

TEACHERS MORALE

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ABSTRACT

Teachers are a vital part of the educational system. They provide the motivation and support that students need in order to succeed. Yet, teachers also need to be motivated and supported in order to be productive. Teacher morale could suffer due to the constant stress of trying to meet educational goals, or due to a change in leadership or policies. Improving teacher morale has many benefits in that it can help teachers to maintain a positive attitude and be happier at work.

Keywords: Interest, Attitude, training and morale

INTRODUCTION:

Morale can be defined as the professional interest and enthusiasm a person displays towards the achievement of individual and group goals in a given job situation (Bentley & Rempel, 1980). Moral is set within the framework of organizational theory with an individual progression toward the achievement of organizational tasks and his or her perceived job satisfaction within the total organization.

Definition of Teacher Morale:

According to Webster's Dictionary (2010), morale is a person's mental state that is exhibited by assurance, control, and motivation to perform a task.

Bentley and Rempel (1970) defined teacher morale as the degree to which the needs of a person are satisfied, and the person's perception of how the job situation brought the state of satisfaction of the worker to fruition. As cited in the Administrator's Handbook for Improving Faculty Morale (Andrews, 1985), Smith defines morale as a confident state of mind that progressively looks to achieve an essential and shared function.

IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER'S MORALE:

Millor 1981 teacher morale can have a positive effect on pupil attitudes and learning. Raising teacher moral level is not only making teachers more pleasant for teachers but also learning more pleasant for the students. This creates an environment that is more conducive to learning.

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FACTORS THAT AFFECT TEACHER MORALE:

- High morale can be characterized by interest and enthusiasm for the job. While low morale is characterized by feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration. Teacher morale can be viewed as teachers striving to achieve their individual goals and educational goals of the school system and their perception of satisfaction that stem from the total school environment.
- Supported and empowered teachers are more likely to have high morale.
- The morale of an organization will only be as high as its leader. Low teacher morale is the result of low leadership morale.
- Stress also affects Teacher Morale. It can “result in emotional and physical fatigue and a reduction in work motivation, involvement and satisfaction”(Stenlund)
- Low pay, lack of respect create crisis in teacher morale. A study revealed that teacher morale in the Lodi Unified School district was low because teachers felt undervalued as professionals during the district's salary bargaining and negotiations about compensation (Reid, 2010). Smith (2010) noted similar sentiments that teachers believed affected their morale. In a meeting the with school board, the Fort Wayne Education Association

advocated for their teachers and highlighted several reasons for the teacher morale problem, which included salary negotiations (Smith, 2010).

- Low teacher morale has been linked to lack of recognition. Recent research findings emphasize that teachers were dissatisfied with the amount and type of recognition and respect they received as teachers in the school (Huysman, 2008; Mackenzie, 2007; Reed, 2010).
- Miller (1981) conceded that teachers were more productive when they were provided opportunities to participate in the decision making process. Teacher praise, instructional leadership, technical leadership, and supporting professional growth were all practices that impacted teacher morale.
- The link between school culture and teacher morale. Miller (1981) maintained that student learning and teacher morale were related to a positive school culture that was characterized by respect, shared decision making, communication, and administrative support.

MORALE AND ACHIEVEMENT:

Morale and achievement are also related. Ellanberg (1972) found that where morale was high, schools showed an increase in student achievement. Conversely, low levels of satisfaction and morale can lead to decreased teacher productive and burnout, which is associated with a loss of concern for and detachment from the people with whom one works, decreased quality of teaching, depression, greater use of sick leave, efforts to leave the profession and a cynical and dehumanized perception of students.(Mendel citing Holt 1980)

“Morale is similar to achievement. It goes up the more we differentiate our practices to fit individual needs” There is no silver bullet, no magical formula. We can however, look at the situation around us and respond in ways that boost the morale. Being sensitive to morale can do much to turn around a lot of things in your school. Student achievement is adversely affected by

low teacher morale. Boosting morale will do more than save a teacher. It will save a student. It will save a school.

EVALUATION OF TEACHER MORALITY:

In addition to being masters of subject matter and teaching techniques, teachers must also serve as ethical examples for their students. For this reason, administrators need to conduct frequent and accurate evaluation of teachers' morale and behavior. Effective evaluations should include the collection and reflective analysis of a wide range of information drawn from various sources on teaching, such as self-assessments and reflections, observations, interviews, teacher portfolios and input from supervisors and building-based administrators, as well as from multiple measures of student performances.

Moral obligation of a teacher

A teacher's first moral obligation is to provide excellent instructions. Teachers with large level of moral professionalisation have a deep obligation to help student learn. According to Wynne (1995), teacher with that sense of obligation demonstrate their moral professional by;

- Coming to work regularly;
- Being well informed about their student-matter;
- Planning and conducting classes with care;
- Regularly reviewing and updating instructional practices;
- Co-operating with, or if necessary, confronting parents of under achieving students;
- Co-operating with colleagues and observing school policies so the whole institution works effectively;
- Tactfully, but firmly criticizing unsatisfactory school policies and proposing constructive improvement.

CONCLUSION:

By treating teachers in ways that empower them, such as involving them in decisions about policies and practices and acknowledging their expertise, administrators can help sustain teacher morale. Principals can also strengthen teacher morale by actively standing behind teachers. Effective principals serve as guardians of teachers' instructional time, "assist teachers with student discipline matters, allow teachers to develop discipline codes, and support teachers' authority in enforcing policy".

Although teachers can take steps individually to preserve their professional satisfaction and morale, they must also be nurtured, supported, and valued by the broader school community. When teachers are provided with what they need to remain inspired and enthusiastic in the classroom, students as well as teachers will be the beneficiaries.

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