Factors Affecting Teachers' Turnover in Private Schools of Karachi

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Abstract

This study was done to examine the factors influencing teacher turnover in Karachi's private schools. The high teacher turnover rate in Karachi's private schools poses a hurdle to student performance and educational growth. In addition, due to the high teacher turnover, the educational process is slowing down, which has a negative impact on student productivity. It is essential to analyze all of those factors that motivate instructors to leave their positions in schools. This study will assist school administrators, head teachers, teachers and policymakers in identifying and mitigating the causes that motivate teachers to leave their positions. This study examines the factors that drive teacher turnover and strategies for retaining teachers for improved student learning outcomes. In this study, private schools from the urban city of Karachi, Pakistan were chosen. Due to the Covid, 19 pandemic and school closure, two schools were chosen for this study. The data collection process utilized qualitative research. Seven school teachers were selected for semi-structured interviews in order to determine the factors influencing teacher turnover. This study uncovered six elements that contribute to teacher turnover: financial benefits (salary), lack of professionalism, respect, administration's support, rewards, and professional development. This study findings reveals that when teachers' demands are not met, they experience disappointment and are more likely to leave their employment.

Keywords: Private schools, Teachers' turnover, Retention, Rewards.

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Introduction

Constant turnover has a negative impact on the educational development of students (Malik, 2019). Especially in the twenty-first century, Zahra (2013) asserts that teacher turnover has gained more attention. In addition, Boyd et al. (2006) stressed that employees play crucial responsibilities in any organization. In conclusion, employees are the most valuable asset upon which nearly every firm might rely, as they contribute significantly to the organization's achievements and success. Felter, (2001) stated that teacher effectiveness is judged by student achievement and can be connected with individual durability and duration in the field; hence, teacher retention difficulties should be taken into account.

Furthermore, schools with low teacher turnover have high levels of trust among employees, whereas schools with high teacher turnover have low levels of trust between teachers (Guin, 2004). According to Naviwala (2016), the lack of job security in the private sector, as opposed to public institutions, increases the likelihood of teacher turnover. Few researches has been conducted in Pakistan to address the issue. According to Tahseen and Hadi (2015), the turnover of instructors in schools has an effect on student learning outcomes as well as their educational progress. Therefore, it is essential for schools to keep their qualified teaching personnel, as only qualified teachers can provide children with the greatest education. According to Tahseen and Hadi (2015), the quality of teachers has a significant impact on the grade of education. However, if qualified teachers leave the school or teaching profession, it will have a negative effect on students and school performance.

According to Naviwala (2016), Pakistan does not have a teacher shortage. It is impossible to understate the importance of the teaching profession and the teachers' role in establishing the human basis of every nation (Adunola et al, 2016). This teacher attrition has been attributed to the success of organizations. According to Hirsch and Emerick (2006), retention of instructors is a correct process in which teachers are encouraged to remain with the organization for an extended period of time or to achieve specified goals. However, there are a variety of measures that can be used to retain teachers and prevent turnover. It is a universally acknowledged reality that long-term retention of loyal and devoted employees is the top priority for any management that believes in creating a defined human resources boundary (Qadir & Khan, 2016).

This study analyses the primary factors that have a significant impact on the decision of private school teachers to leave their positions. It will foster an appreciation for teachers, their working conditions and their perspectives on job satisfaction.

Research Question

Which factors influence teacher turnover in Karachi's private schools?

