

**AN INTEGRATIVE MODEL ON JOB SATISFACTION
AND INTENTION OF LEAVING THE JOB AMONG
KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS IN HONG KONG**

WING CHEUNG TANG

ASIA e UNIVERSITY

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Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
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ABSTRACT

The study has critically focused on the satisfaction level of the kindergarten teachers with their jobs while working in Hong Kong. However, more than 85 percent locals account for the kindergartens and local teachers have been accounting for more than 90 percent of kindergarten teachers within the Hong Kong. The research was about the satisfaction regarding the teaching job within the kindergarten for teachers and their intention of leaving the current employment. It used multiple theories and identified numerous factors that helps in enhancing the motivation of the employees especially linked with the teaching. The teachers associated with kindergarten have been facing challenges like work burden, competency issues while dealing the special students with other language. The researcher only selected 395 local kindergarten teachers who have been teaching in the kindergartens, and their age is among 18 to 60 years, further they have good communication skills, and they can read and write the traditional Chinese. Moreover, the study has been conducted during the tenure August 2020 to October 2020 (three Months). The study has complied quantitative research approach, which further used both primary data collection method and secondary data collection method. The entire survey related to the satisfaction regarding the job was approved by the Spector for academic research. Further, researcher used different motivational theories, statistical analysis, and in-depth literature review for attaining the objectives of the current study. The study strongly identified that high satisfaction level regarding jobs result much positive and reflects high productivity with the work of the employees. Whereas the lack of satisfaction regarding the job results intentions of leaving the current employment as seen in the kindergarten teachers' case in Hong Kong. The research result indicated that there was a significant relation among the satisfaction regarding the job of the kindergarten teachers and the communication barrier among the students and the teachers who are associated with the kindergartens in the Hong Kong. Mostly, many authors have already resulted that the satisfaction regarding the job is not based on any single variable. It is associated with the different variables in different studies. When focusing on the satisfaction regarding the job of the kindergarten teachers, the results of each variable ought to be different as per the circumstances of the study.

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, for the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy


The student has been supervised by: **Associate Professor Dr Sheila Cheng**

The thesis has been examined and endorsed by:

Associate Professor Dr Wan Sabri Wan Hussin,
Associate Professor
Asia e University
Examiner 1

Associate Professor Dr Ilham Sentosa,
Associate Professor
University Kuala Lumpur
Examiner 2

This thesis was submitted to Asia e University and is accepted as fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Professor Dr Siow Heng Loke

Asia e University

Chairman, Examination Committee

3 October 2022

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted in fulfilment of the PhD degree is my own work and that all contributions from any other persons or sources are properly and duly cited. I further declare that the material has not been submitted either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. In making this declaration, I understand and acknowledge any breaches in this declaration constitute academic misconduct, which may result in my expulsion from the programme and/or exclusion from the award of the degree.

Name: Wing Cheung TANG

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tang Wing Cheung". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Signature of Candidate:

Date: 11 August 2022

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
EDB	Education Bureau
FKQES	Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme
HRM	Human Resources Management
JCT	Job Characteristics Theory
JSS	Satisfaction regarding the job Survey
KCFRS	Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme
NCS	Non-Chinese Speaking
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PEVS	Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
POAS	Primary One Admission System
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds
SEM	Structural Equations Modelling
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TJS	Teacher's Satisfaction regarding the job
TNA	Training Need Assessment

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Over the decades, kindergarten education was considered essential and had been adopted as fundamental in the Hong Kong. Parents play an important role to choose a suitable kindergarten for their children to meet their development needs and cultivate their learning interests. On the other hand, teachers had been contributing positively to this prosperity and attaining high level of their satisfaction with this job (Ozgenel & Mert, 2019). However, this is vital to determine the satisfaction regarding the job of the teacher to attain high productivity and positive results from their duties. Further, teachers' satisfaction helps them to implement the educational policies and procedures properly, and as a result they achieve their desired outcomes in shaping good learning practice at adult's level. According to the International Commission Report (2016), childhood education needs to be delivered with high quality and positive sequence for building strong base of these students and lacking in providing good education to the students result achievement gaps and it further restrict the opportunities. All it depends upon the teacher's attention and motivation while teaching these students in their early life. Further, comfort zone is another key element which need to be provided to the teachers while their working hours at the kindergarten. The comfort within their environment had kept them self-motivated to perform and teach the students with quality. Moreover, it would also help them to reduce their stress regarding the workload. Additionally, balance life needs to be given to these teachers for attaining more positive results from them.

