FACTORS THAT MOTIVATE SPECIAL EDUCATORS IN NGOS IN BANGALORE

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Abstract

Education is a platform that offers skills to cope with the challenges of the world. Differently abled individuals rather need more facilitation through Special Educators who work with compassion & enthusiasm and equip them with the required life skills. The current Research describes the factors that Motivate Special Educators in NGOs in Bangalore. Interview, observation and document review data, collected from 50 Special Educators from among 150 of them, are used to describe and explain motivational factors of Special Educators. Findings indicate that, Empathy for the Special Children, Challenging & Interesting work and Salary are some of the factors that precisely motivate special educators in Bangalore. The Hypothesis that 'more than 50% of Special Educators in Bangalore are highly motivated' is found to be true and hence it is accepted. Co-workers, family pressure and inflexibility in work timings are the de-motivating factors that negatively influence the special educators. There is a need for special education teachers to receive the moral and material support appropriate to their level of responsibilities. Research findings reveal a positive correlation found between the job design factors and teachers' motivation. It is observed that, there is no significant difference in the special education teachers' choice of job motivation factors due to differences in their gender, age, level of special education training/education, years of experience and type of disability served. Findings and conclusions of the research work close-in on suggestions that, the special education allowances should be reviewed regularly to compensate for the challenges posed by the nature of the job of these teachers, provide with an adequate working environment with resources and materials necessary to facilitate good teaching and to boost their morale and make them part of curriculum development in special education.

Keywords: *Education, Differently abled, Special Educators, Motivational factor, Teacher, Life Skills.*

1. Introduction

Education is the process of facilitating learning. Knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits of a group of people are transferred to other people, through storytelling, discussion, teaching, training, or research.

The term "disability" broadly describes impairment in a person's ability to function,

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caused by changes in various subsystems of the body, or to mental health. The degree of disability may range from mild to moderate, severe, or profound. A person may also have multiple disabilities. Another term used for them is "Differently-abled".

Special Schools serve children with Disabilities. They are different from Main stream schools as they don't follow any specific curriculum but Individual Development Programme will be created in consultation with Parents by the Special Educators who play a vital role in the overall progress of the disabled person. Special Educator is an individual with various specialized skills to teach and improve the overall progress of a disabled person. Special Educator works with passion, love, affection and dedication.

Review of selected Literature

Why do we need motivated Special Educators? The answer is survival (Smith, 1994). Motivated Special Educators are needed in our rapidly changing workplaces and Education System. Motivated Special Educators help NGOs survive.

Motivated Special Educators are more productive. To be effective, NGOs need to understand what motivates employees within the context of the roles they perform. Of all the functions a NGO performs, motivating Special Educators is arguably the most complex.

Educating learners with special needs involves long teaching hours with little observable students' progress and lack of perceived success on the job can affect the teachers' motivation to teach (Schmid and Nagata, 1983). In support of this notion RoK (1999), asserts that special education teachers work with children, some of whom have severe to profound impairments. It further states that some children require the physical support of the teacher while their pace of learning too slow thus needs a lot of patience on the part of the teacher.

Need for the research

The researcher has decided to research this subject in Bangalore due to following reasons:

1. Previous data was not available on this subject
2. Researcher's interest in a Special Education
3. Hardly any studies were conducted on Motivational factors of a Special Educator
4. Outcome of the research might help various NGO Managements to fill the gap by introducing schemes to improve Motivation of Special Educators.

Scope of the research

This research is vital. The researcher has tried to identify the Motivational factors that influence performance of Special Educators in Bangalore.

The research covered an understanding of what motivates Special Educators and how were they motivated. Motivation gives confidence, enthusiasm, increases commitment to work and helps in constant positive energies to work with socially less privileged persons.

The researcher had carried out this research in Bangalore in Karnataka. He chose 50 Special Educators from among about 150 of them, who are working with various small to medium size Special Schools run by NGOs in Bangalore.

Inputs of Special Educators were the sources of data related to this research.

Limitations of the research

Every research will have its own limitations. This research is carried out under the following limitations:

- There are many types of organizations catering education to special children. This research is confined to special education provided by small and medium sized NGOs in Bangalore only.
- There are many educators all around. This research covered special educators who cater to mentally challenged, hearing impaired, visually challenged, etc., only.
- While there are more than 150 organised special educators in Bangalore, this research covered 50 of them only.
- There are about 60 small and medium sized NGOs working in the field of special education in Bangalore. The researcher randomly selected about 20 of them, from among whose Special Educators, who number more than 100, 50 of them are selected.

