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Masters Research Project

"Incentives and Disincentives in Education and their impact on educator satisfaction."

University of The Witwatersrand

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Final Submission
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Topic

"Incentives and disincentives present in the teaching profession and their impact on educator satisfaction."

- What is it that keeps educators teaching or in many instances, what is it that sends them on a hunt for a change in career?

- Can schools implement policies and incentives that will keep educators satisfied?

Overview

In the following research report I shall endeavour to investigate what incentives and disincentives are present within the education system and how these incentives and disincentives impact on the satisfaction experienced by educators.

The process involved in this research and the gathering of necessary evidence included looking at similar research conducted in both the United States of America as well as research conducted within rural provinces of China. While both these countries display many differences in culture and civilisation, a large amount of the research undertaken within both countries looked at similar areas and had similar results in terms of educator satisfaction when their research was concluded. Given the evidence extracted from these studies and the similarity of their focus, a questionnaire was developed that would be used for the gathering of evidence within the South African context.

In terms of the South African context and subsequent findings, the focus group was kept small and within the confines of Johannesburg – while it was a small group, the responses seemed to mirror what has been reported within the South African media.

In order to understand what satisfaction is and what it means in terms of something experienced by individuals, I chose to look at the work of George Berns, who examines satisfaction from a psychological and scientific perspective. Using Berns's work I have attempted to garner a greater understanding of how satisfaction impacts upon individuals and, in turn, how that satisfaction is important within the lives of educators.

It is evident from the research conducted that, increasingly, educators are becoming more despondent and less satisfied with their careers and a large degree of this dissatisfaction appears to be stemming from the organisational structures within education.

I have also looked at various educational authors such as Davidoff & Lazarus in order to get a historical and sociological view on South African education and educators as well as various news and media reports in order to compare satisfaction levels with current events. The South African authors have focused their work on looking at satisfaction levels post-apartheid and how curriculum and organisation changes have impacted on the educator.

Using South African based work I have also been able to establish similarities between research conducted in the United States of America and China.

Finally, given my findings, I chose to look at organisational coaching work done by Mink in order to draw evident problems pinpointed by educators to the foreground and provide suggestions as to how these may be addressed, in order to positively impact on satisfaction levels. While I acknowledge the non-academic nature of Mink's "group tutorial", coaching manual, I feel that his work is of relevance in terms of my findings in that he provides more concise steps as to how to develop an organisation. Given that an organisational management approach appears to be the direction that South African schools are heading, I felt that a more detailed and structured approach in this regard was necessary.

Introduction

A high-quality teaching staff is the cornerstone of a successful educational system. Daily interaction between educators and learners is the centre of any educational process therefore, attracting and maintaining high quality educators is a necessity for education in South Africa.

In order to develop a high quality staffing body, one needs to understand the factors associated with educator quality and retention.

One of the factors is job satisfaction, which has been widely studied by organisational researchers and has been linked to organisational commitment as well as to organisational performance. One of the most important factors that fall under the banner of job satisfaction is the consideration "that all staff and others need to feel valued and acknowledged for their efforts and contribution towards the school." (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2003. p.145) Often it is not merely satisfaction with the job or organisation but with one's career choice in general that is important. Satisfaction with teaching as a career is an important factor since it affects teacher effectiveness, which ultimately impacts on learner achievement. "Conditions of service are the real 'bread-and-butter' issues of teachers and if they are unsatisfactory, teachers' performance will most likely also be unsatisfactory." (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2003. p.152)

Job satisfaction is an affective reaction to an individual's work situation. It can be defined in terms of specific areas of a job or career (such as compensation, autonomy, co-workers) that impact on one's overall feeling about one's job.

Ultimately, understanding factors that contribute to educator satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) and the incentives/disincentives involved is essential to improving the systems and structures needed to support a successful education system.

With regard to educators, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their job may have large implications for learners and their learning process. Stated bluntly, an educator's satisfaction with his or her job could influence the quality and stability of the learning experience provided in the classroom. It is argued by researchers and educators alike that an educator who does not feel supported in their work may feel less motivated to provide their best work in the classroom. This means that if an educator is satisfied in his or her role within a school, and feels as though his or her effort is regarded as beneficial to learners' development then, he or she would feel inspired to provide the best learning experience within the confines of the classroom. However, if an educator finds him/herself in a situation where they are not happy with their role within the school, and they feel as though whatever they do they will not have the desired influence in learners' lives, then they will not feel inspired to do their best and will simply do enough to get through the lessons required for the day.

> "Changing syllabi, changing approaches to teaching, changing approaches to school management and governance, changing laws about forms of discipline – all these changes mean that teachers are constantly faced with having to adjust to new circumstances. This can be very stressful if they are not given support to cope with all these demands."
>
> (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2003. p.147)

Taking into account all of the above changes, new circumstances faced by educators and the constant demands being placed on them, I have chosen to focus my research on job satisfaction and the incentives and disincentives presented in this area. It is often the incentives that lead to job satisfaction and it is the disincentives that take away from and impact negatively on the overall satisfaction and enjoyment experienced by educators.

Educators who are not satisfied and find themselves unimpressed with the system in which they work, the conditions and situations in which they find themselves in terms of class discipline, societal appreciation – or lack of it – and financial security, are not indigenous to South Africa but are a breed of "workers" found world-wide. For this

reason, I also chose to find out what research has been conducted in other parts of the world in order to ascertain whether the factors influencing job satisfaction differ or whether they are similar and, in such an instance, if the research conducted further a field offers any differing solutions that may improve educators' job satisfaction.

In the following research I am also going to draw from work done by researchers who looked at educator satisfaction in the United States as well as in rural China in order to provide a comparative analysis. Work done in both countries focused on what provides for satisfied educators as well as what negatively impacted on their satisfaction levels. By comparing research conducted in Johannesburg, South Africa, one may be able to gauge our satisfaction levels against those of other educators in rather different societies.

The reason I chose to look at these two countries is because, even thought they are totally different in terms of their cultures and civilisation, the one thing they share are educators that are not satisfied. I thought that this was interesting in respect of the fact that both these countries differ greatly from South African culture and civilisation but, the problems experienced with in their respective education systems mirrored or were very similar to the problems experienced by South African educators.

On a more localised level, based on research I conducted in 2005, entitled "The role of teachers within the classroom", a number of disincentives became apparent as reasons for educators leaving the education system. This led to an interest on my part to find out what incentives there are for educators and how these incentives/disincentives aid or hinder educator satisfaction.

The findings from 2005 showed that there are a vast majority of educators within the system who are feeling overworked and overwhelmed by ever-increasing demands – findings also showed that age, sector and phase had little effect on many of the educators. However, there were many educators who were still able to find satisfaction in their jobs and this satisfaction serves as an incentive to continue in their chosen field of occupation. In contrast, other educators are finding the constant change in

requirements, parental influences and School Governance, or lack thereof, resultant disincentives and highly de-motivating factors, and reasons for leaving the education system.

In terms of school governance, political, financial influences etc, many educators view their profession as an extension of themselves and view their workplace as a mirror that reflects the beliefs and morals that educators hope to impart on their learners. However, many schools have school governing bodies that are not necessarily run to their optimum potential and don't take the cares and concerns of their educators to heart. This results in many educators feeling that their workplace is working against the 'greater good' by ignoring suggestions or ideas that may better suit the school or learners within it.

According to my personal research findings in 2005, many educators at a particular school felt that the School Governing Body ran the school to appeal to the public and to suit the parents' needs and wants – specifically focusing on the 'wants' of the wealthier parents – rather than taking into consideration what educators felt may be beneficial. Due to low staff morale, internal politics and disinterest on the part of the SGB, the school had a termly turnover of at least four educators who had resigned. By year-end, the school had lost approximately fifteen educators who had left because of poor school governance and low staff morale.

I feel that in terms of educator satisfaction, there are various factors to consider that may impact on educator satisfaction:

- The school environment and working conditions within which an educator may find him/herself teaching: Administrative support and management, learner behaviour, school atmosphere, and educator autonomy impact on working conditions associated with teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

- Does overall educator satisfaction have anything to do with the age and in-classroom experience educators have? Are younger, perhaps more enthusiastic educators more satisfied than their older, perhaps less enthusiastic counter-parts?

- Although certain background factors, such as educators' age and years of experience, may be related to educator satisfaction, they are not nearly as important in explaining the different levels of satisfaction as are the school environment factors, such as administrative and management support, parental involvement, and teacher control over classroom procedures.

- Could educators with greater autonomy within their classrooms show higher levels of satisfaction than teachers who feel they have less autonomy?

Ultimately, the more satisfied the educator, the happier the educator. Happy and satisfied educators mean happy classroom environments, which results in a positive and meaningful educator-learner interaction. This translates into a meaningful learning experience, which leaves learners wanting to learn and educators wanting to educate rather than both parties being in a classroom because children have to be and educators are paid to be.

I will spend time in following chapters focusing on the above points in greater detail and link them accordingly with the research conducted in the United States of America as well as in rural China.

What is “Satisfaction”?

What is it that satisfies an individual? Is it the realisation that one may be appreciated for what one can bring to the table and the impact that can be made, or is it the idea of knowing that one has a place in the world in which one is able to put back some of who and what one is?

Ultimately, the study of satisfaction and the role it plays in the lives of all humans is a separate topic of focus altogether. It not only has psychological facets of interest but also falls into the scientific study of brain imaging and the various chemicals responsible for feelings of happiness, pain, sadness and euphoria, to name but a few.

On a reasonably superficial basis, satisfaction can be described as a “need to impart meaning to one’s activities. When you are satisfied you have found meaning.” (Berns, 2005. pg.244) While the journey to find satisfaction may be a need experienced on a non-specie specific level, it can be said that within humans it is a need that has become more sophisticated over time, which has resulted in humans going beyond the superficial in order to attain a greater more meaningful sense of satisfaction in which their individual meaning has a greater and deeper basis.

Gregory Berns is an associate professor of psychiatry and behavioural sciences at the Emory University in the United States of America who has attempted to discover what it is that leads people to find satisfaction. While he spent a great deal of his research going into the chemical basis for satisfaction and what exactly it is and the processes that lead to it, his final findings are what bear importance in the research that I have undertaken.

Berns suggests that satisfaction is not necessarily only linked to good and positive happenings but in fact to any circumstances that are novel. By novel, Berns suggests that these circumstances are events that occur which contain a great deal of information

that one does not know. It is through experiencing this new information and mastering it – regardless of whether the steps leading up to the mastery are good or bad – that one gains a feeling of satisfaction.

