

A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SELF-TALK AND JOB
SATISFACTION OF A GROUP OF A.C.T.
PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

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ABSTRACT

Research shows us that the intrinsic aspects of the work of teachers, such as facilitating student learning, have the greatest impact upon job satisfaction levels (Dinham & Scott 1997, 1998). These intrinsic aspects are dependent on what is happening externally for the teacher, for example, successful lesson delivery, positive interaction with students and rewarding relationships with colleagues. Little work has explored internal variables within individual teachers, such as self-talk, and their relationship to job satisfaction level. This thesis reports on research from 78 teachers working for the ACT Department of Education. Teachers collected individual examples of positive and negative self-talk over a two week period. They were also surveyed to determine job satisfaction level.

A ratio of positive to negative self-talk was determined using the States of Mind model (Schwartz & Garamoni 1986, 1989). Results showed that teachers at higher levels of job satisfaction used greater amounts of positive self-talk during their work day. The ratio of positive to negative self-talk was significantly related to job satisfaction for teachers at the extremes of job satisfaction level, either highly dissatisfied or highly satisfied.

This study confirms the external factors that influence teacher job satisfaction, along with providing insights into the self-talk of teachers at different levels of job satisfaction. Implications from the results relate to teacher recruitment and retention issues and address a gap in the literature about teacher job satisfaction.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACT – Australian Capital Territory

CBT – Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

MCEETYA – Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs

RET – Rational Emotive Therapy

SOM – State of Mind

SOMCAT4 – State of Mind when organised into 4 categories

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