, it is unfortunate, then,

that teachers felt professional development opportunities were limited, with under half expressing satisfaction. As Spear et al. (2000) argue, a lack of professional development can contribute to job dissatisfaction. Especially when they first joined teaching, many teachers had high expectations of receiving in-service training, which were not met. However, Figure 6 above reveals a slight difference between males and females. Females appeared to have had more training than males, this being probably associated with the introduction of Basic Education Grades 1-4, which led to the training of females, who taught these grades.

Regarding advancement, which Herzberg (1968) considers an important extrinsic motivator, teachers appear to recognize that promotion opportunities available to them are slim, with only a minority expressing optimism. Adams (1965) asserts that when teachers encounter inequity they will tend to respond negatively and start to lose interest in teaching. Yet, in this study, although teachers perceived opportunities for advancement as being minimal (in a typical school there are only seven senior teacher posts compared to around 60 teacher posts), this did not seem to count as a strong demotivator because many respondents were realistic about their chances. However, one female headteacher pointed out that the criteria for promotion could be clearer.

Many teachers appear to believe that the promotion system in Oman does little to motivate teachers. Headteachers' comments supported these views, though one asserted with regard to rewards: "This is getting better in Oman, the Ministry of Education are trying to appreciate teachers… for example they celebrate Teacher's Day … they didn't use to celebrate it before, give bonus or additional salary or certificate." Interestingly, male teachers seemed to be more satisfied than females with the rewards they get.

Overall, more could be done to value teachers. As argued by one of the Ministry staff, simple things, such as inviting teachers to meetings to show they are involved and being listened to, could enhance morale and influence teachers' motivation positively.

5.4   Working conditions

Criticisms of working conditions included heavy workloads, insufficient time, low salaries and poor job safety. The significance of these factors varied according to the specific circumstances of each school, but there appeared to be a consensus amongst teachers that school conditions were difficult overall.

Most male and female teachers (78.6 %) surveyed reported heavy workloads. In particular, teachers with Basic Education classes saw their loads as unmanageable. This increased workload can be attributed in part to the requirements of successive educational reforms, particularly those associated with the introduction of Basic Education and new assessment and related administrative procedures. Rowinski (1998) and Varlaam et al. (1992) note that administrative work adds an additional burden and may result in teachers having insufficient time to carry out their teaching duties properly. In Oman, the number of changes being introduced simultaneously and the speed with which they have been implemented has increased the workload in schools. One male headteacher said: 'Workloads are

pretty heavy … 25-30 lessons a week,… it's too much, especially in Oman, where the weather is very hot, humid and classes are crowded'

However, while headteachers agreed teachers have heavy workloads, they claimed it is not in their hands to change the situation. So, if headteachers cannot help in reducing the pressure on teachers, the Ministry needs to reconsider what constitutes a reasonable workload. For, as Morrison et al. (1988) assert, teachers who have experienced pressure in their work may develop stress and other health problems.

A related problem is that the majority of teachers (79%) claimed insufficient time to complete school tasks during the working day. A feeling they are experiencing rapid change, without having time to absorb it, could be one of the factors that puts teachers under pressure. Cox et al. (1988) found a strong association between lack of time and stress. When teachers experience stress in the workplace they begin to lose motivation and interest. Insufficient time, an external factor classified by Herzberg (1968) as a dissatisfier, may indirectly demotivate teachers, by making them feel they are not well-treated compared to employees in other domains.

 Approximately half the teachers surveyed perceived their salaries as low, while the other half seemed satisfied, which suggests that frustration with salary was not a strong demotivator for these teachers. As Herzberg (1968) argues, pay is not the only motivator. Indeed, "research evidence generally supports Herzberg's contention that pay is a hygiene factor and, as such, is incapable of motivating [teachers]" (Evans, 1998, p. 43). My evidence suggests that salary was not the key demotivator discouraging teachers from producing high quality work. Indeed, pay rises would not necessarily lead to greater motivation. 'I don't think increasing salary would assure better quality [though] it might help in some individual cases', a male headteacher reported. In essence, headteachers suggested that encouragement, appreciation and reducing teachers' workloads would be valued more than a salary increase.