Research design

This research employed an **Explorative and Descriptive method, using survey approach.**

Sampling Technique

There are about 150 special educators in Bangalore which constitutes the population. Hence, 30% of the population, i.e. 50 of them are taken into consideration for the purpose of primary data collection. They are selected based on convenience. In other words, NGOs are selected by **Convenient Sampling technique**, while the Special Educators in each NGO are then selected at Random. Therefore, it is **Random Sampling Technique.**

Data Collection

Primary data is collected from the Special educators working in different NGOs in Bangalore, by administering a **structured questionnaire** & **interview** method. The questionnaire, with closed & open ended questions, was developed in consultation with the research guide. It is also subjected to Cronbach Alpha test to establish its validity & reliability, using item analysis. At a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.810, it is found to be highly valid & reliable.

Secondary data is obtained from the literature survey in journals, books, HRM text books and reports available through internet & other sources.

Field work

The researcher called on the said respondents personally to administer the questionnaire for collecting the necessary data and conducted personal interview for a hands-on experience. Name, Age, Gender, Marital status, Years of Experience, Highest Qualification, Training in Special Education & Service Disability Category of the respondents and Name and Area of the School, etc. are captured as part of the Survey.

Findings of the Research work

In current survey, it is found that majority of the respondents are happy to moderate extent. Generally it is observed that the NGO's where these special educators work, offer them a not

so good a pay scale compared to other industries.

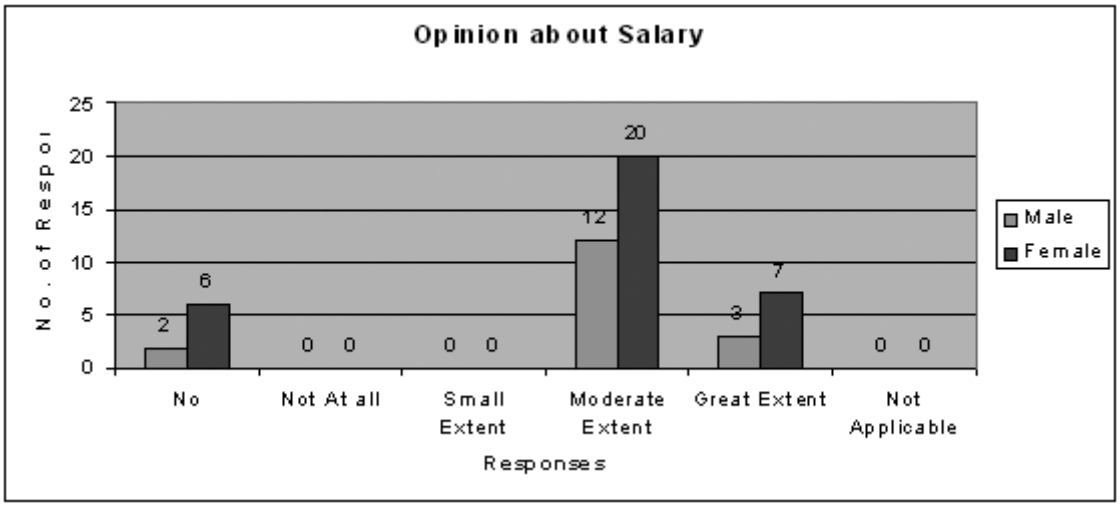
This shows that these special educators do not attach high priority to money, but they work because of other factors.

Serving category of disability by the respondents:

Sl. No.	Category of Disability	Male		Female	
		No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Mentally Challenged	02	04%	13	26%
2	Physically Challenged	05	10%	03	06%
3	Visually Challenged	05	10%	08	16%
4	Hearing Impaired	05	10%	07	14%
5	Others	00	00%	02	4%
	Total	**17**	**33%**	**34**	**66%**

Majority of the respondents feel that their job offers them a significantly a good working condition to the extent of moderate to good. Female respondents, constituting 54% of all the respondents, feel that their working condition varies from great or to moderate extent.