> "Everyone wants satisfaction. Some have found ways of attaining it; others have not, but in contrast to the image of a man retiring on the beach, a newspaper in one hand and a cold beer in the other, the most fulfilled people I meet don't sit still. For them, satisfaction and purpose have become the same thing."
>
> (Berns, 2005. pg. xvi)

In terms of satisfaction within education, one could look at educator satisfaction from the point of an educator taking on a new class of learners each year. With each new class comes a compendium of different personalities from the previous year and with it different problems and circumstances that may arise. Through mastering the new learners and their personalities, an educator draws satisfaction from the developments of each learner. The educator makes it his/her purpose to get to know the learners on a deeper level. However, when the effort put in by an educator is taken for granted and parents and learners look at educators as glorified baby-sitters, educators begin to become dissatisfied with putting in effort and not getting out reward.

There are both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that impact on educator satisfaction and, with further investigation, one may see that each of these factors provides further information and classifications that could and may very well fall into the 'incentive' or 'disincentive' category. Below, I will endeavour to provide a brief explanation about what the intrinsic and extrinsic factors affecting educators are and will attempt to break these into 'incentive' and 'disincentives'.

> *Intrinsic factors.* For educators, intrinsic satisfaction can come from classroom activities. Daily interactions with learners inform educators' feelings about whether or not learners have learned something as a result

of their teaching. Learner characteristics and perceptions of educator control over the classroom environment also are intrinsic factors affecting educator satisfaction (Lee, Dedrick, and Smith, 1991). Several studies have found that these factors are related to, both attrition and satisfaction in teaching, as well as other professions (Boe and Gilford, 1992; Lee et al., 1991). Advocates of professional autonomy claim that conferring professional autonomy "…will enhance the attractiveness of the [teaching] profession as a career choice and will improve the quality of classroom teaching and practice." (Boe and Gilford, 1992, p. 36)

Intrinsic factors may play a role in motivating individuals to enter the teaching profession, since most educators enter the profession because they enjoy teaching and want to work with young people. Very few educators enter the profession because of external rewards such as salary, benefits, or prestige (Choy, et al., 1993, p. 126). However, while intrinsic forces may motivate people to become educators, extrinsic conditions can influence their satisfaction in this position and their desire to remain in teaching throughout their career.

Adapted from: Perie et al, 1997, p. 17.

Within the intrinsic factors, it is apparent that while having a positive impact can be seen as a source of incentive, it is also apparent that, if an educator has to constantly fight an uphill battle in terms of getting learners to cooperate and parents to support educators in the decisions they make and recommendations they provide, then the incentive fast becomes a disincentive in that educators no longer want to put in all the effort for little or no return.

Extrinsic factors. A variety of extrinsic factors have been associated with educator satisfaction, including salary, perceived support from administrators, school safety, and availability of school resources, among others (Bobbitt et al., 1994; Choy et al., 1993). These and other

> characteristics of an educator's work environment have been targeted by media, researchers, and educators who claim that "poor working conditions have demoralized the teaching profession" (Choy et al., 1993, p.137). These groups (i.e. media, researchers, and educators) believe that when educators perceive a lack of support for their work, they are not motivated to do their best in the classroom, and that when educators are not satisfied with their working conditions, they are more likely to change schools or to leave the profession altogether.
>
> Adapted from: Perie et al, 1997, p. 17.

Again, based on the above, it is easy to see how these perceived incentives can fast become disincentives when, without the proper support and acknowledgement, educators become frustrated not necessarily only with their lack of remuneration but also, with the lack of support provided not only by parents and the school but, by society in general.

Disincentives in South African Schooling

While apartheid and the authoritarian education system that characterised pre-democratic South Africa have both been abolished and, as a result, out of practice for at least ten years now, their ghosts still haunt the homes, schools and offices of South Africa. The sense of euphoria that filled the country post-apartheid has slipped away and certain realisations have taken place; there are insufficient services, insufficient housing and insufficient employment to sustain a developing country. While these problems may seem remote from the reality of schools of South Africa, they are included as some of the hindrances affecting school development and impacting on educators and learners alike.

> "The current challenge in South Africa is the building of a truly humane society – a society which respects the rights of the individual, a society which united rather than divides, and which enables its citizens to participate meaningfully and creatively in its ongoing development"
>
> (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2003.p. 3)

Educators, parents and members of society all play a role in attempting to develop a 'truly humane society' and in doing so have a responsibility to share the pressures that such a task requires. However, within the school context the parents frequently lay all the responsibility on the shoulders of the educators and expect them to encourage their children, impact on their emotional, mental, spiritual and psychological development, and educate their children in "humanity". While it is a process of democracy that needs to be lived on a daily basis, often parents expect everything to be done by the schools and fail to carry the lessons of equality and acceptance through into the home environment. When situations arise because parents may be holding onto past 'grudges' and animosity regarding structures in place to right the wrongs of the past, or

are unable to shake their own negative personality traits, this ‘problem’ falls onto the educators to solve. With parents becoming more obstreperous, educators are faced with less recognition and appreciation for what they successfully achieve with children and are being blamed for children becoming freethinkers and questioning the world in which they live.

In a country and society where critical, and creative thinking is being encouraged in order to accept the errors and misfortune of apartheid and the past and, where these same thought processes are being encouraged in order to take the country forward into the global economy and market with a united focus and front, it is important that these traits are accepted and perpetuated by all citizens. On the whole, publicly these traits are being embraced and practiced by most political parties and their supporters as well as citizens who don’t want to be seen as ‘going against the grain’. However, when it comes to the privacy of home life, many parents struggle to come to terms with the fact that their children are more liberal, freethinking and accepting of diversity than what they may be. This resentment is then aimed at the educators because parents dislike the thought that they do not have as much say in the thinking of their children.

Along with the above, educators are faced on an increasing basis not only with thankless parents but also with the negative aspects of society filtering through into the classrooms. The violence that one used to associate only with back alleys and the ‘dregs’ of society has become a bi-monthly if not weekly association with schools. With news reports echoing concerns related to corporal punishment, schools being robbed and children being held up in their own classrooms, one must wonder what it is that keeps educators going back. Along with the violence, more and more, educators are expected to take on various roles ranging from parent to policeman to psychologist. With the consequences of HIV/AIDS becoming more apparent and with increasing numbers of children losing family members to the pandemic, educators are under enormous amounts of strain and pressure.

Schools and the education system itself have become places of uncertainty - where schools used to offer protective and protected environments where children and

educators alike felt safe within the school confines, they are now areas of the unknown where on an ongoing basis, educators, learners and parents alike feel at risk.
On a national level, more and more, the South African educational system is finding itself under the spotlight and the publicity being garnered is more often than not in a negative light. With stories being printed and aired that range from sexual abuse and corruption on the educators behalf and violence and stabbings on the pupils behalf, the schools are becoming a terrifying place to be, with learners intimidating educators and educators taking advantage of their positions.

The situation within schools has reached such a critical point that Education Minister Naledi Pandor has said that "the extent of violence – leading to murders and attempted murders among pupils highlighted in the media over the past year – was worrying." She went on to comment on and suggest that "We need to act to protect teachers and pupils. All schools need to be fenced, security staff engaged, and counsellors and other professionals contracted." (The Star Newspaper, November 22, 2006 *Edition 1*) Having to deal with increasing security risks and support systems that are lacking in the urban areas and even more so in the rural areas, one must ask, what is it that keeps educators excited about their work and wanting to return day after day.

The lines that differentiate the caring educator from the educator who abuses his or her position are being blurred. Where educators are no longer able to jack, smack or in any way hurt 'insubordinate' learners, physical activities such as push-ups and sit-ups are being implemented in order to discipline learners. While this may seem like a reasonable substitution instead of the previously physically hurtful methods of discipline, these methods are being distorted in order to cause learners pain – placing pencils under the knuckles of learners doing push-ups and expecting this task to be done whilst pushing up from the knuckle as opposed from a flattened hand push-up. This particular method is used at one of the Johannesburg Boys' Schools. The educator who explained the technique would prefer to remain anonymous.

In some instances, educators who have become disheartened and jaded by the system try to milk the system by charging for extra lessons and, in some instances, avoiding

teaching totally … even if it means giving learners physical tasks to complete rather than teaching. Increasingly, the mere mention of education sparks debates that show South African education and education in general in poor light and as a result, more and more educators are wanting to leave their classrooms in pursuit of a career that will garner more respect and appreciation, less administration and equal footing with his or her colleagues and fellow members of society.

It is no longer a career that leaves the educator feeling satisfied that he or she has done his or her bit for the betterment and improvement of society but a career that leaves bystanders questioning the motives behind such a choice and who may even ask if it was a last resort in terms of areas of study that may have been available for an individual. Amongst student educators many often comment on the ridicule faced by peers who have chosen a different area of study and who view education in a fairly negative light. Educators are being perceived as non-professionals and this is severely impacting on their satisfaction regarding their choices and how they are viewed amongst the general public.

> "We live in harsh and often troubled times. Social issues prevail in many of our communities – issues that reflect dysfunctional homes, and fragmented communities, poverty and often a lack of hope. What teachers have to deal with in schools is the manifestation of the breakdown of family and community life."
>
> (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2003. p.153)

While the betterment of society and making a difference was once seen as the main incentive for teaching, it is slowly falling to the wayside. Experienced educators reflect on the past when teaching was a career where educators only used to take off time if they were pregnant or seriously ill (because of their dedication and enjoyment of the job), increasingly, and as these experienced educators slowly exit the system, the younger seemingly less enthusiastic educators are taking days off on either sides of public holidays or in order to extend the school holiday period because they are left feeling so drained, stressed out and tired by the increasing workloads and non-

cooperation from parents. Educators have suggested that absenteeism amongst learners is also on the increase, with parents believing that missing a day here or there in order to have a long weekend at the game farm is not detrimental to their child's intellectual, emotional or psychological development. A sense of apathy appears to be systematically seeping into schools, regardless of whether they are privately or government run. A number of educators suggested that they would rather take a day on either side of a long weekend than come in to school to teach a class where half the learners have been kept out by parents for an extended weekend.

In order to steer away from the apathy and lack of enthusiasm on the educators' part, schools are beginning to implement their own forms of incentive in order to keep educators in their employ. The question is, do these incentives outweigh the disincentives, and are the disincentives such as school violence and unhelpful parental interference present in most schools, or is it the select few that are casting a pall on South Africa's education system?