The general view among Omanis is that teaching is a comfortable, safe job, but this was not altogether the view of respondents. While teachers generally responded positively when asked if they feel safe in teaching, they also said they experience stress, depression and anger. Females complain of health problems especially during pregnancy, while males seem to feel threatened by stress and fear of transfer. Maslow (1970) asserts that human beings need to feel safe and secure before considering social needs or self-esteem. Teachers need to be well-protected against any potential health problems. "A competent employee who is depressed and has low self-esteem is an unproductive one", as Ivancevich (1998, p. 640) argues.

Males and females gave similar responses with regard to workloads and shortage of time. However, female teachers felt they were more overloaded than males. This could be because most females work in Basic Education, where teaching might be more demanding. Yet only 20% of females said they wanted to leave

teaching, despite their heavy workloads, compared to 47% of males. This could be because teaching in Omani society is perceived as a culturally more acceptable job for females. The school culture, too, would seem to accord with their traditional values and beliefs. Furthermore, most are able to teach near their homes.

Overall the data revealed that working conditions were not perceived as ideal. Heavy workloads and insufficient time to carry out school duties were perceived as the most serious difficulties. Job safety was the next concern. Though many look at teaching as a safe job, some teachers complain of health problems. Nevertheless, the majority did not report significant enthusiasm for leaving teaching. The results of this study then agree with Celep (2004) who found that his Turkish participants reported a high level of willingness to continue in teaching despite difficult school conditions. A further source of motivation to continue teaching is the 'work law' which allows teachers to stay in their jobs until they reach the age of sixty.

5.5   Years in teaching

Results indicated clear differences in motivation between teachers with less than five years' experience and those with more than 10. Findings from studies in England by Fraser et al. (1998) and Chaplain (1995) suggest that teachers who had worked for more than 10 years tended to be less satisfied in teaching. However, the present study suggested that teachers with long teaching service were more highly motivated and showed higher levels of job satisfaction than recently employed teachers, who might have higher expectations. These teachers with less than five years' experience may have perceived many of their work conditions to be dissatisfiers.

5.6   Summary

Overall, if we apply the theories of motivation to the situation in the five schools, the results of the study seem to support Herzberg's (1968) two-factor theory. To fit this two-factor framework, "job satisfaction must be shown to be due to intrinsic satisfiers", Spear et al. (2000, p. 53) report, "whereas job dissatisfaction should be explained by extrinsic dissatisfiers". In this study, most factors perceived as satisfiers by teachers were related to the nature of teaching itself, and could therefore be classified as intrinsic satisfiers. The factors were recognition, advancement, promotion opportunities, reasonable workload and recognition from colleagues and the outside community. The absence of these factors could cause job dissatisfaction and low levels of motivation. Pay was not classified significantly by teachers as a strong motivator, but it could have an influence on teachers' motivation.

The data show some differences between perceptions of male and female teachers, particularly in relation to workload and gender-specific issues. Females complained more of heavy workloads, working in demanding classes and suffering

health problems, especially during pregnancy. Males complained of other health problems like stress and depression. A 2005 study of nearly 2,000 Ministry of Education employees found that though female teachers suffer more in schools, they are more willing to continue teaching. This fits the results of the current study. Traditions in Muslim communities prevent females from working in certain other domains, whereas males have opportunities to move into other jobs, which may influence their motivation.

Studies conducted by Huberman (1993) revealed that teachers' motivation and job satisfaction decrease the longer they spend in the same job. However, this was not the case in the present study, where more experienced teachers showed greater commitment to school and teaching, whereas less experienced teachers seemed more frustrated and less interested in continuing. Generally, the results of this study fit the results of a recent study conducted in Oman (Ministry of Education, 2005), which found that the longer staff spend in schools the more committed they are. John and Taylor (1999) explain such commitment by saying that when staff spend many years in schools they feel they have made an investment, related to establishing good relationships with people, future expectations and a feeling of being safe and secure. New teachers, who are mostly degree holders, tend to be more easily frustrated by job dissatisfiers and turn their minds to searching for other jobs where they think they will achieve greater job satisfaction.