Theoretical Framework

Turnover is a person's intention to leave their organization (Pradifa & Welly, 2014; Mendis 2017). Turnover is a suitable issue that is fundamentally important to organizations (Houkes et al, 2003). Initially, turnover was defined as a form of socialization process (Rice, Hill & Trist, 1950). Professionals leaving their chosen field is not a novel topic at any institution; still, it is an ongoing concern in education (Lytle, 2013). According to Mobley (1979), the level of job satisfaction can influence whether an employee is contemplating quitting. Frustration can initiate undesirable behaviors, such as passivity and non-appearance at work, leading to thoughts of quitting. Teachers who leave the schools are the most knowledgeable and perceptive employees within the organization. Their valuable experiences, skills, abilities, and knowledge will depart with them, resulting in a fall in output (Watrous et al., 2006). Abelson (1987) elucidated that turnover is fundamentally influenced by the interrelationships between individual, hierarchical, work, and natural factors and that a final turnover decision is typically taken after careful consideration and a wise decision leads to the notification of assent. Teachers are dissatisfied and demotivated, according to Naviwala (2016), since principals and students have high expectations without providing any assistance for the growth and learning development of the pupils. Retention of teachers is one of the most crucial aspects for the success of any educational programme and the schools delivering it.

Rationale of the Research

This study sought to identify the factors that lead private school teachers to leave their jobs. Teachers wanted to leave any school for a variety of reasons, including personal problems, organizational challenges, salary or health issues, etc., as determined by the study of several studies and prior research. Different studies of turnover have been conducted in regions of the world with distinct environments, situations, or circumstances. Every country has different sorts of causes for turnover based on their employee needs and environment. It is vital to identify the reason for teacher turnover in our country. There are few research on teacher turnover in the domain of Karachi. It is vital to pinpoint the factors of teachers' turnover that pertain to the city of Karachi.

Methodology

To achieve the objectives of this qualitative study, the researcher utilized qualitative research methodology. According to Creswell (2009), qualitative research might investigate multiple covers of the true problem. A narrative inquiry method was adopted, which was more suitable for this investigation.

The narrative technique can be utilized to organize and coordinate new perceptions and knowledge, according to Pachler (2009), because it creates awareness and makes it more learnable. In this study, teachers were selected using a strategy of purposive sampling. The sample consisted of seven teachers (five females and two males) between the ages of 29 and 50. These teachers were selected from two private schools in the urban city of Karachi. As a result of the Covid-19 epidemic, schools were closed and then reopened for a short time; thus, only two schools were chosen. One of the factors contributing to the present pandemic is turnover. For data gathering, the researcher selected four teachers from school 1 and three teachers from school 2.

The researcher employed semi-structured, open-ended interviews as the data gathering approach in the correct order to maintain topical focus. The researchers ask respondents open-ended questions that allow them to express their experiences (Thomas, 2015). The participants were interviewed face-to-face in a school environment that was conducive to their comfort. After receiving the consent form, participants were recruited for the study. The interviews were documented in writing for further examination. The interview was done in the interviewee's original tongue and then translated into English. To maintain confidentiality, each participant was designated by a letter and a number, such as TR1, TR2, TR3, TR4, TR5, TR6, and TR7

Data Analysis and Results

This qualitative study involved thematic analysis. The thematic analysis enables a logical and inductive examination of the themes identified or labelled in the interview. The interviews were documented in writing for further examination. As explained by Rubin & Rubin (2005), the researcher studied the record numerous times, identifying and noting significant applicable codes and themes. Six important themes emerged from the data analysis: (a) Financial benefits (salary), (b) Respect, (c) Lack of professionalism, (d) Administration assistance, (e) Rewards, and (f) Professional development.

Limitations

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, schools were closed and then reopened for a limited time, which is the reason why there were so few volunteers available for this study. The qualitative character of the study permits researchers to do an in-depth analysis based on interviews with a small number of individuals.

Results and Discussion:

In this study, respondents provided teachers' perspectives and ideas regarding teacher turnover, which were well supported by real-world reasons to cite in informative statements and narratives. Respondents' accounts were outstanding in providing information for this study's evaluation. Using the following topics, researchers analyzed the findings in relation to the theme.

A. Financial Benefits (Salary)

As per respondents, salary is the leading cause of teacher turnover. Less pay was cited as the leading reason of teacher discontent and turnover by respondents. It is a widespread concern among participants that the majority of private schools do not offer financial rewards; this is also a prevalent issue that teachers face. Lavob (1997) stated that a lower wage is the most plausible cause for an employee to quit their employment. The employee will not remain at the workplace longer if they are compensated less or receive inadequate wages. The male respondent (TR5) with fifteen years of experience in the field of education stated that if schools offer competitive remuneration, teachers will remain in their positions and be content with their jobs.