More on the South African Context

More and more, the South African Education system finds itself under the spotlight. If not for continuously changing policies regarding various educational implementations then for the violence and uncertainty experienced in many educational institutions. Whether they are nursery schools, primary schools, high schools or universities, at one point or another there is always one or the other in the news either, for poor child minding or attempted kidnapping at the younger end of the spectrum or, for fee related or freedom related riots on the more mature side of the spectrum. South Africa has been living in a post-apartheid, democratically focused state for over ten years now, and with South Africa fast falling in line with the global society, the sense of possibilities open to one and all seems endless. However, the news we read about or hear about on a daily basis "speaks of an angry, frustrated and poor society" (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2003. pg. 3).

> "These cycles of violence and anger often spill over into schools and other educational institutions. Gang warfare threatens the lives the lives of teachers and youths at school, drugs and drug dealing occurs at many schools, and schools are regularly torn apart by theft and vandalism. At these schools, both teachers and students feel their lives are at risk."
>
> (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2003. pg. 3)

The research carried out and information provided from Davidoff and Lazarus that dates back to 1997, rings true almost ten years later in a time where school violence echoes through the pages of the daily newspapers on an ever increasing basis. Looking at the case study that they conducted and the findings that they uncovered, I look at the points that they refer to as 'Strengths' and 'Weaknesses' more in the context of 'Incentives' and 'Disincentives' and, draw on these points to inform as to what could be considered the factors that keep educators satisfied and what factors influence them in such a

negative factor that they would leave their chosen career. While some of the points may seem rather shallow and unimportant, coupled with other points, they begin to mount up to a level where educators feel they can no longer cope.

Strengths/Incentives:

- Well-cared for (neat) grounds and school buildings – a comfortable working environment.
- Attempts being made to integrate the school on racial and gender grounds – working in an environment that mirrors the society we are trying to positively develop.
- School administration, including timetable management, generally well done – a workload that one is able to deal with comfortably.
- Some attempt at creative teaching – educator autonomy within the classroom.
- Teacher collegiality evident – an environment where working relationships can be developed.
- Regular staff meetings that are run in a professional manner.
- An active school governing body – a school where the organisation is run successfully and democratically.

Weaknesses/Disincentives:

- Overcrowded and inaccessible classes – an uncomfortable working environment.
- Lack of physical resources and facilities.
- Low teacher morale – no longer enjoying what one does.
- Discipline problems with students – lack of respect.
- Division and mistrust between management and general staff.
- Lack of vision, accountability and trust amongst staff members – disorganisation amongst members.
- Little staff development and no support from parents.

Adapted from Davidoff & Lazarus, 2003, pg. 15

These points will be elaborated on below. As I go into the findings and results of the questionnaires conducted by myself I will come back to the issues presented in bullet form here.

Christie provides information about the role of the learning organisation in educator satisfaction. Often, according to Christie, a breakdown of teaching and learning can be attributed to the "(dis)organisation" within a school. If there is difficulty among upper management and the staff members of the school, often this disharmony is taken into the classroom – not intentionally, but children have the uncanny ability to pick up when there is tension. If the school is being run in a manner that results in bad communication and planning, then how can one expect educators to feel satisfied in their workplace?

> "Schools as formal organisations relate people to each other in specific ways both within and outside their boundaries, as, for example, students, teachers, principals, parents and inspectors."
>
> (Christie, 2005. pg. 287)

It is not surprising that if a school is an institution where people are expected to relate to and with each other, if there is uncertainty amongst staff members and a feeling of not knowing where to turn, these feelings would result in educators no longer feeling satisfied in their chosen careers.

Christie explores the legacy of apartheid education within South Africa, which was termed the 'breakdown of the culture of teaching and learning.' While the article was published in 1998, the legacy is still in place with a number of poor functioning, previously black schools found in poor, dilapidated rural communities or, communities bordering urban but that are not yet wealthy or supported enough to compete with their education standards. These schools share a number of features which include disputes and tension between authority relations and principles, educators and learners, educators and parents as well as spasmodic attendance by learners who are often to caught up in rural violence and conflict to be bothered with school.

In a situation like this, is it any wonder that educators find themselves de-motivated and dissatisfied with the lot that they have been dealt?

Comparably, in richer urbanised schools, educators face similar tensions with parents and learners and, relations with district are also not as co-operative as one may assume. With tension in well off, rural, urban and poor schools, what are the factors that influence this tension, and what can be done to placate the mounting dissatisfaction experienced by educators? Is it as simple as trying to provide educators with more money, or do the problems that appear to strike the education systems in the United States of America and China seem to be influential in terms of South African education as well?

"Schools as organisations show a remarkable degree of similarity globally in late modernity"

(Christie, 1998. p. 286)

With education in general being of global concern, is it any wonder that South African education should follow suit? Perhaps with the correct approach, South Africa could find a middle ground where educator satisfaction could be maintained without having to offer over the top-incentives such as 13th cheques, birthday cheques and 'because you stayed the whole year' cheques which, in some instances and schools seems to be the case.

Again, using Christie's article on the 'breakdown of the culture of learning and teaching', attention can be drawn to the role of the organisation within schools and how a successful organisational body can either make or break the staff morale and impact severely on their satisfaction, or lack of it. "In the failing township schools in South Africa, organisational environments do not support the substantive work of systemised learning." (Christie, 1998. p. 289) It is through the organisational and administrative bodies that incentives are implemented that compliment the staff contingent, or it is this same body that does not try to diminish the disincentives present within the school.

Whether this responsibility lies solely on the School Governing Body or shares the load with the national and district departments is still to be uncovered.

While Christie provides a significant background in terms of the organisational workings of schools and how they may or may not affect the educators, an article entitled *Vorleben* written by Kai Horsthemke and Mike Kissack provides background as to how educators and role modelling are linked – knowing that educators play such a formative role in the mental and emotional development of a child, how can this impact or influence educator satisfaction?

In the article, Kissack and Horsthemke suggest that the manner in which an educator is viewed professionally impacts on their interactions not only with staff members but also their interactions with students and parents. A negative view of an educator's position in society could easily impact on their satisfaction of their job and, if the manner in which they are viewed results in dissatisfaction, one can understand why an educator would feel the need to change occupations. Educators are aware of the impact they have in the lives of the children they teach. They acknowledge that they are role models and that children may learn certain behaviour from their interaction with their educator – if an educator is unsatisfied in the classroom, this comes across to the learners.

> "Within the domain of professional interaction with colleagues, educators may expect expressions of courtesy (which is conferred) and respect (which is earned) from others, as they collaborate to formulate and ensure the successful completion of common educational goals, and to win the confidence of the community whose children are their educational responsibility. These multiple considerations are all subsumed under the notion of professionalism."
>
> (Horsthemke & Kissack; 2006. pg. 140-141)

Given the above comment, one can see that a large portion of educator interaction and relationship building is based on successful interaction with various individuals and groups within the educational environment and, if these individuals or groups (members of School Governing Bodies, parents, learners and even fellow educators) do not

participate in a manner that reflects the educators professionalism, it can be highly disheartening and unsatisfying.

Knowing or having a notion of how one is viewed by external parties has an effect on the manner in which people view themselves and if people view themselves negatively, one may assume that they are not satisfied in their current position. The focus then falls onto how an educator is expected to act satisfied and provide a satisfactory learning environment for children in the classroom when they themselves are highly dissatisfied with the manner in which they are perceived and treated.

The SACE Handbook for the code of Professional Ethics also provides a backbone in terms of how management and administration within schools should be run. Based on these guidelines, educators have an idea of how systems and structures regarding their positions should be dealt with within the School Governing Body and what their role as educator within the school is. Using the SACE Handbook I will try to ascertain whether educators feel these guidelines are being followed and, if so, how this impacts on the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of educators.

Given the manner in which educator professionalism is viewed, I felt that incorporating work done by the South African Council of Educators would provide some idea as to how one could begin to integrate the satisfaction of educators and the status they have with correct ethical behaviour – hopefully by integrating the two, educators would find themselves on a happier, more satisfying path.

SACE (South African Council of Educators) has compiled a *Handbook for the Code of Professional Ethics*, which provides educators with a list of morals and values that they could consider instituting into their teaching practice. There are various points focused on educator behaviour in terms of their interaction with learners. The points look at the role of the educator and how he/she should treat learners. Treatment includes the respect and acknowledgement of individual learners' dignity and uniqueness. Other points include the compassionate exercising of authority, promoting gender equality and the avoidance of humiliation, and refraining from physical and emotional abuse. If one

looks at the points, one can see that they are based on the decent and humane treatment of learners and parents. If most of these points in terms of treatment were reciprocated not only by learners but parents in general, perhaps educators would be more satisfied because they would be achieving greater respect.

With set standards of behaviour being set for what is the accepted norm in terms of educators and, the emphasis on constant 'self-improvement' and life-long learning, educators are being encouraged to expand their education boundaries and to reap the benefits of the learning opportunities placed in front of them. Educators are no longer simple, authoritative; 'repeat-what-I-say' teachers but are facilitators and mentors to tomorrow's leaders.

For this reason, schools are becoming more focused on correct procedural workings and are becoming more like businesses and organisations needing the correct professional team in order to run successfully, smoothly and for the betterment of all parties concerned. It is in the move to run more smoothly and more business like that the incentives and disincentives evident in the profession begin to play more of a role. Previously, the largest incentive was the prolonged holiday period. However, with educators having to further their professional development during these periods, the incentive starts looking more like a disincentive in that even with the extra qualifications, the respect and acknowledgement that would follow someone in the commercial or corporate world is not necessarily an experience enjoyed by the ever developing educator.

The South African School as an Organisation

With increasing necessity, schools too are required to move ahead with the global prescriptions set by a dynamic and constantly developing society. It is no longer sufficient for schools to be run as a place where learning takes place. With more and more importance being placed on tomorrow's leaders, the schools of today need to be on par with the global developments. For this reason, schools are beginning to be run on a more business focused level where different agents are responsible for different aspects with regard the successful running of the institution.

Within business, differences are encouraged, creativity welcomed and team work expected. "Leaders, who recognise the value of cultural differences, will try to derive organisational strengths from the variety of lifestyles and outlooks found under one roof." (Khoza; 2006. pg. 115) It is the acceptance of these differences and encouraged teamwork and creativity that allow for job satisfaction in the work place to be attainable. While it may not be said in as simple a manner it is considered that a satisfied staff, regardless of the business type, results in improved business productivity.

In essence, the above statement provided by Khoza could comfortably refer to a principal and his/her staff members. If a principal is able to lead his/her staff forward in such away that diversity is encouraged as a means to instigate change, reform and improvement based on varying views, then his/her staff members may feel as though they belong to a successful, enlightened working vessel. With regard to satisfaction, if staff members feel that their views and opinions hold importance in the eyes of management that would result in increased job satisfaction. The more one feels that they are involved in developing positive systems and structures, the more complete and satisfied one feels in terms of their position and role within an organisation.

