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Teaching Profession in Nepal: Attitude and Job Satisfaction of the School Teachers

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Abstract

Quality education is the key factor for overall development of an individual and nation. Quality of education is directly related to competency and dedication of the teacher, as teacher is the main implementor of the educational program. This study investigates the attitude of permanent school teachers towards teaching profession and their level of job satisfaction. Quantitative research design over a sample of randomly selected 200 teachers was used in this study. A Likert type attitude scale was prepared and standardized by the researcher on the sample of 374 school teachers of five districts of Nepal and India but this study is based in context of Nepal. Job satisfaction level was measured by Job Satisfaction Scale (JSST-DM) published by National Psychological Corporation, Agra, India. Normative survey method was used to collect required data. Maslow's theory of motivation based on the needs hierarchy system was used to interpret the findings of this study.

Result was interpreted by using z-score norms based on seven categories, which explored that 20.50 percent of the teachers were favorable towards their profession, 46 percent were unfavorable and 33.50 percent were neutral towards teaching profession. Similarly, percentage of teachers found above Average Satisfied on their job was 37 percent, below Average Satisfied was 40 percent and percent of Average Satisfied teachers was 23. Out of which, nine percent school teachers were extremely satisfied and 13 percent were extremely dissatisfied.

Teachers cannot do well on teaching profession unless they have a positive attitude towards their profession and are not satisfied with it. This study reveals that a significant number of teachers are not satisfied with their profession and do not have a positive attitude towards it. It is imperative that the concerned authorities review the policies regarding salary, facilities and position in the national protocol for teachers in order to bring a positive change in the situation.

Keywords: Quantitative design, teaching profession, attitude, job satisfaction

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Introduction

Teaching is a process in which pupils develop talents based on their capacity (Karsli, 2007) and in educational system; teacher is a person who enables students to gain cognitive, sensory and behavioral aim (Gundogdu & Silman, 2007). Teaching is considered as a distinctive profession (Tezcan, 1996) and teachers are mainly responsible to improve the teaching profession (Hotaman, 2010).

Teachers enable interaction among the main elements of educational system like student, educational program and teaching environment (Posner, 1995). Teacher also prepares youths as future members of society and contribute to the intellectual, social and economic growth of the nation (Atjonen, 2015) by maintaining ethical values (Gluchmanova, 2015). They also play a prime role in influencing the society (Temel, 1988). Educational process revolves around teachers, and innovations are not possible without good teachers (Altbach, as cited in Gao, 2009, p. 9).

US President Barack Obama's address (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2011, p.4) "If you want to make a difference in the life of our nation; if you want to make a difference in the life of a child- become a teacher. Your country needs you" exposes the importance of teacher to shape the coming generation and to build the nation. But a teacher can do well in teaching profession if he or she is satisfied in the job and has a positive attitude towards the teaching profession.

Nepal is a developing country. Quality education is urgent necessity for the nation. Teachers are mainly responsible for imparting quality education and hence progress of the nation. Though a country full of the natural resources, Nepal has not been able to make expected progress. Teachers are frequently blamed that they are not responsible to their duties. In this context, teaching profession in Nepal was identified as research area. As effectiveness of teaching is directly related to job satisfaction and attitude of teachers, so attitude of teachers towards teaching profession and their level of job satisfaction in Nepal was identified as the research problem. Thus, this study was guided by two research objectives: to identify the attitude of school teachers towards teaching profession and to find their level of job satisfaction.

Allport (1935) defines the attitude that, "an attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all the objects and situations with which it is related" (p. 34). Similarly, attitude is defined by Robbins (1994) as "Attitudes are evaluation statements, either positive or negative, about objects, people or events. Attitude expresses how an individual feels about something" (p. 17).

Hellfritzsch (1945) demonstrate the importance of attitudes towards teaching almost 75 years ago. Recently, Stronge (2002, as cited in Casey and Childs, 2007) has shown the attitudes like caring, fairness, respect for students, peers, parents and community, enthusiasm, motivation and dedication to teaching are necessary for pre-service teachers to become successful teachers.

Azeem, Mahmood, Rehman, Afzal, Muhammad and Idrees (2009) construct an attitude scale to measure pre-service teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession in Lahore Pakistan. Result of this research indicate that the selected respondents had negative attitude and were not interested in teaching profession.

