

## Exploring the linkage between employees' Apathy and their Performance: A study of Punjab University's teachers

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### Abstract

Apathy towards work among employees is considered to be one of the major causes of their low performance. Current study has measured the relationship and the linkage between the apathy level prevalent amongst Punjab University teachers and its impact on their (teachers') performance. The heads including senior faculty members of all the teaching departments of Punjab University were selected as population for this research. Results obtained through Cross Tabulations, Multiple Regression, Chi-Square and Correlations on the data of 74 respondents depicted that majority of respondents had medium level of apathy with medium level of performance and concludes that apathy does affect their performance negatively.

Along with the analysis of total 74 respondents that participated in this study, a separate analysis for gender and age were also conducted. Research hypothesis of the existence of negative relationship between apathy level and performance of teachers got supported in all of the analyses that were being conducted on the data.

Possible reasons of the negative effects of apathy on the performance of teachers were also given. In younger group of teachers between 41-48 years old, almost equal number of respondent were low, medium and high apathetic with maximum percentage of them showing medium performance. In the category of 49-56 years old respondents, maximum percentage of teachers were high apathetic with majority showing low performance and in the seniors most age category i.e. 57-65 years of age, maximum percentage of them were found medium apathetic with all the three kinds of performances i.e. low, medium and high in the same ratio. Female teachers were less apathetic with better performance in comparison with their male counterparts who were found more apathetic with lower performance.

It was proved from the analysis of satisfaction with compensation that majority of the teachers were not satisfied with their pay. All of the females who participated were found less satisfied with their salary.

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*The analysis of total 74 respondents concluded that the teachers of Punjab University tend to be very normal by showing medium apathy and medium performance on the whole.*

*The study ended up by giving limitations of the current research and recommendations for the future research.*

## **1. Introduction**

Organizations today are continuously facing challenges such as globalisation, information technology explosion, diversity, mergers etc. as a result of which apathy among employees is seen as part of organizational life. In the above mentioned situations employees face disruptive routines, higher level of expectations, familiar leadership changes, crucial system breakdowns and failures. They often face unrealistic demands from their bosses causing a lot of undue pressure on nerves. Such painful emotions take the form of apathy when employees feel stripped of their confidence, hope or self-esteem due to the disregard or in other way the disrespect they get from the messages of their supervisors, bosses, senior managers etc.

At times the situation gets bitter by the inconsiderateness or lack of interest workers feel in others' response to their efforts. Employees conclude that their point of view or their feelings do not matter and their contributions do not or would not make a difference at their workplace. They show tendency to detach themselves from their work and its demands and start focusing, even to obsess, on the apathy they experience and its apparent sources. Employees, in such situations are either not able to or on the other hand, themselves, chose by their own will, not to put their emotional and intellectual abilities and energy into work activities and issues. They rather withdraw their dedication, commitment and loyalty to their organization and resultantly, every body losses out.

Apathy is toxic. It drains vivacity from individuals and from the whole organization. Until and unless it is recognized and tackled in healthy and productive ways, it is a severe and often overlooked cause of organizational dysfunction and poor performance (Frost, 2004; Baron 1986; Allyn & Bacon, 1986).

Economic hardships and unrealistic changes in today's environment are disrupting organizational dynamics, causing increase in apathy among employees at work place, declines in loyalty and mistrust of management in far too many work settings (Gardner & Schermerhorn, 2004).

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The construct of burnout is very closely related with apathy. Apathy does have some common dimensions with burnout (e.g. emotional exhaustion) but still apathy is broader construct as compared to burnout as it includes many other concepts and constructs in self (e.g. alienation, stress, anxiety etc). Maslach and Jackson defined burnout as a 'syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do "people work" of some kind (Maslach & Jackson, 1986, p. 1). (By people work it could be law enforcing organization, professions like nursing, teaching etc). Burnout is a pattern of responses to stressors at work (Shirom, 1989).