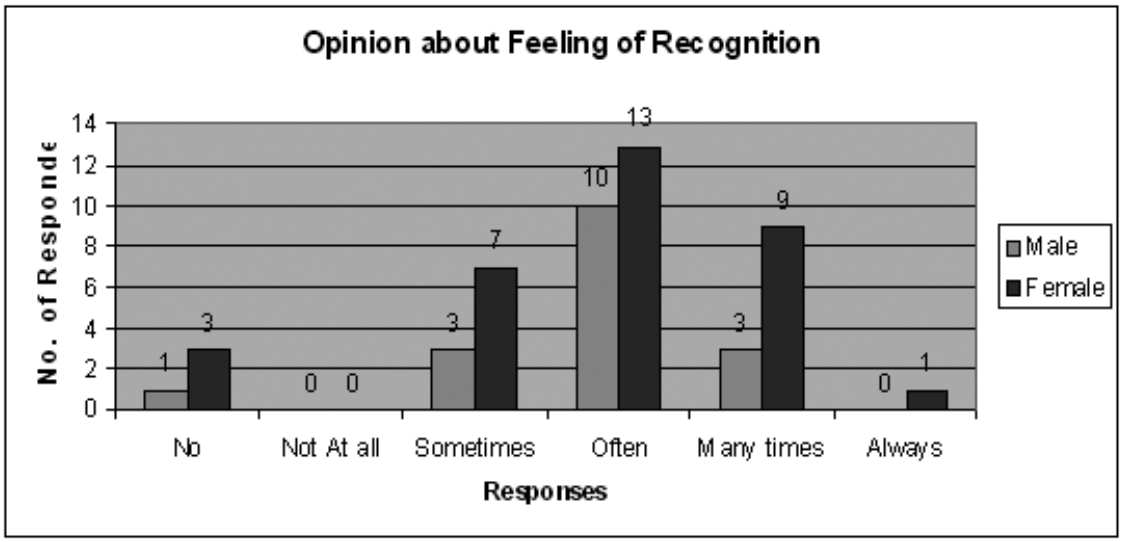
It is observed that majority of 62% of the respondents also feel that their organization provides them a good opportunity for advancement to the extent of either moderate or good. This is one of the major factors for retaining the employees by the NGOs.



In special schools run by NGOs where amount of salary is less, but provided a good sense of security, make the special educators motivated enough to continue to work for the organization.

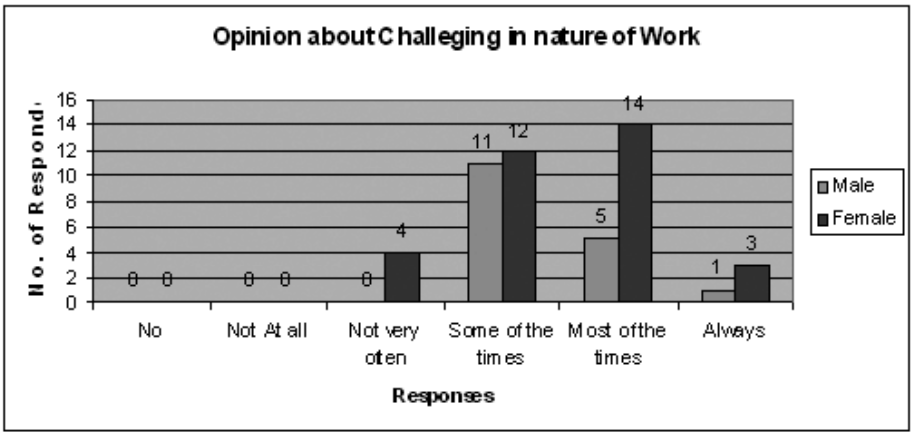
In this case, 40% of the female respondents feel secured, either to moderate or great extent compared 12% of male respondents. This may be one of the reasons that female special

educators tend to feel secured by the way the NGO's operate, which may offer them flexibility or good work conditions. 22% of all the respondents feel 'Not' secure in their current job, may be due to various reasons, like industry recession, social status, peers or stress at work. 10% of all the respondents feel sense of security to the extent of 'Great', which is a very positive sign to the organization.



In case of special education, the recognition by the parents of special children boosts the morale of special educators to a great extent, which is reflected during the survey.