Another research is made by Hussain, Jamil, Noor, Sibtain and Shah (2011) on the problem *Relationship between the Professional Attitudes of Secondary School teachers with Their Teaching Behavior in Pakistan*. The mean and standard deviation for the attitudes of teachers were 3.70 and 0.702 while the same statistics for behavior of the teachers were found as 3.90 and 0.712. The correlation between the attitudes of the teachers and the teaching behavior was 0.835 and found significant at 0.05 level of significance, which is a high correlation. This study concluded that the education system of Pakistan needs revolutionary efforts to improve the situation, one of these efforts may include the improvement of teacher education, so there is burning need to change the behavior and attitude of the teachers positively to meet the demand of the day. Attitude of most of the teachers and their teaching behavior were not in the favor of teaching profession that is why researcher suggested to improve teacher education in Pakistan.

Alkhateeb (2013) conducted a study to identify the attitudes of education students towards teaching profession in Qatar. The study was guided by two research questions and quantitative approach was used to analyze the data. A sample of 334 undergraduate students majoring in education was selected out of which 216 (64.7%) of the students indicated their GPAs were 3.00 or higher and 17 (5.1%) reported their GPAs were 2.00 or lower. It was found that 277 (82.9%) of students had positive attitudes, 4 (1.2%) were neutral and 53 (15.7%) had negative attitudes towards the teaching profession. In this study, almost two-third of the students enrolled in teacher education programme were found to have GPAs 3.00 or higher, one-sixth of the students were found to have GPAs 2.00 or below. This result clearly indicates that in Qatar, most of the students having high academic achievement are enrolled in teacher education programme. Again, results show that more than four-fifth of the students had positive attitude while nearly one-sixth of the students had negative attitudes towards teaching profession.

Another study on *Attitude towards teaching profession* was conducted by Andronache, Bocos, Bocos and Macri (2014) in Romania. A sample of 82 students of Masters in Science education was selected out of them 72% of the participants are licensed in educational sciences and 64% of them came from urban areas. A Likert Scale with 5 points containing 34 items was used to identify future potential teachers' attitude towards teaching profession. Statements were based on three components of attitude; cognitive, affective and behavioral. Result was interpreted on the basis of mean attitude scores of all components. Mean scores of components cognitive and affective were indicating favorable attitude while mean score of behavioral components was in favor of unfavorable attitude.

An attitude scale is constructed by Renthleil and Malsawmi (2015) to measure the attitude of school teachers of state of Mizoram (India) towards teaching profession. Altogether 22 statements (10 positive and 12 negative) were included in final scale. Split half reliability and concurrent validity were found .69 and .84 respectively. This study found that out of 453 high school teachers 3.09% teachers have very high attitude towards teaching profession, 17.44% have high, 62.03% have moderate, 13.47% have low and 3.97% have very low attitude towards teaching profession. Result was interpreted as 20.53% teachers have favorable attitude, 62.03% have neutral and 17.44% teacher have unfavorable attitudes towards teaching. If this much percentage of teachers who are either not favorable or neutral towards their profession are involved in teaching then one can easily guess the level of students' achievement and quality of education.

An assessment of prospective teachers' attitude towards teaching profession was done in Northwest University, Kano-Nigeria by Musa and Bichi (2015). The aim of this study was to determine the attitudes of student teachers attending teacher-training programs in the Faculty of Education at Northwest University, Kano towards teaching profession. Result of this study revealed positive attitude towards teaching profession. Respondents agreed that teaching is interesting and a well-respected profession. Mean attitude of the prospective teachers towards the teaching profession and standard deviation were 3.41 (out of total score 5) and 0.869 respectively. Overall, 68.2% respondents were in favor (strongly agree and agree) of teaching profession.

Soibamcha (2016) conducts a study to identify the attitude of teachers towards teaching profession at Imphal West District, Manipur (India). A sample of 150 teachers (75 males and 75 females) from 15 government and 15 private secondary schools was selected by using the simple random sampling technique. Reliability of the scale was 0.88. Chi-square test did not indicate the significant difference in attitude between more qualified and less qualified teachers, and younger teachers and older teachers. However, more qualified teachers and younger teachers have more favorable attitude towards teaching profession.