"Powerlessness", "normlessness", "self estrangement" and "meaninglessness" are few of the many constructs linked with the concept of alienation and to the broader construct of apathy. *Alienation* is sub construct that comes under the construct of apathy. It is one of the many important factors that create apathy in someone (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Mackey & Appleman, 1984). Alienation is disengagement by someone in something and due to this disengagement, one shows indifferent attitude and behaviour towards that matter for which he/she is showing alienation (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Mackey & Appleman, 1984). Apathy on the other hand is a broader construct that contains in itself, many smaller constructs and concepts that are related with creating frustration, indifferent and detached attitude towards matters, disengagement in matters, hopelessness, feeling of being emotionally exhausted by one's work, helplessness, stress, anxiety, alienation, low level of energy, anti optimistic approach towards matters and many other negative aspects that ultimately make a person apathetic.

From the above discussion, it is concluded that apathy is the lack of emotion, lack of motivation and commitment, insensitivity, helplessness, hopelessness, frustration, alienation and burnout. It produces indifferent and impassive behaviour, detached attitude towards work and people, lack of interest in routine activities, insensitivity and insensibility to suffering and feeling of passionless existence. It also develops a feeling of lack of confidence and demonstration of aggressive behaviour. While apathy may be about a person, activity, or object it is mainly used to describe indifferent behaviour. In psychological context it is more like the opposite of motivation, the lack of will to go on and the inability to care about the consequences.

Talking of the population of the study, a motivated teacher is one who devotes substantial energy to his/her work, spends considerable time on campus, enthusiastically participates in work place activities and interacts frequently with faculty members, students and other teachers. Conversely, a typical apa-

thetic teacher shows indifferent behaviour towards his/her work mostly neglects his/her work responsibilities, tries spending little time on campus, abstains from different work related activities, and has infrequent contact with faculty members, students or other teachers.

Teachers' involvement in work is an important factor that contributes towards positive or negative performance. Performance refers to actions that drive the achievement of key results. A "high performer" is an individual (or work group) that performs the actions necessary to drive key results (Kerns, 2008). Campbell described performance as *all behaviours in work*. He pointed out that these behaviours make contribution to organisational goals. He divided Performance of employees into efficiency, production and effectiveness. Efficiency can evaluate the outcome of an employee's work behaviours. Production is usually used to determine the cost of efficiency. Effectiveness stands for the value of efficiency and production. (Campbell, 1990)

On the one hand teacher's involvement (more or less) in work contributes towards the positive or negative performance and on the other hand, at the same time, it gets affected itself by apathy.

Some teachers show high involvement in work and others show less involvement. Apathy is a major factor that leads to low involvement of teachers towards their work. It is not so much what the individual thinks or feels, but what the individual does and how he or she behaves that defines and identifies involvement. Involvement basically is the inculcation of "physical" and "psychological" energy in a variety of items, objects or matters. Regardless of its entity, involvement in any object takes place along a continuum i.e. in the same object, different levels of involvement is being shown by different teachers while in different objects, the same teachers will show different levels of involvement at different times.

Teacher's involvement in work affects his/her performance and the important factor that affects involvement is apathy. Therefore apathy among teachers is likely to affect their performance negatively.

## 2. Review of Literature

Apathy has become a major buzz word and legitimate concern of the time today (Luthans, 2001). When employees are responsible for many tasks at work but have no authority, they are unable to voice complaints, there is inadequate recognition of their work, there is lack of clear job descriptions and reporting relationships, these things inculcates apathy among employees (Dutton, 1998).

The problems due to apathy can be exhibited physically, psychologically or behaviourally by the individuals experiencing apathy. The performance of many tasks suffers and is strongly affected due to the apathetic behaviour at work. Performance usually drops off sharply when a person feels apathetic (Baron, 1986; Allyn & Bacon, 1986).

A field study conducted by Blau to find the impact of apathy on employees' work place performance found that effort level and direction of efforts are important in explaining individual workers' performance in an organization. If employees are apathetic they would not put desired effort towards their job requirements (Blau, 1993).

A review of the literature suggests that personality of a person also matters in placing him/her high or low on apathy which in turn affects his/her performance on the job. A person's self-efficacy refers to one's confidence in his or her ability to mobilize the self motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action necessary to successfully execute a specific course of action within a given context and persons self efficacy is closely linked with apathy (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). In a Meta Analysis of 114 studies, it was found that self efficacy was more strongly linked to work performance than to other well known organizational behaviour constructs such as job satisfaction, goal setting, conscientiousness, feed back etc. Confident employees have also been shown to pursue and attain more challenging goals, exhibit higher levels of sustained effort, persevere when faced with task related obstacles, engage in positive thought patterns (e.g., positive self-talk) and display greater resistance to stress (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

Those with low self-efficacy tend to experience apathy because they expect failure, whereas those with high self-efficacy enter into potential apathetic situations with confidence and assurance and thus are able to resist apathetic reactions. High self-efficacy is strongly related and very highly predictive of high performance (Bandura, 2000).