Focusing on the Hong Kong that had recently experienced extensive and comprehensive modifications in its entire education system especially in the secondary

education system of seven years and three years' university to the six years secondary and four years' university respectively. The reduction of one year in secondary education from seven to six have increased more dependency of students on their teachers. However, entire success of contraction in number of years directly relates with the satisfaction regarding the job of the teachers and on the other side more effectiveness in the existing secondary education system. Most vitally, it is vital concern for the teachers regarding their satisfaction and motivation with their work, however, it had created new challenge for the students in terms of preparing similar course in six years, but in the broader scenario, it had benefited the society with more positive results in terms of early completion of secondary education of the students. Although, it is beyond the concept of rich and poor because this system complies on all and every student must pass this system for continuing their education, though it reflects high attention to the Chinese community regarding their children's education especially in the context of the enrollment rate of kindergarten which is found high. On the positive, Chinese families had been recognized as responsible community in providing the secondary education to their children within this region.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Satisfaction regarding the job level was vital to teachers in kindergartens (Liu, 2016). The job and the workplace context affected kindergarten teachers' satisfaction regarding the job level. According to Feng (2014), the satisfaction regarding the job level of the teachers varies from region to region depending upon the workload, incentives and working environment. In Hong Kong, satisfaction regarding the job of the teachers working in the

kindergartens are affected by multiple factors such as extensive workload, behavioral issues, dealing students with special educational needs, non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students, issues linked with their own capacity, and others. These factors have resulted in demotivation to the teachers' working morale and forced them to switch their jobs and careers. There was also a shortage of staff in the schools in Hong Kong

Furthermore, the additional workload related to the administrative responsibilities and the unresolved problems and stress issues teachers faced over decades had caused most teachers ready to leave their jobs.

These highlighted factors contribute maximum in their satisfaction while performing their duties and additional responsibilities at the workplace in the kindergartens in Hong Kong.

Further added that teachers had been discouraged due to the work burden and behavioral issues within the kindergartens, resulting serious consequences for the management to manage the teachers and the quality of education within the institution (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2017).

Besides, the challenges that were faced by the teachers working at kindergartens have been found beyond gender differences, seniority and other issues like subjects being taught among the pre-primary educational centers, it had been the work burden which is shifted and enhanced equally on all the teachers resulting high demotivation among them (Zhang, Yu & Liu, 2019).

The least satisfaction regarding the job level had been experienced by the teachers who have already served this profession more than two decades. It was mainly due to their habit of doing same task from years and years, reflecting same thing instead of anything

new or innovative. They needed to take on more responsibility and responsible for the mentoring of their younger colleagues.

On the other hand, past studies (Wu et al., 2020) have determined limited scope regarding the satisfaction regarding the job of these kindergarten teachers within the kindergartens in Hong Kong.

Therefore, it is vital to identify that which of the factors have been impacting negatively on the satisfaction regarding the job level of the teachers. The current study critically examined these factors within the kindergarten teacher's job to formulate effective strategy for overcoming these factors to raise the satisfaction regarding the job of these teachers within the Hong Kong. Further it had prior focused on the components that raises the satisfaction regarding the job level of the kindergarten teachers to ensure their long-term retention with the institution and their self-motivation and commitment with their job. An integrative model for boosting the satisfaction level of these teachers regarding their jobs at kindergarten had been proposed.

1.3 Research Objectives

The key objective of the research was to determine the impact of the factors affecting satisfaction level of the teachers during their jobs in the kindergartens in Hong Kong. This research study was about to measure the satisfaction level of the kindergarten teachers working in different schools in Hong Kong. A satisfied employee can perform his duties and responsibilities in an appropriate way and can deliver more what it is expected from that employee. Further, it was also required to identify and highlight the main factors that are leading the employees towards dissatisfaction because researchers cannot provide the solution without the proper identification of the factors that were creating problems for

the kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong. The researcher was required to check the relationship of the unsatisfactory factors for the kindergarten teachers with the intention of leaving the jobs because there were so many kindergarten teachers who are ready to leave their jobs and they want to change their professions because of the pressure and leading factors which are causing to dissatisfy them while performing their duties and responsibilities at the workplace in Hong Kong. Other than internal issues created by the management of the schools in Hong Kong, there were also some significant external factors that were also contributing to the reduction of satisfaction level of the employees working at the kindergartens in Hong Kong. The demographic factors were one of the main factors that were affecting the satisfaction level of the kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong. The researchers of this study also required to identify the factors that can help to contribute to the reduction of intention to leave the jobs from the kindergarten schools in Hong Kong. To clarify objectives, the researcher clearly explained about the objectives of this research study. The researcher highlighted the sub-objectives for achieving the main objective discussed below.

- (i) To assess the level of satisfaction regarding the job among kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong.
- (ii) To identify the main source of unsatisfactory of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong.
- (iii) To explore the relationship among job un-satisfaction and intention of leaving current employment.
- (iv) To identify the impact of demographics on satisfaction regarding the job and intention of leaving current employment.

- (v) To find out the strategies for teachers to reduce their intention of leaving current employment.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions helped writers focus their research by providing a path through the research and writing process. The specificity of a well-developed research question helped writers avoid the “all-about” paper and work toward supporting a specific, arguable thesis. This research was about the kindergarten teachers, and it was being focused on their satisfaction at the workplace and their intention to leave their jobs due to the work burden and dissatisfactory factors highlighted by the researchers in this study. The current research study had following research questions.