Positive attitude is very important for students' learning outcomes and hence quality education (Pandey and Sagar, n.d.). Attitude and beliefs drive classroom actions and influence the teacher change process (Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Peck & Tucker, 1973; Richardson, 1974). Without positive attitude, teacher will not be able to succeed in his profession (Soibamcha and Pandey, 2016). Teachers' attitude, emotional reactions and habits affect the students' success and personality (Bloom, 1976; Jeans, 1995; Brooks & Sikes, 1997). Research revealed that 91.2 percent believed that a positive attitude increased students' performance (Ulug, Ozden & Eryilmaz, 2011).

Job satisfaction is the function of the degree to which one's needs can be satisfied (Kuhlen, 1963 and Glimmer, 1966) and taken as a discrepancy between 'how much is there now' and 'how much there should be' (Wanous and Lawer, 1972). Teacher satisfaction is affected by intrinsic factors like students' characteristics and perceptions of teacher control over the classroom environment (Lee, Dedrick and Smith, 1991); extrinsic factors like salary, perceived support from administrators, school safety and availability of school resources (Bobbit, Leich, Whitener and Lynch, 1994) and demographic factors like age, education, marital status and gender (Eichinger, 2000). According to Pii (2003), the factors that significantly related with job satisfaction are compensation, recognition, institutional policies and practices, working conditions, supervision and human relations. It has been identified that absenteeism, irregularity and lack of commitment are all effects of low job satisfaction (Bennell and Akyeampong, 2007 as cited in Nigama, Selvabaskar, Surulivel, Alamelu and Joice, 2018).

Job satisfaction is strongly influenced by the rewards that the individual receives from his or her work (Mosley, Meggins and Pietri, 1993). Job satisfaction gives a subjective feeling of relief and pleasure (Mathis, Nica & Rusu, 1997 as cited in Bota, 2013), consisting of a set of positive attitudes towards the work done (Popescu-Neveanu, 1978) and it is a positive or pleasant emotional state resulting from a person's appreciation of his/her own job (Locke, 1976). Lack of job satisfaction resulted in frequent teacher absenteeism from school, aggressive behavior towards colleagues and learners, early exit from the teaching profession and psychological withdrawal from the work (Mwamwenda, 1995). In the UK, low job satisfaction has been cited as a possible cause of the teacher crises (Crossman and Harris, 2006 as cited in George, Louw and Badenhorst, 2008, p. 140).

Tuettmann (1991) reveals that classroom success, acknowledgement and recognition were considered to be important factors associated with job satisfaction by teachers in Western Australia while Rice and Schneider (1994) concluded that participation in decision making and autonomy were identified as contributing to job satisfaction in

Australia. Similarly, Scott, Cox and Dinham (1999) found that student learning and achievement, professional development, relationship with colleagues and the status and image of teaching were taken as influencing factors of job satisfaction among teachers in the United Kingdom.

Sharma and Jyoti (2006) carry out a study on *Job satisfaction among school teachers* in Jammu city to analyze the various aspects of job satisfaction among government and private school teachers. Analysis of the data revealed that job security and guiding approach by the principal added to the job satisfaction of government secondary school teachers while under estimation of the profession by society and the anti-social elements among the students lead to dissatisfaction. Similarly, private primary school teachers were found satisfied from the students and the physical environment and they got minimum satisfaction from the pay and rewards. Most of the government teachers were found dissatisfied with the promotion policy while most of the private school teachers reported lack of job security.

George, Louw and Bandenhorst (2008) conduct research on teachers' job satisfaction in the Windhoek region of Namibia. Objective of this study were to measure job satisfaction and burnout of secondary school teachers on the basis of seven biographical variables; gender, age, marital status, school area, teaching experience, highest academic qualification and rank. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), mean and standard deviation were used as statistical techniques. Results indicated that the job satisfaction profile of the teachers have significantly high levels of dissatisfaction with the intrinsic factors of their work and a significant correlation was found between the Namibian teachers' levels of burnout and job satisfaction.