A positive stroke from their senior, peer or parent makes the special educators to work to the extent of feeling of oneness. In the current survey, 44% of female respondents either feel recognized either to the extent of 'often' or 'many times' and this may be due the reason that females being more sensitive and understanding, compared to the males (26%). Recognition may be tangible or in-tangible, but any form of recognition is appreciated. Definitely, recognized special educators will surge forward for their work.

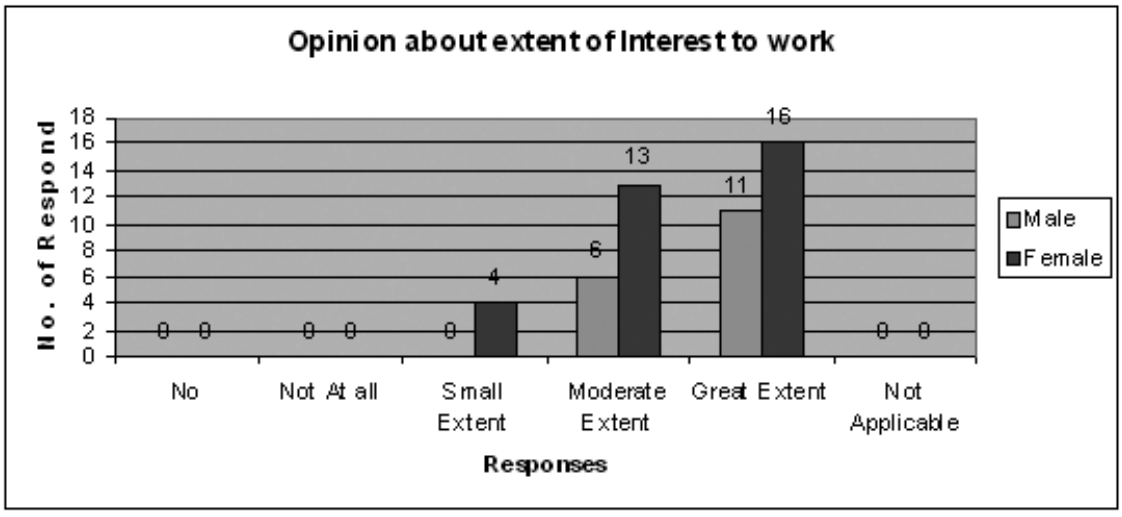


It is observed that, 46% of the all the respondents feel their work to be 'some of the times' as challenging and another 38% of them find it to be so 'most of the times'. Overall, it reflects that special education is a challenging work. This is one of the factors which is keeping their motivation level high. Higher the degree of challenge (which can be coped with), higher the motivation level. It is also observed that 28% of the female respondents feel their work as challenging 'most of the times', probably due the factors like interest, flexibility, progression and pressure, to which most females are normally quick to respond.

Teachers who have to work constantly with special needs learners have to deal daily with the emotions aroused by them, which, sometimes, can be painful and stressful. Educating learners with special needs involves long teaching hours with little observable progress and lack of perceived success on the job, can affect the teachers' motivation to teach (Schmid and Nagata, 1983). In this current survey also, we can observe this, as 54% of all the respondents feel that they are performing well 'sometimes' and out of whom, 36% of them are female respondents.

40% of all the respondents feel that they are performing well either 'most of the times' or 'always', which may be due to high morale or the factors such as coping strategy, experience, good working conditions, etc..

Participation in decision making by a subordinate is assumed to result not only in greater job satisfaction, but also in higher productivity. The current survey reflects that 58% of all respondents feel that they get an opportunity for independent thought and action, which may be evident from the information that the NGO's where they are working, provide them every opportunity to learn and use their specific skills. However, results by Lewin et al., (1999) suggest that under some conditions, higher productivity may be achieved by using more autocratic methods. Probably because of this reason, 28% of them have given a negative response by mentioning that they don't get opportunity for independent thought and action, but this a minor data.



The current survey reveals that majority of the respondents feel their work to be interesting to the extent of 'small to great', this may be due to the fact that the special educators were looking for varied, stimulating and creative job objectives and work activities, i.e., a job that allows them to express and develop their creative side.

Cole and Walker (1989) argue that many responsibilities of special education teachers may be viewed as "dirty work", at least by the society at large.