Less-than-desirable pay causes teachers to lose interest in their jobs, which is the most prevalent reason they do not remain with a single organization. By offering generous compensation, school administrations can incentivize teachers. (TR5)

The respondent (TR5) stated that teachers require acceptable compensation. Attractive pay are the most important factor in retaining teachers, as they facilitate the fulfilment of daily wants and needs (Shoaib et al, 2009). Respondent (TR7), female teacher with six years of experience in the teaching sector, commented on the minimal financial rewards of instructors as follows:

Less salary and fewer facilities are the primary problems that are extremely difficult to solve in the teaching profession. However, most needy and experienced teachers do not consider less salary a problem and work without complaint. (TR7)

According to the teacher's statement (TR7), qualified teachers in need are affected by this issue. Salary is regarded as the most important factor in attracting and maintaining employees (Willis, 2000). Moreover, Anwar et al. (2014) noted that financial uncertainty and insecurity lead to stress among employees, who frequently leave the firm as a result.

B. Respect

The majority of respondents who emphasized and expressed interest in an admiring workplace claimed that everyone requires respect and no one desires to work at a disrespectful setting. They mentioned that their inspiring workplace comforts them and makes them feel as though they are working at a nice place. According to Ellingsen and Johannesson (2007), employees want to be appreciated by their employers and coworkers. We asserted that the most essential of all indicators is the respect they receive at work, as it validates their significance and worth. The narratives of responses listed below demonstrate that respect is an absolute necessity in the workplace:

I never collaborate with schools that do not respect their people. Teachers might be content with their jobs if their employer treats them with respect. (TR2). I am able to manage my work in all conditions, including those with hard workloads and extra school hours, but I cannot tolerate an environment that is disrespectful. Respect from our colleagues, students, principals, and parents is crucial; nevertheless, occasionally parents mistreat teachers and principals do not support them; if the school does not recognize the significance of teachers, teachers will become dissatisfied. (TR4)

The preceding accounts demonstrate that teachers desire greater respect in the workplace. Teachers' enthusiasm in an organization dissipates in a disrespectful atmosphere. According to Dutton (2003), Organizations vary in how they accord importance and worth to all their employees, regardless of their degree or position. Respect is inextricably linked to the achievement of widespread social necessity.

C. Lack of Professionalism

Few respondents highlighted teachers' work practices and discussed their incompetence in the workplace. This distinct topic evolved from an examination of the data. Two respondents, (TR1) and (TR3), stated that teachers' work attitudes are not always positive. While explaining additional causes, they also claimed that occasionally teachers do not manage their professional attitudes in the workplace due to a lack of work experience, lack of tolerance, empathy, and responsibility. According to Yong et al. (2012), a lack of a professional mindset causes job-related factors such as less work knowledge, less social participation, a lack of motivation, and less confidence. Employees must demonstrate practical behavior in order to deliver precise abilities. The effect of an organization's recognition of employees' attitudes on the performance and motivation of employees is substantial (Chowdhury, 2007). The following teacher quotes emphasize the need for professionalism in the workplace. Female respondent (TR1) shared her thoughts on the professional behavior of teachers as follows:

I believe professional attitude is also very important on the job; most new teachers don't want to follow routine school regulations and quit without completing their probationary period; this is not a good attitude; most new qualified teachers have this attitude; they believe they will get another job, but with this approach, they cannot gain valuable experience in teaching. (TR1)

The male respondent (TR3) is the most experienced and qualified teacher and has a great deal of expertise in the teaching profession. He

highlighted teachers' attitudes at the workplace and noted that management determines whom to keep or fire for many reasons, stated as:

Some teachers have low tolerance for accepting others people's teaching suggestions, exhibit non-professional behavior with students and occasionally with coworkers, and are unable to handle a variety of situations; as a result, management does not retain these teachers. In my vast expertise, I have encountered these occurrences numerous times; only a teacher's job brings them to the attention of others. (TR3)

The statement of Respondent (TR3) highlight that a professional demeanor is vital in the workplace. Positive attitude, cooperation and excellence in performance are the primary foundations of professionalism.