Chamundeswari (2013) carries out a study on job satisfaction and performance of school teachers to investigate the relationship and difference in job satisfaction and performance of teachers in state, matriculation and central board schools at the secondary level in India. This study concluded that job satisfaction and performance of teachers were significantly and positively correlated with each other.

Msua (2016) discusses the job satisfaction among teachers in public secondary schools in Tanzania. Objectives of this research were to explore the level of job satisfaction, discover factors contributing to job satisfaction and determine job satisfaction differences by age, sex and working experience among teachers in public secondary schools in Tanzania. Mean, standard deviation, percentage and *t*-test were used as statistical techniques. Data was analyzed through SPSS version 17.0. The study concluded that teachers in public secondary schools in Tanzania generally have higher job satisfaction. The motivators and hygiene factors were confirmed to have great contribution on job satisfaction among teachers in public secondary schools in Tanzania.

Nigama, Selvabaskar, Surulivel, Alamelu and Joice (2018) made a study on job satisfaction among school teachers in Tamil Nadu (India). The objectives of this study were to measure the level of satisfaction of teachers in private and government schools and compare it with respect to school management and gender. The result of this study revealed that the mean score for all factors indicating the level of satisfaction is above average. Result also showed that there is no significant difference in the job satisfaction level of government and private school teachers as well as the male and female teachers at 0.05 level of significance.

Mondal, Shrestha and Bhaila (2011) make a study in school teachers' job stress and job satisfaction in Kaski district of Nepal. Researchers concluded that the school teachers were partly satisfied with responsibility to their work, relationship with students and the work itself. Study also found that female teachers are more satisfied in their job than male teachers.

A study on job satisfaction among teachers in Nepal is made by Thadathil (2015) on 411 teachers of government and private schools of three districts Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Jhapa. This was a comparative study between government and private school teachers on the 15 parameters like enjoy the job, like the head master, fair pay, promotion chance, recognition etc. This study concluded that the general level of job satisfaction among both government and private teachers of Nepal is high.

In past one decade, salary, recognition, promotion, motivation, job security, rewards, working environment and other facilities have been identified as critical factors related to the job satisfaction (Adhikari & Barbhuiya, 2016; Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016; Chipunza & Malo, 2017; Hashim, Khattak & Kee, 2016; Hina, Zamir & Nudrat, 2014; Mathur & Mehta, 2015).

Teacher job satisfaction is an essential component of the quality education and there are close correlations between them (Persevica, 2011). It is also related to teacher emotions (Erarslan, 2021), professional activity of the teacher (Persevica, 2011), teacher retention, well-being of teachers and students, overall school cohesion and enhanced status of the teaching profession (Toropova, Myrberg & Johansson, 2020). But now a days, diminishing prestige and dissatisfying working environment causes teacher turnover (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; TemaNord, 2010 as cited in Toropova, Myrberg & Johansson, 2020).

Review of the literature reveals that researchers have conducted so many studies in the field of attitude of in-service/prospective teachers towards their profession and their level of satisfaction in teaching profession. But researches in the field of attitude and job

satisfaction of teachers in the context of Nepal are rarely found. Hence in the light of related literature review, lack of studies focused in attitude of school teachers and their level of job satisfaction in Nepalese context was identified as research gap and two research questions: what is the attitude of school teachers in Nepal towards teaching profession? and what is the level of job satisfaction of school teachers in teaching profession? were designed to fulfill the objectives of this study.

Result of this study has been interpreted by using the Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs. Maslow (1954) developed a theory of motivation based on the needs hierarchy system involving five categories of motives arranged with lower-level needs to higher-level needs. Hierarchy of needs determine a person's level of aspiration and attitudes determine the individual route (Haimann, 1973). This theory clearly indicates that there are five types of general needs of people from lower to higher level. Firstly, persons want to fulfill their physiological needs then safety needs and social needs respectively. After fulfillment of these needs, they want to fulfill their ego needs, which include achievement, freedom, recognition, appreciation and prestige. Finally, there are self-actualization needs at the top of hierarchy of needs. This theory is directly related to attitude and job satisfaction of teachers in this study.

Methodology

Researcher adopt quantitative design for this study. Normative survey method was used to collect data. A sample of 200 permanent school teachers was selected from three districts Kanchanpur, Kailali and Dadeldhura of Sudurpashchim Province and two districts Kathmandu and Bhaktapur of Bagmati Province by using systematic random sampling.