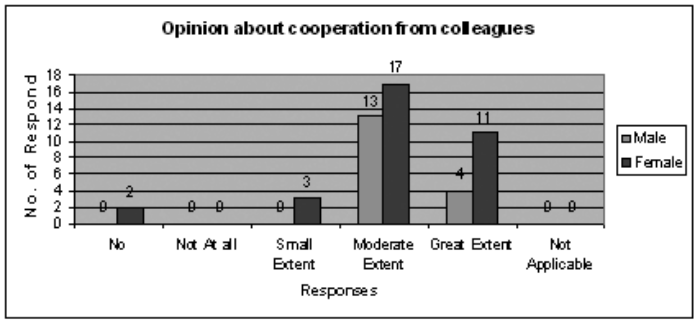
Having these above factors in mind, we can observe in the current survey that 94% of all the respondents feel that they yield positive results to the extent of 'small to great', which is really a positive sign for the special education system as a whole. 54% of female respondents feel that they yield positive results to the extent of 'moderate to great', probably this due to the fact that, females have more patience, perseverance and are focused.

Teaching material is the main source of aids used in special schools to teach special children. They play a vital role in practicing, re-modelling, role play, etc., Generally, NGO's who run the special schools will not be able to provide the appropriate teaching materials on time, due to financial issues and lack of technical knowledge in creating or maintaining the same.

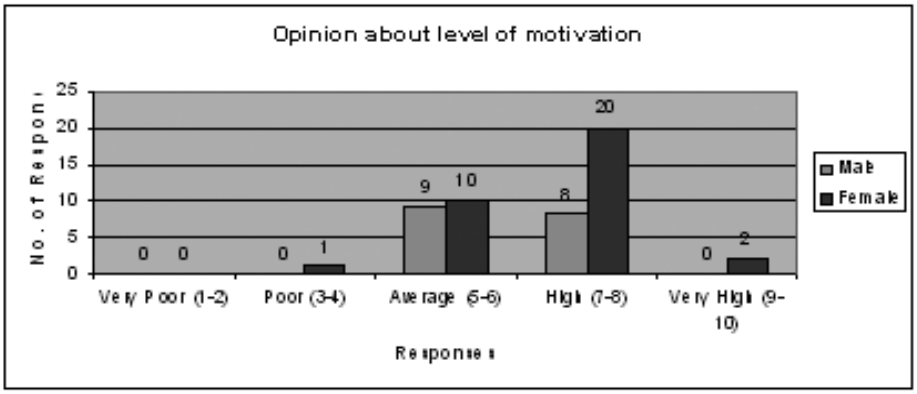
In the current survey, it is observed that, the respondents provided positive response, mentioning that the availability of the teaching material was to an extent of 'some of the times' to 'always'.

There is a big gap between the course the students undergo and the work they would be performing during their career. This may be due to curriculum structure or covering more subjects in minimum time or evaluation methods, etc. 80% of the respondents feel that the training they underwent is meeting the reality, which shows that the special education training curriculum follows practical oriented methods to sticking to the theory.

Contrary to the above, 52% of all the respondents, did not feel interference in their work due to routine duties and paperwork, among whom, 38% of them were female respondents. Agreeing to the above studies, 48% feel that there as an interference in their work due to routine duties and paperwork, to the extent of 'small', 'moderate' and 'great'. In general, the special schools, will have to have lot of paperwork like documentation of daily/ weekly/monthly reports, individual development programs, checklists, guidelines, etc., on a continual basis, which is a time consuming activity. Higher interference may bring down the morale due to stress in managing time and activity.



90% of all the respondents feel that their colleagues are either cooperative to the extent of 'moderate' or 'great', out of which 56% are female respondents.



More than half of the responds are highly motivated and more than one third feel their motivation level to be average. Motivated educators will give a positive result and they become more productive compared to the less motivated educators, as they influence negatively. Overall, the personal, organizational and social objectives of special educations are met optimistically.

More than half of the responds are highly motivated and more than one third feel that their motivation level is average, which is a positive sign. The lower side of the result may be due to various factors such as time, stress level, mood, not understanding the question, etc.

Personal loyalty is felt more because of various factors like charisma, ethics, values, moral responsibility, possessiveness, attachment, etc. This is one of the major factors because of which the labor turnover is less in countries like India, where loyalty to the employer is viewed as ethical. There are several instances where for over three decades, continuous service is offered with the same employer, i.e., entry to retirement, with the same employer. But the trends are changing widely, but still, during this current survey, it is observed that the respondents feel stay with the organization because of their personal loyalty to the employer.