A perception that still lingers is the idea that schools are different from businesses – “You cannot manage schools like industry; they are filled with children.” (Macdonald, 1994. pg. 104)

Perhaps, it is this perception that has led to some schools who take the ‘bull by the horns’ by forcefully, dynamically and enthusiastically instituting a more methodical, business type approach to their schools and instating different kinds of incentives. They don’t want to be seen as just some glorified child minding service but more as a leader in educating future leaders. The idea that one cannot run a school as a business because of the children is as naïve as assuming one cannot run a hospital like a business because of the sick people.

Possibly, the reason for the South African schooling system being so erratic are the number of policy and curriculum changes that have been implemented over the past two decades. Prior to the democratisation of South Africa in 1994 education was seen as a route to the masses to perpetuate the inequalities however, in 1976 the Soweto Youth uprisings were an indication that the educational constructs had to be re-evaluated and changed. This resulted in the De Lange commission being established in 1980. The commission submitted many suggestions for an equal and open education system, but the suggestions were shelved in order for the government to try and maintain control. The only thing that emerged successfully from the De Lange Commission was the inception of S.A.C.E (South African Council of Educators), which allowed educators to be registered with an institution that would monitor the system and aid educators where possible in terms of change, training etc. It was only in 1994 with the emergence of the new democratic South Africa that education came under the spotlight again in terms of reform and development.

In 1994 the ANC Education and Training Policy Framework ‘was the expression of the official policy position of the ANC on matters related to the educational sector.” (Carrim, 1998. p. 68) The document drew on work done by NEPI (National Education Policy Investigations) and the NETF (National Education and Training Forum). Briefly, NEPI was instituted to investigate possible policy options on all levels of the education

system, while NETF was established to look at “ways in which education and training may be brought together or into some sort of structured articulation with each other”, and the requirements such a set up would require.

The ANC Framework Document drawing on the above works articulated and brought together what it thought to be important values that should inform education and training in the newly democratised South Africa. Among other things, it highlighted issues surrounding pedagogy and assessment as well as the role of education in a contemporary South Africa.

What followed was Curriculum 2005 (C2005) and a move to Outcomes Based Education (O.B.E) in which learners were encouraged to think critically and creatively and express their viewpoints and educators were encouraged to allow children the freedom to express themselves openly. While the notion was good, the educators lacked the training and understanding and, while it was expected to be up and running successfully with the first class matriculating in 2005, the results showed that not enough had been done in terms of training and inception protocol. While things appear to have calmed and fewer changes are being implemented in terms of curriculum, many educators are still reeling from the past 12 years worth of changes and this has resulted in a number of educators regardless of age feeling de-motivated and uninspired. Since 1994 school organisations have also seen the emergence of the School Governing Body (SGB) as well as the Student Representative Council (SRC) which were implemented in order for every party involved in the school to have a say in the running of the school. With all the happenings, educators have gained more control in some areas and lost control in others.

While it appears that the overall changes made since 1994 have proved effective in increasing and improving on the matric pass rate – this in its own right also appears to be a greatly debated topic. “Despite these improved matric results, there is a body of evidence to show that quality in the majority of primary schools remains poor. The Department of Education itself acknowledges that ‘there is considerable evidence that

quality of education in South African schools is worryingly low relative to what South Africa spends on schooling' (DoE; 2003; 101)" (Chisholm; 2004. p. 4)

One must ask what the educators have gone through in attempting to keep up with all the curriculum and policy changes and implementations, and how their jobs and resultant satisfaction have been impacted. The systems and structures in place that allow for the smooth and successful running of any organisation are key in terms of providing and environment in which satisfaction can be attained.

What is needed in a successfully run organisation are individuals qualified to fill the posts in which they find themselves as well as motivation to keep individuals enthusiastic and excited about the work they do. A current problem within the South African schooling organisation is the remnants of the apartheid regime where educators were not necessarily fully qualified to teach. What has been left in the wake of apartheid are educators locked in an authoritarian mind set, educators who were not necessarily fully equipped with the knowledge base required for the job and a distinct barrier between rural and urban educator standards. There are also educators who lack enthusiasm because of changes and for this reason, no longer feel motivated to give of their best. Before the schools can be run as fully operable organisations, all involved require training in the new curriculum and OBE education. This is a slow process and is also a major factor in the dissatisfaction of many educators – not necessarily because they do not hold the required qualifications but because time is needed in order for the systems and structures required to be put into place and for all parties involved to work as a team, which given the previous educative style is an uphill climb in its own right.

In essence, it is the successful business that maintains a consistent workforce, and it is the successful school that openly ventures to try new approaches, and that works with the members of staff rather than against them that maintains a strong, able and willing staff body.

While research and studies have been undertaken that focus on various aspects of schooling, one thing appears to remain consistent regardless of the work undertaken,

namely the idea that schools that have a more stable and efficient organisational team in place and where each individual is treated as a meaningful member of the greater picture are schools that stand out in terms of satisfaction, high staff morale, learner and educator development.

Within the section entitled “Recommendations”, I will delve further into the school as an organisation as this seems to be a major area of contestation in terms of the research topic. Depending on the success of the management teams in place within the learning organisations, educators are either driven to do better, and see this as an incentive, or they are demoralised and no longer want to teach.

The American Findings

Various authors and articles have provided an outline and broad look at the governmental and departmental impact on educators and how an educator's position within society is viewed. They also reveal how educators' perceptions impact on their satisfaction and provide ideas and suggestions on what can be done by various influential parties (staff, parents, members of the community that are involved in the schools) to positively impact on educator satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction Among America's Teachers: Effects of Workplace Conditions, Background Characteristics, and Teacher Compensation, written by Marianne Perie, David P. Baker and Summer Whitener, is a report based on research conducted under the auspices of the United States Department of Education in conjunction with the United States NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS through 1996-1997. It is a very informative report that looks at educator satisfaction across the board from educators in kindergarten through to educators in the 12th Grade, as well as at educators in both the private and public teaching sector, and provides fundamental building blocks that inform my research in terms of teacher satisfaction; what it is and the importance of having satisfied educators.

Their research found that the United States Education Department share the same problem of educators leaving the teaching field to seek employment else where however, their research also showed that very few educators were dissatisfied with their remuneration. Personal research undertaken by myself in 2005 showed that, in terms of *South African educators,* it often appeared and still appears as though remuneration is a core reason for educators leaving the education system.

A large influencing factor of satisfaction in the American report is policy showed that a large number of American educators found themselves dissatisfied with the workplace and organisational management within it – based on the American systems in place

during the time this report was published, all of the workplace issues fell into the scope of policy and, in order for changes to be put into place, all their policies would have to be revised and edited. The South African education system has been going through a number of policy and curriculum changes over the past few years as mentioned in the chapter entitled *The South African School as an Organisation* and for this reason, I have also addressed school/organisational management within my research findings in the hopes of finding out what impact these changes may or may not have on educator satisfaction.

"Teachers are more satisfied with teaching as a career when they receive support from administrators, cooperation from their colleagues, the resources needed to teach, and when they are not burdened with non-teaching duties." Perie et al, 1997, p. 62.

Other outcomes associated with educator satisfaction in terms of the American study showed that satisfaction is directly linked to the wear and tear or burnout experienced by educators – those that are satisfied "survive" longer in the system than their less satisfied counterparts. 'Teacher control' and 'Student behaviour' were also factors related to satisfaction. While 17% of both public and private school educators left the education system after the 1987-88 and 1990-91 school years for private or family reasons, 48% of both public and private school educators left "because they wanted to pursue other career opportunities, they were dissatisfied with the profession, or because they desired better salaries or benefits." (Perie et al, 1997, p. 18.) Of those who cited dissatisfaction with the education profession, few were complaints about remuneration, the majority of educators expressed concerns regarding the inadequate support provided by school administration as well as poorly motivated learners.

The American research covered such a broad scale of educators that, the surveys conducted were able to include a variety of backgrounds characteristics, which included "teaching in different schools, with different perceptions of workplace conditions, and receiving different levels of compensation." (Perie et al, 1997, p. 25.)

Within these groupings of characteristics, educators were also looked at in terms of the communities within which they find themselves as well as the different school types and the conditions present within these schools. Overall, given all the different variables, while there may have been some differences in the satisfaction, they were negligible – the greatest area of satisfaction or lack of, came from the workplace conditions. Another factor that seemed to hold quite a great deal of weight in terms of satisfaction was the educators' age. In terms of the American research, it was found that both the youngest and oldest educators fell into the "more satisfied" bracket while those who fell within the 39-51 year old age group were the least satisfied.

One may wonder why it is the middle aged group of educators who appeared to be less satisfied than their younger or older counter-parts. A reason for this may be that the younger educators have not been in the current system long enough to be jaded by whatever inefficiencies there may be. With regard the older individuals, their reason for satisfaction may be because they have been in the education system for the duration of their working lives and still enjoy it to some degree because they realise they are nearing retirement and potentially because they will not have to deal with the increasing number of obstreperous learners that their younger colleagues will. While it is an interesting point to ponder, there is little information related to why it is only the middle-aged individuals who are the least satisfied. A potential reason for the older educators experiencing greater satisfaction may be because they are able to command greater respect in a way that their younger colleagues are not. This relates to the idea that they have been in the system longer so they have been able to develop different methods of discipline and have learnt to 'read' the different kinds of learner from year to year.

Within this study, it appears that the incentive of money was not a driving force for satisfaction however poor remuneration was responsible for a number of educators pursuing alternative career choices. The incentive for more educator autonomy played a greater role in educator satisfaction. Educators who felt that they had more control over the running of their classrooms and what went on within the confines of their classrooms were far more satisfied than educators who had to follow a set classroom outline or educators who had to run every potential classroom idea past a supervisor.

Similarly, the disincentive of administration and disorganisation played a major role in educator dissatisfaction. Student behaviour in some instances as well as, parent support was seen as a disincentive among the less satisfied educators whereas, in other instances the support garnered from parents and the behaviour presented by pupils was seen as an incentive and as a driving force for educator satisfaction.

Still within the American education system, Mary H. Shann conducted research in the United States of America within middle class urban schools and discovered that there was a link between satisfaction and professionalism and how educators view themselves within society, amongst their colleagues as well as how they are viewed by parents. Shann also suggests that school Principals play a major role in satisfaction. Shann's research showed that an alarming 50% of young educators who enter the teaching profession, leave the education system in search of different careers within 5 years of starting their teaching careers. A number of factors appeared to impact on satisfaction levels however, all of these factors fell under the realm of the school as an organisation and, how individuals within this organisation be they parents, educators, learners or administrative staff, interact and work together.