To measure the attitude of teachers towards teaching profession, researcher had constructed a Likert type attitude scale with 50 statements. This scale was standardized on a sample of 374 school teachers of five districts of Nepal (Kanchanpur, Kailali and Dadeldhura) and India (Chapawat and Udham Singh Nagar) so that this scale can be used in both countries. But this study is based in Nepal only. Standardization process was based on construction of the draft, piloting, scoring, item analysis, construction of the final scale, estimation of the reliability and validity, normality check and factor analysis of the scale. Item analysis was made by using Edwards (1957, p. 153) formula. Reliability coefficients; split half reliability (.868), test-retest reliability (.800) and Cronbach's coefficient alpha (0.845) showed that the scale was highly reliable. Content validity of the scale was established by the judgement of four experts of the subject area and 27 percent upper and lower group method was used to determine the power of discrimination of the statements. Finally, 32 statements were accepted out of which 17 statements were positive and 15 statements were negative in polarity.

Following z-score norms and interpretation criteria were developed to interpret the result obtained by attitude scale:

Table 1

Z-score Norms and Interpretation Criteria for Attitude

Range of z-scores	Interpretation
+2.16 and above	Extremely favorable
+1.39 to below +2.16	Highly favorable
+0.62 to below +1.39	Favorable
-0.15 to below +0.62	Neutral
-0.92 to below -0.15	Unfavorable
-1.69 to below -0.92	Highly unfavorable
Below -1.69	Extremely unfavorable

To measure teachers' level of job satisfaction, a standardized *Job Satisfaction Scale (JSST-DM)* was used. This scale was developed by Dr. Meera Dixit, Department of Education, National College Lucknow, U.P., India and published by National Psychological Corporation, Agra, India. 52 items in the form of eight factors were included in this scale. Split-half and test-retest coefficients of reliability of this scale were .92 and .86 respectively. Researcher had developed the fresh z-score norms and interpretation criteria for job satisfaction scale as below:

Table 2

Norms for Interpretation of Level of Job Satisfaction

Sr. No.	Range of z-scores	Grade	Level of job satisfaction
1.	+1.77 and above	A	Extremely high satisfaction
2.	+1.08 and below +1.77	B	High satisfaction
3.	+0.39 and below +1.08	C	Above average satisfaction
4.	-0.30 to below +0.39	D	Average/Moderate satisfaction
5.	-0.99 to below -0.30	E	Below average satisfaction
6.	-1.68 to below -0.99	F	Dissatisfaction
7.	Below -1.68	G	Extremely dissatisfaction

Results and Discussion

Attitude of Teachers towards Teaching Profession

After collection of filled attitude scales, the researcher scored all the response sheets

carefully, converted raw scores in to z-scores on the basis of mean (99.302) and SD (15.984) obtained in standardization process. Number and percentage of students lying on various level of attitude are presented in the table 3. From table 3, negligible (0.50%) government school teachers are extremely favorable to their profession. Most of the teachers are either neutral (33.50%) or unfavorable (33.50%) to teaching profession. Ten percent teachers are highly unfavorable and 2.50 percent teachers are extremely unfavorable to teaching profession. Only 20.50% teachers are favorable/highly favorable towards teaching profession while 79.50% teachers are either neutral or not favorable to their profession.

Table 3

Attitude Levels of School teachers towards Teaching Profession in Nepal

Respondents						Interpretation
Male		Female		Total		
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
0	0.00	1	1.28	1	0.50	Extremely favorable
4	3.28	4	5.13	8	4.00	Highly favorable
11	9.02	21	26.92	32	16.00	Favorable
42	34.43	25	32.05	67	33.50	Neutral
46	37.70	21	26.92	67	33.50	Unfavorable
16	13.11	4	5.13	20	10.00	Highly unfavorable
3	2.46	2	2.56	5	2.50	Extremely unfavorable
122	100	78	100	200	100	Total

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Four-fifth of school teachers do not have positive attitude towards teaching profession. More female teachers (33.33%) have positive attitude towards teaching profession than male teachers (12.30%). Percentage of male teachers having neutral attitude is slightly higher than that of female teachers, but percentage of male teachers who are unfavorable and highly unfavorable is very higher than that of female teachers.