Special Educators work with passion, love, affection and dedication. They generally tend to build a special bondage and relationship with their students, so that the objectives are met. As these educators work with socially under privileged children, lot of attachment will be built during the course of teaching.

They participate in empowering the parents, siblings and their families and society as a whole. High motivation is achieved only when the person enjoys what he does and has belief in his strength and focuses on the goals. It's more of emotional bonding because of which the special educators tend to give results than just teaching them autocratic way. 10% of the respondents feel that they don't have special bondage with their students, which may be a temporary phase, because special education is such a field where lot of stress, patience, continuous learning, creativity and challenging

work is needed. Other factors such as peer pressure, cooperation from management, timelines, wages, etc., would have triggered them and might be reactive to the situation.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory illustrates that workers need a wage sufficient to feed, shelter & protect them and their families satisfactorily. This implies that pleasure comes from something the task leads to, such as money.

But in the current survey, Salary as a motivation factor, is ranked fourth, which may be because, most of the respondents are females and they may not be the primary bread winners of the family. Surprisingly, male respondents are also claim to be happy to the extent of moderate (13) to great (2) out of 17 respondents. In the current survey, opportunity to use personal skills is ranked at fifth, above the good working condition and job security. This may be due to satisfaction felt more when opportunity to use personal skills is provided.

Most employees also value locations that are close to home, offer cleanliness, adequate tools & equipment and buildings that are in good conditions, among others. Because of the same reason, in the current survey, good working condition is a motivation factor, ranked at sixth, above job security. Employees will look for personal growth in their work and will actively seek out new responsibilities. Probably due to this reason, Job security and personal growth in the organization are ranked at eight and ninth place as motivation factors. Many times, the special educators look for policies to be more flexible, but in reality, that mayn't be possible for the management to offer, as these will be the least priority for them to run the organization. Hence, in the current survey, it is observed that the respondents ranked this as a last motivational factor for them as they may not be getting good support from the management. It is mostly true in all other industries also.

36 of 37 respondents mentioned that the special children are the major motivating factor. This might be due to the reason that the special education is a field where empathy, love, passion, affection are prioritized. 18 of the respondents also mentioned that Salary is their second motivation factor. Other than these two, job security, social recognition, cooperation from management, job satisfaction, working environment, etc. are listed.

Most of the respondents feel that their relationship with their colleagues is not good and a de-motivating factor. As mentioned earlier, generally, people enter into special education as in-service, part time job. But later, they find it interesting & challenging and continue in the same field.

As they will not have proper qualification and skills, they tend to feel factors like qualification, handling pressure, etc. as de-motivating factors. Experienced and qualified professionals also feel the pressure, but they cope with them quickly.

Out of 24 respondents, 22 of them list 'special children' as the factor to bring back their motivation level high. Other factors listed are Salary and Family support. Personal bonding and commitment/ empathy to help special children are the factors that drive the special educators to work productively. Probably because of this reason, whenever they are de-motivated, they tend to spend time with them.

Hypothesis framed

- Null Hypothesis: Ho- More than 50% of Special Educators in Bangalore are highly Motivated.
- Alternate Hypothesis: H1- The number of Special Educators with high motivation are less than 50% in Bangalore.

From the findings of the research, it is evident that, 57% of special educators in Bangalore are highly motivated. Therefore null hypothesis is found to be true and hence it is accepted. Consequently the alternate hypothesis is untrue and therefore it is rejected.

Contribution of the Research work:

- Empathy for the Special Children, Challenging & Interesting work and Salary are the factors that precisely motivate special educators in Bangalore.
- Co-workers, family pressure and inflexibility in work timings are some of the de-motivating factors that negatively influence the special educators.
- The research has come out with suitable suggestions and recommendations and the same are listed in the following paragraphs.
- The research has provided definite insight into the current motivational level of special educators.

Conclusions of the research

The current research explains the complicated nature of the work of special education teachers. This research breaks down teachers' work into specific job factor categories. The findings of this research are hoped to lead to greater and deeper exploration of this matter concerned among special education teachers in future studies.

The main task for the stakeholders is not merely to ensure that the key elements highlighted in the present research are present, but also to state what these elements are and how they are vital in improving teacher motivation.