With regard to principals and the impact they have on the satisfaction of the educators that look up to and report to them, one could assume that principals are not only in their position in order to run the schooling organisation effectively but they are also there in a mentoring capacity. In schools where the principal has an open door, anytime policy, with regard young educators who are unsure of how things are and are not to be done, satisfaction of younger educators is higher than at schools where they are left to "fend" for themselves.

Often, it is the principal of a school who does not welcome interruptions who fails to realise how large an impact he/she may have on young educators just entering the system. If he/she fails to provide the support younger staff members may need, it is easy to see why they would become disheartened and leave their chosen career soon after entering it. Granted, there could be other aspects that influence their final decision

to leave but, if there was a strong mentoring staff person such as the principal involved, help and direction could be sought.

In terms of corporate organisations, many have a mentoring programme in place that allows for the individuals who have just entered the corporation to feel at ease and know that they have a place to go to and a person to ask for guidance.

The Chinese Findings

Keeping Teachers Happy: Job Satisfaction among Primary School Teachers in Rural China (Sargent & Hannum, 2003, pg 2) is a research report written by Tanja Sargent and Emily Hannum from the University of Pennsylvania. This research, conducted in 2003, looks at how one can go about maintaining a happy and satisfied teaching body. The research was conducted after the opening-up of the Chinese labour market and during a time when it was of growing concern how the Chinese education system would retain qualified educators in poor communities.

Research was conducted in one of China's poorest provinces and focused on the influence of individual educators' background as well as the effect of the communities and school environment on satisfaction. Results from this research showed that educators in the rural Chinese areas found remuneration an issue in causing dissatisfaction because of low as well as late pay. Results also showed that younger, better-educated teachers were less satisfied than their older counterparts and showed that educators were more satisfied in schools with an organisational climate that supports collaboration and in communities where village leaders are involved in the development of education. One of the major points that came up in terms of the compensation of Chinese teachers was the fact that the "decentralization of school finance in China has disequalised the economic resources available to schools in different locales" (Park, Rozelle, Wong, & Ren, 1996; Tsang, 1996). This means that there is an imbalance of salaries and educators would far rather apply for a job in schools where the earning capabilities are higher, than to teach in schools where remuneration is low. This also results in better qualified educators having the flexibility to move where the money is which in turn results in the poorer schools receiving the less qualified educators.

Drawing on research done on a previous occasion, Sargent and Hannum address three factors associated with educator satisfaction, namely:

1. Community factors: Educators are more satisfied in communities with greater economic and social resources, and in communities that are less remote.

2. School environment: Educators are more satisfied in schools with better economic resources, in larger schools, in schools where there are more opportunities for professional advancement, and in schools where there is an organisational climate that supports educator collaboration.

3. Educator background: Young educators, male educators and educators with greater human capital are less satisfied, while educators who are more socially similar to the local community are more satisfied.

(Adapted from Sargent & Hannum, 2003, pg. 2)

In terms of South African educators similar factors impact on their satisfaction, especially in terms of organisational management. It stands to reason that organisational factors and the manner in which an organisation is run would be similar globally. Where ever one may go there are people working. They work to earn an income and they work to gain satisfaction – noting that a large income does not necessarily equate to increased satisfaction.

Using their previous research and providing more detail in their *Rural China* report, Sargent and Hannum provide more detail about their ideas regarding the above three factors and how they affect educators.

1. *Community*: Around the world, community poverty presents significant challenges to educators in under-resourced schools, ranging from the social problems that often attend impoverished communities to stringent limitations regarding school funding. Educators serving in rural communities in developing nations experience particular challenges.

Physical conditions brought about by poverty often make even daily necessities difficult to come by. In addition, educators in rural towns or villages may face a lack of access to transportation as well as difficulty sourcing various cultural or educational facilities. Recreation and opportunities for enrichment and personal advancement are often limited to those available in nearby towns and cities. Educators may feel isolated, especially if they are from the outside or if there is a wide educational gap between themselves and the local community.

2. *School Environment*: Socio-economic and organisational resources in schools may be linked to educator satisfaction. Socio-economic conditions in the school encompass both broad measures, such as the human capital composition of the faculty and expenditures per learner, as well as educators' own economic circumstances. Concerns with remuneration may be of importance, particularly in an area where payment is often late and, where salary packages are not very substantial. The organisational conditions of schooling have garnered considerable attention in research on the effects of school characteristics on educator retention and satisfaction. It is noted that schools with supportive and organised administrative teams, surpass less organised schools in terms of satisfaction.

3. *Educator Background*: Demographic factors appear to matter. Young teachers have been shown to be more likely to leave than older teachers (Ingersoll, 2001; Murnane, 1987; Perie et al., 1997) In addition, women have been found to be more satisfied, than men (Chapman & Lowther, 1982; Ma & MacMillan, 1999). Perhaps more concerning is the finding that better qualified teachers tend to be more dissatisfied than less qualified teachers, and thus more likely to leave teaching (Darling-Hammond, 1984; Schlechty & Vance, 1983). This finding may be in part attributable to the fact that teachers with better qualifications perceive more alternative opportunities. Teacher demographics in China differ substantially from

> those of other nations. In a multi-country study of teachers using the World Education Indicators data, China was the only country with a majority of male primary and middle school educators (OECD, 2001: 125). The gender balance is shifting, however. The teaching force is gradually becoming more feminised, as shown by the fact that among younger educators, female educators are in the majority (OECD, 2001: 125). Further, China's teaching force is relatively young, with 60 percent of educators under 40 years of age (OECD, 2001: 125).
>
> (Adapted from: Sargent & Hannum, 2003, pg. 4-8)

While Sargent and Hannum focused a great deal on only three factors, there overall findings linked very similarly with the findings and data produced by the U.S. study. In terms of *community*, the *Rural China* results indicated that Educators who had attained higher qualifications were found to be more dissatisfied with the careers and with the education system in general. It was perceived that the reason they could feel dissatisfied given their qualifications is because they were more aware of other job opportunities that may await them in the corporate/commercial sector. It was found that less qualified educators who taught in more rural villages were more satisfied than there more qualified educators who taught in slightly more urbanised villages. In general however, educators were found to be more satisfied when they were allowed to influence the running of the school and when the school was closely connected to the community and members who inform it.

This relates back to autonomy and how much say an educator has in the running of his or her school as well as how this in turn impacts on the classroom setting and how much independence and educator has to make it his/her own space.

Looking at *school environment*, more educators were satisfied in schools where educators took part in *Jiaoyanzu*. *Jiaoyanzu* is time taken weekly by staff members to meet and prepare lessons and, to be informed what the latest changes in policy or district are. It is time spent inducting new educators into the being of the school and, a

time where the older members of staff take the younger less experienced educators under their wing in a mentoring fashion. Based on the brief explanation of *Jiaoyanzu*, it is easy to understand why educators who experienced this time together were more satisfied than their counterparts in other schools where this was not a routine. Overall, most educators were more satisfied in schools where the economic resources were able to support the learning and teaching needs of the school and where salaries for educators were sufficient (not necessarily highly paid but paid enough in order to survive) and paid on time.

Related to South African schools, the time of Jiaoyanzu translates back to subject or grade meetings where various aspects regarding the lessons, administration and responsibilities for individual educators are addressed. While this time may work for the educators in China, it falls under the administrative responsibilities and many South African educators feel that too much time is spent dealing with administration and meeting with different staff members in order to get to the final result. A reason for the Chinese being more satisfied may be the idea that they live and work within small communities that have little interaction with the urban way of life so they are more communally minded than their South African counterparts. Whereas, in terms of the research conducted, the South African educators questioned live in urbanised and busy cities where communities span over many kilometres and include millions of people.

Finally, regarding *educator background*, more educators were deemed as satisfied when they had involvement in community as well as school improvement. Another similarity with regards the American research is the fact that findings showed that younger educators were more dissatisfied than there older counterparts, it was also shown that the more qualified or educated educators were dissatisfied in comparison with their less qualified or educated counterparts.

Sargent and Hannum believe that their results could carry some significant implications ultimately because the dissatisfaction of younger, more qualified educators underscores the unsurprising but important challenge that impoverished communities face in retaining qualified educators, as educator labour markets and general labour markets

continue to evolve. While concerning, this result is unsurprising, given research in the U.S. showing that better qualified educators tend to be more dissatisfied than less qualified educators, and for this reason are more likely to leave teaching (Darling-Hammond, 1984; Schlechty & Vance, 1983).

In countries that are still developing, Farrel and Oliveira (1993) warn that, “qualified teachers are likely to abandon teaching if what they earn in teaching differs too greatly from what they could earn in an alternative career.”

This has always been a pertinent issue in South Africa where educators often feel that the work they carry out far outweighs the remuneration at month end. While this begs the question whether one only chooses a vocation for the monetary rewards, it also requires one to look at how much or little remuneration ultimately impacts on the satisfaction of South African educators in relation to their Chinese and American counterparts.

The Educators' Views

Having briefly provided the background of the current South African situation and looked educator satisfaction in the United States of America and China, one can begin to look at the processes undertaken to find out what a portion of urban South African educators felt in terms of what they saw as the incentives and disincentives present within their organisations and the impact that these factors had on their overall satisfaction.

Along with the literature covered, a questionnaire (see Appendix) was developed in order to find out what a portion of South African educators felt. The educators were provided with letters of consent guaranteeing confidentiality in order to insure honest views throughout the answering process. The questionnaire itself comprised of various questions related to what educators felt impacted on their satisfaction in terms of the incentives and disincentives present within their occupation. The questions were formulated on a similar basis as those provided in the American and Chinese research, in order to keep the fields of reference similar.

The questioning process was carried out at four private schools as well as four government schools within the Johannesburg area. The questionnaires were distributed among all educators within the schools.

Among the private schools questioned, two were significantly well off in terms of funding from the private and parental sector. While the other two were financially sound, they did not have the same financial pull as the previous two private schools. Within the private schools, questionnaires were circulated amongst all members of staff and were answered on a purely voluntary basis with an anticipated response from at least 15-20 educators per school. The resultant response rate in some instances was satisfying with 15-20 educators responding from the less well off private schools while one well funded school in particular that is linked to a housing estate in a highly affluent area, only managed to return 3 of the completed questionnaires.

In terms of the Government schools, again, four schools were chosen. These were four schools based within the Johannesburg area that receive fairly moderate support from the School Governing Body as well as the main parent body in instances where it is possible for incentive programmes to be put in place. Again, questionnaires were circulated amongst all members of staff and were answered on a purely voluntary basis with an anticipated response from at least 15-20 educators per school.