6 IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Recommendations

The findings of this study allow some suggestions to be made for enhancing the motivation of teachers. Maslow's (1954) theory suggests that satisfaction of any higher need requires satisfying the need before it. If teachers are to provide high quality teaching, we can say their own perceived needs should be met as far as possible. Herzberg's (1968) two-factor theory suggests that "improvements need to be made to the intrinsic satisfiers" (Spear et al., 2000, p. 54), while at the same time reducing the impact of extrinsic dissatisfiers. This study revealed that teachers perceive their status to be low, with inadequate recognition from the community and the Ministry, limited opportunities for promotion, heavy workloads and insufficient time to carry out their duties to a high standard. These factors comprise a mixture of intrinsic motivators that need to be improved and extrinsic demotivators that need to be reduced, with the help of headteachers, regional authorities and the Ministry.

Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory views motivation in terms of the individual's expectations. According to this assumption, people choose a particular action based on their initial expectation of what they are going to get in return. In terms of the present study, teachers join the teaching profession with high expectations for their careers in teaching and become frustrated when these are not met. This suggests that, on the one hand, teachers should be clear and realistic about their expectations,

but also that headteachers should work to help teachers realise their expectations. Teachers expect to be recognized, well treated, and respected, and recognition of excellent work performance is crucial to teachers' sense of satisfaction in their job. This kind of recognition indicates to teachers that their efforts are making a difference and this in turn motivates them to do even better.

Motivation, according to equity theory, is strongly influenced by the way in which individual teachers are treated inside school and in the community. In this study, teachers' responses revealed that they feel inequity. When individuals encounter this, they will start to compare their status with the status of other jobs in the community, which may have a negative impact on their work (Evans, 2001).

Headteachers may not be able to influence hygiene factors like salaries and promotion opportunities, but they can, within the constraints operating in their schools, adjust workloads by sharing responsibilities equitably to make sufficient time available for the key preparation and teaching tasks that need to be done. By offering professional development opportunities within their schools they can promote self-growth. By managing their staff well at all times, promoting good relationships, making teachers feel respected and valued, praising and giving recognition to individuals and searching for ways to improve teachers' status in their community, they can provide teachers with greater recognition, show teachers they are valued and enhance their self-esteem. In these ways it may be possible to reduce or remove dissatisfiers and raise the level of motivation.

Motivating teachers in times of change requires headteachers who not only have good managerial skills, but also an understanding of how motivation works in practice. This requires them to be aware of individual needs, know how different individuals are motivated and have the ability to act as a mentor-motivator to support them. A combination of both theoretical and practical knowledge is needed. We may therefore finally suggest that headteachers need an understanding of psychological theories, in particular theories of motivation, to support their practices. The value of theories "lies primarily in their capacity to sensitize managers and researchers to specific factors and processes that can have an important bearing on the behaviour of people at work" (Steers & Porter, 1975, p. 582).

6.2 Limitations

This case study only focused on five schools and 150 teachers. Clearly, the small sample size could have affected the results; the research could have benefited by gathering a larger sample of quantitative and qualitative data. Further research on work motivation should be carried out over a larger geographical area in Oman to generate a broader sample.

6.3 Conclusions

The present study focused on five sample schools in Oman and investigated the

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factors that influenced teachers' motivation. Gender and years of teaching were taken into consideration to see how motivation differs between these variables. The results revealed that teachers' motivation was affected by a mixture of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The dominant factors were low recognition, difficult working conditions and insufficient time for completing teaching tasks. Differences between the two genders appeared when asked about workloads and job security. Female teachers reported having more intensive workloads than males and consequently experiencing more health problems. Other significant differences appeared between teachers of more than ten years and below five years' experience. Teachers with less experience showed more interest in leaving teaching, perhaps for reasons such as working conditions and the desire to have a less stressful job.

In general, the level of motivation of teachers in these schools seemed disappointing and the study carries implications for headteachers and regional authorities. These revolve around two major factors; reducing teachers' workloads in schools in order to improve motivation and raising their status in the community. Following from this, the study suggests headteachers in Omani schools should develop greater understanding of motivation, not only from a theoretical perspective, but also from the practical perspectives of teachers.

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