D. Administration's Support

Administrative support was emphasized by the majority of respondents. Administrative support, according to respondents, provides them more self-assurance and a feeling of safety at work. Respondents highlighted how challenging it is to work with an administration that is not helpful. According to Simon (2015), administration directly affects the performance of teachers which eventually makes it easier for instructors to stay on the job. Trust can enhance the relationship between administration and instructors. Reframing the management of principals, according to Griffith (2001), has a direct effect on teachers' job satisfaction, lower teacher turnover, and good effects on students' academic performance. The narratives of respondents demonstrate the value of administration support, expressing their perspectives as:

Administration assistance is essential where we work; however, most school administrations are unaware of the needs of their teachers. When administration is unhelpful and unfriendly, employees may be unwilling to work for it. Teachers do not wish to work under pressure. At work, they require a good structure and flexibility. (TR3)

With administration's support, we feel safe and at ease; with their assistance, we are able to manage all responsibilities with ease; and without administration's support, our work becomes difficult; administration's support gives us confidence to learn more, grow more and perform work with integrity. (TR7)

Administrations oversee the entire process of schools; their cooperation is a boon for personnel. I quit my prior position as a result of unsupportive management and a demanding work environment. If we work hard but our management does not recognize it, the result is nothing but dissatisfaction. (TR4)

Both the female respondent (TR4) and the male respondent (TR5) claimed that they left their previous positions owing to management concerns. Research participants added that they are unable to work if administration is non-supportive and non-appreciative. Respondent (TR5) further noted that if administration is poor, employees will not remain with the firm for long. Loeb et al. (2005) asserted that inadequate administrative assistance may contribute to a rise in teacher turnover.

E. Rewards

Majority of the respondents stated that they anticipate some form of compensation. The majority of respondents indicated a desire to get awards from their organization, but the school administration does not prioritize this. The narratives demonstrate that all teachers anticipate compensation, which motivates them to perform better. According to Mercer (2003), there is a direct association between the reward system and staff retention. The expectation hypothesis indicates a high demand for effort from employees, who are also expected to be talented. According to the following narratives, teachers place a high value on rewards, enjoy receiving them and school's administration can increase teachers' engagement by rewarding them.

I prefer to receive reward in the form of wage increases, as they can quickly increase our enthusiasm for our work. Schools' administration can improve teachers' performance by reward. The best approach to maintain employee satisfaction is through this. (TR1)

Promotion or other advantages I anticipated my organization to provide an incentive. These rewards motivate me to exert greater effort and enhance my performance. (TR2)

Naturally, I anticipated a reward for my hard work; I have no issue accepting any kind of prize, trophy or anything else. It motivates us to improve our abilities. It doesn't concern anyone. It is due to the teachers' self-passion that, without any reward, they function like machines. (TR3)

I believe that rewards are essential for us since they serve as a motivator and make us feel valued. Rewards increase my confidence that I am doing a good job, and if I receive one, I will realize that my school is benefiting from my efforts. (TR6)

The female respondent (TR4) was dissatisfied with her previous position since neither the school administration nor the principal recognized her efforts. Due to this and numerous other factors, TR4 quit his employment. According to the teachers' accounts, compensation is a fundamental demand of teachers that motivates them to perform better work. Rewards and gifts contribute to employee earnings and employee retention can be achieved through organization (Pek-Greer et al, 2016).