The response rate from the Government schools was satisfying in that educators seemed interested in the topic and were eager to assist in the answering process.

Ultimately, research was focused on differences between satisfaction levels found in Government and Private schools. For this reason I have not gone into in-depth details regarding the background and profiles of the individual schools.

While it can be noted that the respondent group was small in terms of the greater South African picture, the comments provided by educators echoed responses that have been publicised in media reports countrywide. Both Private and Government schools were approached for questioning, in order to try and locate any distinct differences in incentives and disincentives. However, once all questionnaires had been revised and processed in order to report findings it was discovered that, in fact, there were no distinct differences between Private and Government schools. Differences were based on the schooling organisation and the manner in which the schools were run. For this reason, rather than distinguishing between Private or Government run schools, I have chosen to look at the findings from an organisational perspective. A learning organisation such as a school, and the manner in which it is run often impacts on the satisfaction levels of staff members. An organisation that displays more effective leadership and staff inclusion often results in happier, more satisfied individuals, as opposed to a school with poor organisation in which case, respondents appeared to be less satisfied. Within this context, I will also look at what incentives the schools have in place in order to keep their educators satisfied.

In terms of the respondents, their gender and age were also requested in order to determine whether age played a role in the levels of satisfaction experienced. In terms of gender, the only major finding – though already generally known is that there are very few male educators. One male respondent commented, on a personal note, that he felt if the remuneration were better, there would probably be more males inclined to enter the profession. However, he also noted, that with males perceived as the main breadwinners, as long as salaries were low, very few males would enter the teaching arena.

In terms of age, respondents' ages ranged from mid-twenties to mid-sixties. Older educators from approximately forty years upwards appeared to be the most satisfied respondents. Almost all of the respondents over forty years old who were questioned suggested that they would keep teaching for as long as they were able. In some instances, many would continue to teach beyond retirement age in a private tutoring capacity and, in these instances, they would not be tutoring for financial gain but for the satisfaction of being able to have an influence on the youth. However, on the younger educator side, many aged from their mid-thirties downwards would leave the education system if a better work opportunity arose. Of all respondents questioned, 19% would be uncertain as to whether they would pursue teaching as a career path whereas 29% would probably not. That results in a staggering 48% of educators not being certain that if they were to re-evaluate their career path that they would without a doubt choose education. This indicates that education is becoming a less desirable career path and is no longer a career that individuals would enter in to as willingly or enthusiastically as they may have in the past.

Surprisingly, 52,4% of the respondents felt that remuneration was secondary in terms of satisfaction and that an increase in salary would not result in greater job satisfaction. This seems contradictory to previous findings that showed remuneration to be a large reason for educators leaving. Arguably, over time, other areas have become of greater importance to educators. In the past where educators felt they needed to leave the education system because they needed better remuneration, it has now become a secondary concern and other areas of concern have moved to the foreground as

reasons for educators leaving. It is these areas of concern that pose problems in terms of satisfaction and it is these areas that seem to relate back to the organisation and running of the schools.

These findings are similar to both the American and Chinese findings in that overall the results showed that it was the older educators who were most satisfied with their jobs and that it was the younger educators who appeared to become de-motivated and dissatisfied with their career choice after a number of years teaching. Again, reasons for the differences could be traced back to the change in discipline methods and the manner in which children do or do not respect authority figures. The perception among educators is that, over the years, more attention has been paid to the rights of the learner and this has resulted in disrespect from learners, parents not knowing how to deal with their children and educators having been pushed into a corner and unable to diffuse situations for fear of ramifications.

If an educator raises his/her voice in order to maintain discipline over a class, or in order to discipline a single learner, parents find out about the situation and feel it necessary to become involved. Some parents do not like the idea of educators disciplining their children and when a situation that need not be blown out of proportion is, it is generally the educators who get rapped over the knuckles. There was an instance commented on by one respondent that took place at her school. A particularly rowdy child was being aggressive towards other learners in a malicious and hurtful manner. When educators intervened, this particular boy's mother came in and insisted that the principal inform his staff members that they were not to handle her son in such a rude and clearly discriminatory manner. While this may be only one incident mentioned, there are similar incidents that take place on an increasing basis. Educators are losing control of their own classrooms. Not because they are incapable but because if they raise an issue or attempt to get involved in a situation, they land up being negatively dealt with – often in order to maintain the parent-school relationship rather than the integrity of the educator.

With regard incentives and disincentives, respondents were asked to list what they themselves felt constituted incentives within their ideal learning situation or organisation and what they felt constituted disincentives within their current situation or organisation. In terms of incentives, the following appeared to be the most sought after:

- Job Satisfaction – making a difference in the lives of the children taught whilst receiving respect (from learners, management, colleagues and parents), support (from learners, management and parents) as well as appreciation (again, from learners, management and parents).
- Educator-learner relationship – witnessing the development of each learner.
- Autonomy – the ability to make decisions concerning one's classroom and how it would be run.

Unfortunately, the incentives list was short and showed few things to work towards when compared to the disincentives as experienced and provided by educators. As disincentives the following were listed:

- Administration – educators are dissatisfied with the paperwork and added hours of work that seems to increase more often than it decreases.
- Dissatisfaction with the Education Department – changes and amendments continuously being made to the curriculum and the impact that has in terms of educators always needing to be updated.
- Remuneration – poor salaries with insufficient benefits provided.
- Difficult inter-person relationships – lack of respect (from parents, learners and occasionally management), support (from learners, parents and management) and recognition or appreciation for work put in.
- Poor and negative representation in the media.

- Extra-mural responsibilities – which results in less time provided for educators to maintain and ensure that their administration requirements are being met suitably.

One's actions and choices often dictate how one will deal with a situation. It is often a choice as to whether one will start the day in a positive or affirmative spirit, or start the day off in dread of what the day may or may not hold. One also chooses in some instances how a situation will impact upon oneself. As far as educators are concerned they may start the day determined to "make it a good one". Yet, with all the disincentives apparent in educators' working lives, are educators able to simply make up their minds to enjoy the day and make it a satisfying experience?

> "Satisfaction can arise only by the conscious decision to do something. And this makes all the difference in the world, because it is only your own actions for which you may take responsibility and credit."
>
> (Berns, 2005. pg. 245)

Unfortunately, in a career that requires people to be enthusiastic, motivated and excited about the work they do, it appears as though, more and more, educators are battling to cope with the increasing negativity surrounding education and educators and the resultant decrease in satisfaction levels. While all respondents enjoyed teaching and the impact they had on the learners, many found it increasingly difficult to focus on the one positive aspect of education, and to overlook the disrespect and disregard. While many educators attempt to make a conscious decision to not allow the external elements of education (such as administration, belligerent parents, extra-murals etc.) to impact on their satisfaction and consciously try to draw satisfaction from the learners and their interactions within the classroom environment, this is becoming increasingly difficult. The responsibility and credit that educators would like to receive for a job well done is simply not forthcoming and this has resulted in education becoming a bane in the lives of the educators who have taken on the responsibility of educating other people's children.

When questioning the respondents, they were also asked questions relating to remuneration as well as support from both administration and management and parents. With regard to remuneration, only 33.3% of the respondents felt that an increase in remuneration would make a difference in terms of their overall satisfaction. 14.3% felt that more money may improve things but they were not certain as to how much happier or satisfied they would ultimately be. The remaining 52.4% suggested that an increase in remuneration would have little or no effect on their overall satisfaction. Many educators enter the system realising that they will not receive a large remuneration and while it may be a relief in terms of daily living to be paid more, the other aspects of teaching have become so troublesome that not, arguably, even the enticement of more money could sway educators.

Looking at the support garnered from administration and management, and from parents, the results showed that good and involved administration and management had a positive affect on educators. With regard to the support received from parents, results showed very little in terms of positive or negative support. Support from parents was given on some occasions and not on others – it was a fairly 'middle of the road' result. Parents were reflected in neither a positive nor negative light.

Support from parents is vital in terms of teaching because, ultimately, without over generalising, learners will in many instances spend more time in the presence of educators through the week than they will at home in the company of their parents. A mutually beneficial relationship between educator and parent results in a learning environment in which the learner feels comfortable approaching and confiding in the educator. A learner-educator relationship like this allows for the learner to feel comfortable with the educator while at the same time not feeling as though they are going against their parent's wishes.

> "Parents expect teachers to give more and more of themselves in one respect but, when they do, the parents feel as though the teachers are trying to 'move in on their territory.' With parents wanting so much but giving so little, teachers are struggling to find equilibrium where the

> children are getting the support they need but at the same time the parents don't feel hard done by."
>
> (McDonald, 2005. pg. 25)

The above quotation illustrates the position educators find themselves in on an increasing basis. Parents want educators to be involved, provide an emotional and psychological safe-haven for their children but when this is done they begin to feel jealous of the role the educator is playing and providing. This viewpoint came across strongly in the research conducted by myself in 2005 and became even more evident in the current research.

Results showed that in terms of parental support, an overwhelming 76.2% of respondents felt that parents provided support in a situational dependent capacity rather than always being supportive or never being supportive. By situational dependent, I refer to parents getting involved when it best suits them and stepping back when they feel it may not necessarily be in their best interests – sometimes, this comes at their child's expense. This is not to say that situational support is a bad thing. However it is often in situations where educators need the support and backing of parents that they fail to provide support. Sometimes, when educators comment on a problem identified in the learner, parents will not support the advice provided by the educator because they may not want to face the idea of their child having a problem. Characteristically, in instances where the situation will make the lives of the parents easier – not necessarily the lives of the learners – then, the necessary support is evident.

> "Parental involvement in today's fast paced society is becoming less and less, they abdicate their responsibility to schools and when something goes wrong at the schools the only fault is the school. We need to educate parents by a 'Parents Charter' – 'How to be parents in the modern South Africa.'"
>
> - A Headmaster's view on parental support and what should be done

An on going problem is the sense of apathy seeping into the education system. Parents do not necessarily always react as would be appreciated, learners take for granted the educators in their classrooms and the media tends to publicise the negative and over look the positive. Ultimately, the lack of support from parents results in lowered levels of satisfaction among educators on a broad scale. The lack of support does not stay within the fields of one school but appears to be an increasing problem throughout the schools.

Within the schools, administration and management teams are in place to aid in the smooth and effective running of the schools. When asked how supportive these teams were, responses were by no means “middle of the road”. It was these responses that began to shed light on the differences within the schools. As mentioned earlier, the research was originally done in private and government schools but it was the management of schools that began to characterise them differently, rather than their private or government status.