Based on the findings of the present research, there is a crucial need to address the factors affecting the motivation of special education teachers. There is a need for special education teachers to receive moral and material support appropriate to their level of responsibilities.

The special education allowances should be reviewed constantly to compensate for the challenges posed by the nature of the job of these teachers. This will make it possible for them to live with dignity and not be forced to engage in additional income generating activities in order to make up for the low pay.

The special education teachers should be provided with an adequate working environment with resources and materials necessary to facilitate good teaching and to boost their morale.

They should be able to receive in-service training and to attend workshops and seminars regularly in order to share ideas and to keep in touch with new trends and developments in the field of special education.

The special education teachers should obtain continuous support and feedback from their administrators through organised forums where they can openly exchange views and opinions.

They should be included in all activities concerning special education. They should also contribute to national debates on special

education as they possess valuable experience as practicing classroom teachers constantly in touch with students with special needs. This can consequently enhance their motivation and confidence in the system.

The teachers should also be represented in curriculum development in special education since they can recommend what is workable, based on their experience.

The curriculum should be adapted to the diversity of special learning needs. The special education component should be incorporated into teacher education curriculum at all levels of teacher training.

Frequent seminars, workshops and refresher courses should be organised for teachers educating special needs students which will enable them to update their skills, methods and strategies for dealing with their students, helping to enhance their confidence and job motivation. Similarly, teachers need to be provided with the opportunity to interact with fellow colleagues from other

special schools in conferences with the aim of presenting experiences, views and knowledge and to simply encourage each other.

Administrative personnel in charge of the issues of special education need to receive frequent in- service special education to enable them to acquire a working knowledge of special education so that they can handle these matters adequately. Preferably, qualified persons with disabilities should be appointed to administrative posts.

Suggestions and Recommendations:

This research analyzed the special educators' work by delineating it into various work categories. In doing so, more detailed information has been obtained and thus more precise procedures and actions can be taken to improve the motivating potential of teachers' work.

A positive correlation is found between the job design factors and teachers' motivation. Special education teachers in the current research cite "workload", "satisfaction with management", "coworkers" as demoralizing factors. Some trends in the results concur with the theory by Herzberg, which posits that extrinsic job factors usually cause dissatisfaction to the employees. Herzberg's also shows that hygiene factors affect the context in which work is conducted and when such factors are not gratified, negative attitudes are created producing job dissatisfaction.

Measures should be taken such as reducing the class size, workshops on team work and teachers' workload and establishing forums where the teachers can air their views as well as their problems and experiences to the special education administrators. Such forums should be organized regularly to enhance positive relations between the teachers and the administrators, while at the same time improve the working conditions of the teachers.

The current research found that some special needs children often require the physical support of the teacher. Furthermore, their learning pace is slow, which can be often frustrating and hence, requires a lot of patience among the teachers.

Curriculum planners should be in a position to address issues concerning extra burdens that exceptional students may present to the teachers to attend to and hence, introduce ways of reducing them. When teachers become overwhelmed with unreasonable workloads,

they become frustrated in their efforts to provide appropriate teaching for the students. The potential for laxity and negligence may be high especially among teachers in crowded classrooms. This, therefore implies that for learning to be effective, teachers in special schools need to be allowed to handle smaller classes, while regular classroom teachers, who integrate special needs students need to be allowed to have fewer such students in the light of the extra demands that are placed on them.

Many teachers report that their daily work with students constitutes only a part of their responsibilities and that the planning involved in Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and counseling students, among others, involve after school and weekend time. It is important that ways of compensating teachers for this extra time are explored.

Possibilities such as the provision of teacher-aides and team teaching may allow the special education teachers adequate time to handle some of these extra responsibilities during regular school days. Rather than reducing instructional effectiveness, these proposed strategies should actually increase the quality of instruction.

Scope for future research:

The present research can be extended to:

- To include the schools run by the Public/ Large NGO organizations, viz., BHEL, Military Schools etc., and State and Central Governments.
- To other disability sectors like Autism, ADHD, Cerebral Palsy, Neurological disorders, Psychiatric disability, etc.
- To include all the special educators in Bangalore to ascertain the results of the research more accurately.
- To include all the special schools catering to all the disability sectors in Bangalore.

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