F. Professional Development

Interviews with teachers revealed that teachers anticipate training from their organizations. The majority of responders highlighted the significance of training and emphasized that teachers must participate. Teachers believe it is crucial for their improved performance in the teaching sector, and if organizations give it serious consideration, it will be beneficial for the teaching-learning process. Vandana (2017) highlighted that leaders may improve employee retention by focusing on their employees' training and development. It reduces staff turnover and improves their development, success and retention. Respondents indicated that it helps to progress their job superiority and is beneficial for their professional development. It is also one of the essential part of an organization that can strengthen all of its work activities and instill staff with a sense of inspiration (Latham, 1988). Respondent (TR2) stated as:

Training is necessary for the professional development of teachers; our school sends us to a variety of workshops and seminars, where I gained a wealth of knowledge and was exposed to numerous innovative teaching techniques. (TR2)

Another respondents stated as:

Different training and courses are important for instructors at this time because they can affect the entire school structure. (TR3)

It is vital for us to succeed in our careers, we must develop our skills in that area, yet schools typically pay little attention to how well their faculty is being trained, and even fewer schools are emphasizing it positively. It's puzzling that schools still fail to see its significance. (TR7)

The responses above demonstrate the necessity for career growth and training. Teachers discussed their views and expectations regarding training and emphasized that schools have yet to recognize its significance. Johennesse and Chou (2017) argued that with the aid of training and development, leaders of organizations may generate motivated employees, hence reducing employee turnover.

Conclusion

This study's purpose is to identify the factors that influence teachers' intentions to leave their positions. Based on the findings, it can be inferred that a variety of factors contributed to teacher turnover. The majority of teachers stated that low pay is the primary issue and many teachers quit their positions due to low pay and lack of raises. It was especially tough for them to manage their expenses on a lower income. The salary is one of the most influential factors influencing employee retention.

The study also concludes that teachers' prior management experiences were negative. The majority of them were treated with disrespect. In order to obtain better results, school management must treat teachers with respect, as they are the ones responsible for shaping future generations.

In addition to the aforementioned facts, teachers left their employment or lost their careers owing to a lack of professionalism, according to the study's conclusions. Occasionally, teachers do not work or perform professionally. In this instance, they either left or were terminated by management.

The result indicates that teachers anticipate performance-based rewards. The reward is the emotional and inner need of the employee; it motivates the employee to perform diligently. The majority of schools either do not have an award system for teachers or do not recognize their success. The reward has its own value but if it is not given, teachers lose confidence and do not feel appreciative in that setting. It can enhance employees' work performance and motivate them to remain for a long period. It gives employees the feeling that they are valued by the firm (Silbert, 2005).

This study also conclude that administrative support is vital for teachers. Administration that bolsters teachers' confidence in the organization results in increased productivity. In this regard, school administration and leaders can encourage their teachers to improve their performance. Generous and helpful administrations can keep teachers for an extended period of time.

Based on findings, the study concludes that professional development is crucial for teachers' career growth. If their organization supports them, they can enhance their skills. According to the conclusions of the study, teachers place a high value on professional development, however schools do not view it as an essential component of the teaching profession.

Recommendations

Teachers are the most useful and significant resource in any school. If private schools review and improve teachers' financial benefits, teachers will be able to achieve their goals and meet their basic needs.

It is also suggested that school administration provide a respectful work environment, take steps to retain teachers through their positive efforts, recharge their professional knowledge and satisfy them by identifying their needs, so that teachers remain with the organization for an extended period of time.

It is necessary for school's administrations to provide assistance to all teachers either new or experienced, in order to develop and maintain their professionalism in the workplace, as well as to take steps to retain teachers through their positive efforts, recharge their professional knowledge and satisfy them by identifying their needs so that they will remain in the organization for an extended period of time.

In addition, it is essential that school management offer teachers a supportive environment and inquire whether they require assistance to reach organizational goals. The lack of administrative support demoralizes teachers' stimulation towards their job.

One of the most influential stimulating factor for teachers is the reward system. It is advised that school managers reorganize their reward schemes to increase teachers' abilities and productivity.

It is vital to give teachers professional development chances in order to enhance their professional abilities, which will benefit the organization and society.

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