Responses showed a distinct difference. 47.7% of respondents said that the support they received from administration and management was situationally dependent. There was little comment suggesting they received support either out right or not at all. The remaining 52.3% of respondents suggested that they always receive the support needed from the administration and management teams and that there was never a point where this support was in question.

The respondents who suggested their support was situationally dependent appeared to be less satisfied than their counterparts who experienced overall support from their administration and management teams. These were a number of the respondents that fell into the category of educators who would not go into education if they could re-think their decision.

The issue of autonomy also appeared to play a large role in determining satisfaction. Educators who were given freedom within their classrooms and who were permitted their own creative freedom in terms of classroom layout with little or no interference

from the management teams appeared to be more satisfied than those educators who had to follow set classroom layouts and who lacked creative freedom.

A point that led in almost all instances to lowered levels of satisfaction and that was commented on by all respondents was the “paperwork”, “red tape” and “departmental interference in classrooms” (Respondent views). Many educators felt that they were being governed and watched all the time. While they accept that standards need to be maintained, they all struggle to understand why there needs to be so much paperwork and administration from the education departments. The educators often feel that the paperwork is repetitive and in many instances unnecessary.

Finally, the media was also seen as a contributor to lowering the levels of satisfaction experienced by educators. They portray educators in a negative light. They make educators out to be incapable of disciplining children and irresponsible when the daily effects of crime manage to slip into the classroom. This in turn results in people and parents becoming jaded in terms of the roles the educators play in the lives of children. Poor media coverage entails less appreciation for what educators do and less positive recognition. Results showed that if educators received even a fraction more appreciation and recognition than what they currently do they would be significantly more satisfied than what they currently are.

Ultimately, educators who work in schools where the organisation, administration and management teams are supportive, where paperwork is kept to a minimum and where they are allowed some sense of autonomy and feel that they are an integral part of the team, appear to be more satisfied. Satisfied educators are the ones who also receive appreciation and recognition for the good they do. Whereas educators in schools where the organisation as a whole is poorly run, where there is little autonomy, where their ideas are stifled and where they feel as though they are being watched and critiqued more than they feel part of the overall team, showed distinct signs of dissatisfaction.

In terms of being critiqued and not necessarily feeling part of the team, this refers to educators who are constantly being monitored and watched. Many educators find that

there are often random stops from the principal or vice-principal into classrooms to watch and comment on lessons often, with the principal or vice commenting on how they would have done it. This leaves educators feeling as though they may never totally relax in front of their learners for fear of having the principal stop by and criticise their efforts. Constructive criticism is good but many educators feel that whomever watches and critiques lessons often overlooks the good and only focuses on what may have been done.

This sense of always having to ensure that the activities in the classroom suit the ideas and ideals of whomever watches lessons leaves educators feeling like children who are constantly being watched over. This type of atmosphere does not bode well for a sense of cooperation and teamwork because in these instances there is a definite hierarchical, authoritative type of leadership and management in place.

The research results seemed to mirror the American and Chinese findings in many areas. In all three instances, the older educators who were closer to retirement appeared to be the most satisfied. All three reflected that one's reason for choosing education as a career was not necessarily financial gain but the satisfaction one draws from making a difference. Material incentives were not a draw card or bonus and the true incentives for teaching were the intrinsic fulfilling reasons. Finally, the schools in the South African research, American findings and Chinese findings all had one thing in common, in terms of the most satisfied educators. The most satisfied educators all taught at schools with excellent organisation and management structures in place.

While there are already some structures in place in some schools where incentives such as thirteenth cheques and birthday cheques are provided, or in other instances long service awards such as televisions, watches or holidays are given, one does not want to work for more money or for a potential holiday when one is not drawing intrinsic satisfaction from what one does. In the following chapter, I will attempt to provide recommendations as to what can be done in schools to try and improve levels of satisfaction, which in turn would hopefully result in more educators wanting to remain in

the education sphere for the job they have chosen and the satisfaction they draw from it, rather than the rewards they may receive if they can “stick it out”.

Recommendations

It is evident from the research conducted that, increasingly, educators are becoming more despondent and less satisfied with their careers. The two major causes of dissatisfaction amongst educators appear to be poor organisational skills and lack of respect, recognition and appreciation. For a large part, this lack of respect, recognition and appreciation appears to be coming from the parents and media.

In this chapter I will attempt to provide some ideas on organisational management and how schools could perhaps instate one or two of these ideas, which would hopefully result in happier and more satisfied educators. I will also look at the role of the parents and what they could do in order to improve their relationships with educators. Again, I am not generalising that all parents and educators have poor relationships. However, I am suggesting that if parents could heed some of the suggestions it may improve an already good relationship, which would only result in a happier working and learning environment.

In looking at organisational management in this chapter I have chosen to draw on work done by Mink. While Mink is not directly linked to any form of study within the education faculty he is an author who has written on the art of coaching and successful organisational management. For this reason I think that his work plays a role in providing detailed information and suggestions as to how a successful organisation should be run. Given the South African schools' movement towards a more organisational approach, I feel the work of Mink provides strong points to consider.

As mentioned in the introduction, a happy working and learning environment is beneficial to both the educator and learner. Learners become more excited about the learning process and educators draw off of this enthusiasm and want to provide an environment in which excitement for learning is encouraged.

To start with, in terms of organisational management, the more successful and approachable the management team is, the more satisfied employees appear to be. For this reason, I am going to draw on Mink's *Twelve Pillars of the High-Performance Environment* (Mink et al, 1993. pg.58-61). There are twelve pillars that each provide ideas on how to create an environment that encourages high-performance through the involvement, commitment and autonomy of the people involved in the running of the organisation. I will provide a brief explanation of what each pillar represents and within this I will develop an explanation in terms of the school or learning organisation and how each pillar can prove effective in the development and running of the school and the staff members who enable it.

Pillar 1 – Shared Vision: "Develop a shared vision for your team or organisation."

Within the school, a vision must be developed that can be owned and implemented by all members of staff. It must be a vision of the school for the school, suggesting where members of the school see it developing and moving toward in the future. It must be a vision that all members of staff agree with and feel comfortable developing and working towards. It is only through working together as a team that individuals may begin to draw satisfaction from what their organisation represents. This satisfaction will only increase if all parties involved in the vision development process agree upon the final and shared vision.

Pillar 2 – Shared Values: "Develop shared values for the team and the organisation."

Values are critical to the successful achievement of the school's vision. For this reason, values must be discussed amongst staff members. The values of the school must be formulated. Is winning the most important value the school wants to develop, or is it a sense of equality and democracy? These values need to be discussed and agreed upon as a group, rather than having one individual formulate what they think would best suit the school. It is only through discussing these values as a group, and incorporating them into the vision as a group, that individual satisfaction will be derived from

educators knowing that they have helped develop the vision and values that their school represents.

Pillar 3 – Goals: "Together, develop goals that are both important (worthy), specific and constant with the emphasised values."

Goals are the short, medium and long-term accomplishments that lead to achieving the vision of the school. Goals need to be defined in a clear and understandable manner so that individuals understand what they are striving for. Every grade and sector within a school should have their own individual group goals that correlate with the overall vision and that allow the groups to strive for their own specific goals. Setting achievable goals will result in increased satisfaction amongst educators because they will have reachable, mutual goals to strive for. Greater satisfaction will follow when these goals are attained. Ultimately though, instant satisfaction is derived when a direction such as goals is provided, rather than leaving educators to their own devises in terms of what to strive for when an entire organisation is involved. Direction is needed in every sphere, and knowing one has it and can work towards it, results in a greater sense of intrinsic satisfaction.

Pillar 4 – Focus: "Provide focus by developing processes that help."

It is no good having goals and a vision for an organisation when there are not the necessary systems and structures in place to help achieve goals. A school must have the necessary management and leadership bodies in place to help assist individuals as well as teams in attaining their goals. Within a school, the teams and leadership groups that help maintain focus would be the equivalent of a School Governing Body, or the various grade heads and department heads. It is the support of these groups and their respect and recognition that educators want. Educator satisfaction would increase greatly if these groups provided the time and support necessary to assist educators with any problems or queries they may have.

Pillar 5 – Desire for Productivity: "Leaders and managers must make clear that they value and want productivity."

This pillar links to the desire for appreciation, which was one of the major areas of dissatisfaction in terms of the research results. If educators know that they are appreciated, they will want to put in their best in terms of classroom productivity and the results achieved within the classroom. This also links to communication and the manner in which the management teams acknowledge the work done within the school. If management communicates that they value the work provided and the direction in which they want the school to develop, staff will want to reciprocate in a positive manner. If the communication is insufficient or unclear, staff will not be interested in fighting for and working towards something that is unclear and vague.

Pillar 6 – Support for Accomplishment:

This relates to the support provided by management and the services they provide. If management suggests that they will have certain things such as media material by a certain time and then they fail to provide, educators will become irritated, especially if it becomes an ongoing thing. Management needs to stick to dates and details and provide the services that they said they would. Too often, an educator will sign on the dotted line because they feel they are entering an institution with good organisation and management, only to find out how seriously disorganised management is when they have been contractually obligated to a year or more of service. Within the educational sector it is important that consistency is maintained.

Pillar 7 – The Right People: "Make sure people can succeed."

If schools want their educators to behave, act and perform in a certain manner and at a certain level, they must ensure that they are able to do so. Schools should employ quality educators and then train them for excellence rather than employ any seemingly qualified educators simply to fill a position. Schools should ensure that educators have been placed in the best area for their expertise. Too often, schools employ educators to

fill positions rather than areas of expertise for example, one will have an English teacher teaching Maths and then questions will arise when results are not as good as what they should be. The educator in question will also have lower levels of satisfaction because he or she knows that they are not suitable for the position they are filling, and for this reason are unable to bring full knowledge of a subject into the classroom with them.

Pillar 8 – Teamwork: "To achieve the synergies possible when sharing a dream, people must work together."

Teamwork needs to be the cornerstone of any effective organisation. In effective teamwork, people work with each other's differences in order to formulate a vision that is mutually acceptable and achievable. Within teamwork there needs to be trust and acceptance and it is up to the management teams to set the scene for an environment in which these traits can be developed. Again, it is the acceptance and support that affect educator satisfaction and if a supportive, accepting environment is developed and encouraged this can only positively influence educator satisfaction.

Pillar 9 – Empowerment and Autonomy: "For people to realise their potential, and thus for the team to realise its potential, each person must feel free to contribute to team goals."