- (i) What is the level of satisfaction regarding the job among kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong?
- (ii) What are the main unsatisfied sources of kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong?
- (iii) What is the relationship among satisfaction regarding the job and intention of leaving current employment?
- (iv) What are the impacts of demographics on satisfaction regarding the job and intention of leaving current employment?
- (v) What are the strategies for teachers to reduce their intention of leaving current employment?

The research questions had been catering the key areas especially in the context of the satisfaction regarding the job among kindergarten teachers, and identification of the unsatisfied sources of kindergarten teachers. Moreover, relationship among satisfaction regarding the job and intention of leaving current job relevant to the teaching. Further,

studies had formulated strategies for motivation of these teachers for reducing their intentions towards leaving their jobs.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study had been beneficial to the development of theory, the daily practice as well as research methodology. Though the results of the study had supported the policy makers and the influential especially the training institutions providing trainings to the teachers, principals, and the kindergartens teachers with effective strategy to overcome the factors that were creating dissatisfaction among the teachers.

(a) Contribution to theory

It had supported to the Herzberg's two-factor theory in the context of Chinese. It provided the opportunity to the kindergarten teachers for expressing their remarks and experiences regarding their challenges and satisfaction level along with the intentions which force them to quit from their jobs. However, it was vital in teacher's perspective that they have been directly associated with the students and students feel more comfortable with their teachers, and quitting the job results more challenges for the students who have affiliation with their teachers.

(b) Contributing to practice

The current research study had critically examined the relationship among satisfaction regarding the job and the intentions for leaving the current employment as teacher in kindergarten within Hong Kong. It hoped to develop existing studies with latest knowledge regarding the satisfaction of the job and on the other side the intentions for leaving and quitting the teaching job. The intention of leaving and quitting included both local kindergartens and the non-local kindergartens in the Hong Kong. It had also

elaborated the satisfaction level with the existing job which need to be observed in daily routine and practices.

(c) Contributing to methodology

It was expected that the entire finding had exhibited valuable data and information along with the act as a support for further research which had been catered on other factors and levels of the teachers' doing jobs in the Hong Kong. It had encouraged the research to comply new methodology for obtaining the effective information to meet the objectives of the current research study. On the other side, exploratory factor analysis had been used for reducing the number of the independent variables which had further contributed on the body of the knowledge.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

Focusing on the limitation in current research study that must be taken under consideration. The data for current study was not collected from bulk number from the respondents due to the time limitation and resources constraint. This was the fact that responses of the kindergarten teachers regarding their satisfaction on their jobs have been lacking and forcing them to make decisions regarding switching towards new jobs and leaving the job with subject to their personal perception and feelings of factors determined under the current research study. The questionnaire prepared for the current research study has been adopted from the survey of the Spector's satisfaction regarding the job and on the other side it has catered intention for leaving or quitting the job up to some extent, so some measurement might not be covered in all aspects. Further, it might be other strong instrument which could be used for investigating more in detail regarding the satisfaction regarding the job level of the teachers and their willingness to change their jobs, but this

might not be feasible to comply within the limitation of the research. Beside the limitation, it had been believed that the questionnaire that had been used during the primary research will help in collecting the valuable and authentic information, and most vitally, the association among the variables in questions. Moreover, it was vital to note that this online survey activity will measure the perceived satisfaction regarding the job. However, this had been the fact that these limitations could be minimized through efficient strategies and there was wide room of further improvement.

1.7 Operational Definition

The key variables and components which had been used in the current research study could be the following terms. They had been discussed during the research activity.

(a) Education Bureau (EDB)

The education bureau had been working as state organization that is responsible for the formulation, development and reviewing of the policies along with programs and legislations linked with the education in terms of pre-primary to tertiary level within the Hong Kong. It further oversee the effective implication of education programs in the Hong Kong (Audit Commission, 2018). Moreover, it allocated public funds to schools and monitor their standard of services and school effectiveness.

(b) Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme (FQKES)

The scheme was initiated for the deserving students whose parents can't afford the fees of their children. The purpose of this scheme was to provide high quality education to these children. This free quality kindergarten education policy was initiated in 2017-

18. Although subsidiary had been linked directly with the student joining kindergartens. However, key objective for launching this scheme was to ensure balance approach for the rich and poor students to provide equal rights for all.

(c) Satisfaction regarding the job survey (JSS)

The satisfaction regarding the job survey (JSS) was initiated by the Spector in the mid-80s. It had six key points defined with the help of the Likert Scale questionnaire and it further consist of 36 components for accessing the attitude of the employees regarding the satisfaction regarding the job and aspects of the jobs in other nine facet scale. Further, each facet had been accessed with almost 4 items and total score has been computed from all items.

(d) Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme (KCFRS)

It helped in providing the deserving families full support in terms of their financial assistance that covers the fee and other academic expenses for these children who had been receiving their pre-primary education (WFSFAA, 2019).

(e) Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS)

The students who had been living in the Hong Kong with their families, having the residency status will be served with a Voucher for PEVS. This voucher had helped the applicants to avail fee subsidiary on presenting this voucher to the local non-profit-making kindergarten that had been working under the PEVS (Audit Commission, 2013).