Job Satisfaction Level of School Teachers

Researcher scored all the collected scales carefully and obtained the raw scores. Raw scores were converted into z-scores by using the mean 172.25 and SD 17.38 provided in manual for *Job Satisfaction Scale JSST-DM*. Number and percentage of teachers under various categories are presented in the table 4.

Table 4*Job Satisfaction Levels of School teachers in Nepal*

Respondents		Female		Total		Interpretation
Male		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
9	12.50	0	0.00	9	9.00	Extremely satisfied
9	12.50	1	3.57	10	10.00	Highly satisfied
13	18.06	5	17.86	18	18.00	Above average satisfied
11	15.28	12	42.86	23	23.00	Average satisfied
12	16.66	3	10.71	15	15.00	Below average dissatisfied
8	11.11	4	14.29	12	12.00	Highly dissatisfied
10	13.89	3	10.71	13	13.00	Extremely dissatisfied
72	100	28	100	100	100	Total

Source: Field Survey, 2020

In Sudurpashchim Province, percentage of extremely dissatisfied teachers (13%) is higher than extremely satisfied teachers (9%). Out of seven categories, most of the teachers are average satisfied (23%), while 37% school teachers in Nepal are satisfied on their job to some extent and 40% teachers were found not satisfied. Job satisfaction level of almost two-third of the teachers (63%) were found either average satisfied or below this level. Percentage of extremely satisfied male teachers is 12.50%, but no extremely satisfied female teacher was found. Similarly, percentage of highly satisfied male teachers was found significantly higher than percentage of highly satisfied female teachers. Most of the female teachers (42.86%) are average satisfied while this percent for male teachers is 15.28%. Aggregate percentage of dissatisfied male teachers (41.66%) is higher than the percentage of female teachers (35.71%).

Job satisfaction, motivation and reward systems are considered as the parts of organizational theory. Out of these, motivation is taken as the most effective as it overlaps in to both job satisfaction and rewards system (Pardee, 1990, p. 3). Motivation is an important factor required to improve work productivity that is why educational administrators need to have a firm understanding of how it relates to job satisfaction and reward system (Pardee, 1990, p. 5). According to Yorks (1976, p. 21), motivation can be defined as “Those forces within an individual that push or propel him to satisfy basic needs or wants”.

Results show that attitude of school teachers towards teaching profession and their level of job satisfaction are not satisfactory. Teachers should be the best minds of the country (Radhakrishnan as cited in Pandey & Sagar, n. d.) but if teachers are not satisfied in their job and lack positive attitude towards their profession, they could not do well in teaching.

The teaching profession is neglected by society because of the less monetary benefits and lack of timely promotion (Pandey & Sagar, n. d.). Same situation is facing Nepali school teachers. Salary and other facilities are not sufficient to fulfill the emerging needs of teachers. Maslow's theory of motivation suggests that hierarchy of needs determines an individual's level of aspiration and attitude determines the course of their life (Haimann, 1973). This study shows that the school teachers of Nepal are unable to move towards higher level of needs as their lower-level needs are not fulfilled. Due to low level of job satisfaction, teachers are not properly motivated and they lack positive attitude towards teaching profession.

Conclusion

Results of this study reveal that only one-fifth of the school teachers have positive attitude towards teaching profession. Similarly, slightly above one-third of the school teachers were found to have **above average satisfaction** in their job. Huge proportion of the school teachers is not satisfied in their job and they do not have positive attitude towards teaching profession. Low job satisfaction and negative attitude of teachers have very serious impact on teaching profession i.e., students' achievement and quality of education. Review of related literature has showed that there are so many factors like salary, promotion opportunities, rewards, relation with students, working environment, support of administration, social prestige and other facilities are responsible for job satisfaction of teachers. Concerned authority and stakeholders should be aware of the low level of job satisfaction of school teachers and their negative attitude towards teaching profession. Authority needs to identify the proper causes or factors that are responsible for low level of job satisfaction and negative attitude towards teaching profession and revisit the policies, acts, rules and regulations regarding various aspects of teaching profession.

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