Each person brings a unique sense of self to a team and it is this sense that needs to be encouraged. People need to be encouraged to bring their ideas forward and to adapt those ideas into a plan that can be agreed upon by the entire team. Unilateral decision-making is often what results in an unhappy, unsatisfying work environment. It is a principal or governing body that feels they know best and it is this idea that leaves educators feeling as though they are simple pawns in a chess game. By allowing educators the freedom to get involved in decision-making, one is empowering them and making them feel part of the team and involved in the development of the school. More autonomy within schools would result in more educators feeling empowered and this would result in greater satisfaction.

Pillar 10 – Leadership: "Human systems – companies, religious organisations, schools, teams, people – need leadership."

Regardless of what career one goes into, one thing that will always be apparent is the presence of leadership. Whether that leadership is good or bad, results in whether productivity is good or bad. A leader needs to be an individual who is approachable or a department that accepts constructive criticism and works towards the betterment and improvement of the organisation. Organisations with good leadership often result in organisations with more satisfied employees because various aspects important to individuals and teams are being met. A good organisation requires encouraging staff members, providing counsel in times of confusion or conflict and encouraging development within the staff – suggesting or providing courses that not only improve the school's productivity but also the livelihood of the educators.

Pillar 11 – Feedback, Feedthrough, and Problem Solving: "Provide people with accurate information about what they are doing in relation to performance goals."

This pillar links back to communication, which in a successful organisation is key. Management teams need to communicate developments to staff members. Too often, staff members are informed of developments at the last minute, which leads to confusion and uncertainty. Confusion and uncertainty lead to irritation, and irritation leads to dissatisfaction. Leadership and management teams need to ensure that they keep staff members informed of developments. If there is a problem, it needs to be raised and discussed, as is the case if a goal has been reached. If good has been done and achievement attained, staff members need to be informed and congratulated rather than left in the dark. It is through communicating the good, bad and indifferent that staff and management will be able to work towards improving or attaining their ultimate vision, and maintaining or improving satisfaction levels.

Pillar 12 – Rewards: "People who have incentives they value normally provide the needed effort."

Based on the research, many educators suggested that their incentives for teaching are not necessarily material based but are the intrinsic rewards such as: watching a learner develop and improve, making a difference in the lives of learners, autonomy and receiving appreciation, respect and recognition. In a school with good organisation, it is possible for educators to attain these incentives. If they are granted reasonable autonomy and management provide them with the respect, appreciation and recognition required, then educators would be far more willing to put in the extra hours and would leave at the end of each school day more satisfied.

Ultimately, if schools ran more like business organisation in terms of the manner in which they approach and manage staff, then their staff members would be far more satisfied. While schools may not be able to provide the salacious incentives provided by more commercialised businesses, they can provide the incentives that drive most educators – the want to make a difference and the respect that they deserve. Simply treating educators as the free-willed, qualified individuals they are, rather than like the children they teach, would result in vast improvements in the satisfaction stakes.

With regard to the role of the parent, one cannot tell a parent how to raise their child. However, one may suggest areas of improvement that could only enhance and better their relationships with their children, which in turn would take more pressure off the educators. Removing some of this pressure would make their child's education experience far more enlightening and informative because educators would want to put in the effort necessary to develop exciting and involved lessons.

In a society that has both parents at work, parents begin to feel it is the responsibility of the educator to educate their children about morals, values and rights. When the child comes home with the lessons it is the same parents who feel the need to contradict the educator. This results in confusion for the learner. It also results in conflict between educators and parents because parents have a tendency towards believing they think they know more than the educator and begin questioning the role of the educator. This ultimately leaves the educator in a position where they question the effort they put in and they feel dissatisfied with the manner in which they are perceived by a percentage

of the parents. While it is not all parents who behave in this manner, it is the few that do who end up making educators feel unworthy and unappreciated. If parents were able to leave the teaching to the educators and focus on a few pertinent points at home, namely, the domestic issues and problems that arise, this would become apparent in the classroom, because learner behaviour in all likelihood would improve.

McLain and Heaston suggest that parents need to keep in mind a number of things when interacting with their children, namely:

1. focus on “do’s” instead of “don’ts”;
2. build feelings of confidence;
3. try to change behaviour by changing situations and surroundings;
4. provide choices for children;
5. work with children, not against them;
6. set limits for children;
7. listen to yourself and your child;
8. set a good example;
9. show unconditional love to your children.

(Adapted from McLain & Heaston; 1993)

If parents follow the above points, not only will their relationship with their child develop and improve, the educator will no longer have to fill the void of parent where the children are concerned. In a society where children have begun to take control of their parents, if parents take back the control, discipline within classrooms will also improve. Improvement will result from the systems and procedures implemented by educators that focus on instilling discipline and respect within the classroom. Also, if educators are granted a greater degree of autonomy in their classrooms, this in turn will garner greater respect from learners. Educators will then be able to present and teach lessons to learners that will not be contradicted by family members who feel they may know better.

According to Eugene Matusov, a lecturer who focuses his work on the impact of educators on children and the role they play in motivating children. Matusov feels that parents also and obviously play a huge motivational role within their children's lives and states that:

> "The role and motivation that parents should play in helping their child learn and develop is a *big* one. When the decision to have a child is made, a parent has made an unconditional commitment to guide their child for life."
>
> (Matusov, 2005. pg. 5)

Parents do need to help in the learning process and they do need to be involved as is indicated in the above quote. When an individual chooses to become a parent, he or she is undertaking to be a guiding force and source of encouragement and discipline in a child's life up to and beyond the point where that 'child' may also choose to become a parent. It is this reasoning that allows a parent the right to make informed decisions and comment on the education their child receives. However, this right does not entitle parents to contradict educators or persons of authority without due cause. Often parents feel that having a child endows them with vast areas of knowledge and understanding and there are always the few that never out grow the "I-Know-It-All" phase. If parents simply loved their children for the beings that they are rather than trying to live vicariously through them, educators would have a far easier task and their satisfaction levels would increase.

Overall, education is a career that one enters for selfless reasons. Satisfaction with one's job is the only draw card. For this reason, learning organisations should strive to ensure that their educators are satisfied and that they feel they play an important part in the overall running of the schools. Parents need to step back and allow the educators to do what they do best and try not to interfere unless it is truly warranted.

In terms of the paperwork, red tape and departmental interference commented on by many respondents, there are some areas that no suggestions can be provided for.

There will always be red tape and interference because education is not about private enterprise but about developing the leaders of tomorrow and as long as the leaders of today have a say in tomorrow, education will constantly be affected. Education systems need to be kept in check and monitored in order to maintain suitable and acceptable levels of education, learning and the necessary testing. If there were not the necessary checks and protocols in place then the education system would become chaos with each province and department trying to do their own thing.

The only way a school can hope to deal with changes and suggestions from a district, provincial or countrywide level in as little a stressful a way as possible is for the management within the school to be on top of developments. Management needs to be accessible to the staff and involved in staff development and maintaining high morale. The schools with excellent management in place, where everybody feels as though they are cogs in a well oiled and working machine, the schools where parents participate in the running of the school in a positive and constructive manner, and the schools where job satisfaction is never in question, are the schools that best cope with constantly changing requirements.

While management, staff morale and organisations all revolve around the concept of group initiative and involvement, one must look at Nyerere's theory that before one can look at the bigger picture of organisational school management, one needs to address the smaller picture which looks at the confidence and self-esteem of individuals.

> "People cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves. For while it is possible for an outsider to build a person's house, an outsider cannot give a person pride and self-confidence in themselves as human beings. Those things people have to create in themselves by their own actions. They develop themselves by what they do; they develop themselves by making their own decisions, by increasing their knowledge and ability and by their own full participation as equals in the life of the community they live in."
>
> (Nyerere; in Sterling and Davidoff, 2000. pg. 69)

While, according to Nyerere's above quote, people are ultimately the only individuals who can have a say over how their lives will be lived, one lives in a world in which people need to work together in order to achieve what they want as individuals. For this reason, it is the responsibility of the leadership and management teams to provide an environment in which people may attain their individual desires for achievement, fulfilment and acquiring satisfaction in doing so. One's choice of occupation should not hinder the quest for satisfaction simply because the organisation one chooses to work in is not satisfactorily managed or run. One should not need to be bribed with material incentives just to remain in an organisation. However, one should also not have to deal with emotionally shattering disincentives simply because they stepped into a disorganised institution.

If schools began running more like businesses then educators would feel more like the qualified individuals they are rather than the "dogsbodies" they are perceived to be. Changing the organisation structure would result in changing the mind set surrounding education which would hopefully result in educators feeling more satisfied with the career they have chosen to follow.

Appendix

Educator Satisfaction – The impact of incentives/disincentives

Year after year, more and more educators feel the need to leave the teaching profession for various reasons. Many of these reasons stem from dissatisfaction with their teaching environment (this environment includes the student, parent, administrative, departmental impact on educators). The purpose of this questionnaire is to attempt to pin point what the educator's outlook is and what the educator views as incentives and disincentives that are impacting on their professional satisfaction.

AGE: _____ SEX: _____

TEACHING AT A PRIVATE/PUBLIC SCHOOL: _____

GRADE YOU CURRENTLY TEACH: _____

YEARS SPENT IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION: _____

PLEASE CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE OPTION

A. How long do you plan to remain in teaching?

   1. As long as I am able
   2. Until I am eligible for retirement
   3. I'll continue teaching unless something better comes along
   4. I definitely plan to leave teaching soon
   5. Undecided at this point

B. If you could go back to your college/university days would you still choose teaching as a career?

   1. Certainly would
   2. Probably would
   3. Chances about even
   4. Probably would not
   5. Certainly would not

Please elaborate:

_____

_____

_____

C. To what degree do you agree or disagree with the statement “I sometimes feel it is a waste of my time to try to do my best as a teacher”?

1. Strongly agree
2. Somewhat agree
3. Somewhat disagree
4. Strongly disagree

Please elaborate: _____

_____

_____

D. Do you feel that if you received better remuneration, you would gain greater educator satisfaction?

1. Certainly would
2. Probably would
3. Chances about even
4. Probably would not
5. Certainly would not

Please elaborate: _____

_____

_____

E. Do you feel that you get sufficient support from the parents within the school?

1. Always do
2. Occasionally do
3. Depends on the situation
4. Almost never
5. Never do

Please elaborate: _____

F. Do you feel that you get sufficient support from the administrative and management teams within the school?

1. Always do
2. Occasionally do
3. Depends on the situation
4. Almost never
5. Never do

Please elaborate: _____

G. What do you think it is that keeps educators satisfied?

H. What does being an educator mean to you?

I. What do you see as incentives to being an educator?

J. What do you see as disincentives to being an educator?

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