Apathy is not restricted just to things that happen inside the organization during the work hours. Many other phenomenon occurring out side the organizations produce apathy that employees ultimately carry to their work place and that affect their work place performance. Such phenomenon include societal and or technological changes, globalisation, family issues, relocation, economic and financial conditions, poor job market conditions, race and class discrimination, minority status, residential and community conditions etc. (Price, 1997; Atkinson, 1999; Carlson & Perrewe2, 1999; Luthans, 2001; Sanchez, Spector & Cooper, 2000; Wall Street Journal, 1986).

There are also the psychological factors like mergers and takeovers that lead to apathy and poor performance. The process of takeover and mergers impacts the work culture as a result of which the work profiles change. Research studies also indicate that during the process of mergers employees face stress, anxiety and apathy that badly affect the performance of the workers. Successful takeovers are those during which special efforts are made to address the issues relating to employees' anxiety, apprehensions and fears to ensure the retention of the best people from both the organizations (Ningthoujam, 2007).

People in any organization manifest themselves not only through individual actions but also through group interactions. When individuals come to the workplace, they come with not only technical skills, soft skills and knowledge but also with their personal feelings, perceptions, desires, motives, attitudes and values. Therefore, employee management in an organization means management of not only technical skills but also other factors of human resources. Sometimes management fails to do their job affectively, fails to cater to these very important HR issues that are related with employees' personal feelings, perceptions, desires, motives, attitudes and values and due to this mistake on the part of management, employees start having attitudinal changes in them. Attitudinal changes lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction amongst employees. Negative attitudes start inculcating apathy amongst employees which can affect the effectiveness of an organization to a considerable extent (Jegadeesan, 2007).

Attitudes have a great say in bringing the best of performance and increasing productivity levels in any organization. It is widely proven in management theory about the impact of attitude building in eliciting quality output from the employees in an organization. Negative attitudes produce apathy in employees and positive attitudes increase confidence in them. Both positive and negative attitudes influence performance of workers that ultimately impacts the productivity of workers and ultimately of organizations (Lakshmi, 2007).

Charismatic leaders have this property in them that they can easily make people agree to their own point of view. They effectively use this trait and mostly can easily seduce the people who follow them. They easily make their followers strive for very high achievements at their work place. At the end what happens with their followers is by working extensively hard, they don't or are unable to create a balance between their personal and work life. The views of such leaders completely dominate the views of their followers BUT when such leaders stumble, fails or leave the organization, their followers who

are now left alone mostly burn out. They feel regretful of their over commitment to someone else's vision. This phenomenon mostly creates apathy among them that leads to low performance (Frost, 2004).

Apathy and hope are two entirely opposite constructs. When a person is apathetic, he/she shows extreme levels of hopelessness and when a person is hopeful, he/she is always un-apatetic. Luthans believe that core positive organizational behaviours (POB) states such as "confidence", "hope", "optimism" and "resilience" are keys to high performance and all these 4 states of POB are entirely opposite to the concept of apathy (Luthans, 2002). He notes that persons with high hopes are apt to be more certain about and challenged by their goals, more likely to value goal progress and goal attainment, more adaptable to change, more adept at forming new and co-operative relationships and more emotionally stable in stressful and evaluative situations. The work units of more hopeful managers have higher profits, more satisfied employees and lower turnover (Luthans, 2003).

Hope is a belief that one can set goals, decide how to reach them, and motivate oneself to attain them. Hope involves two components: agency (the will), which involves one's sense of goal directed determination; and pathways (the ways) that refer to a sense of being able to produce successful plans for reaching one's goals. Hope always creates positive effects on academic achievement and performance as well as on mental and physical health (Snyder, 2000).

At the organizational level, performance should improve as employees avoid levels of apathy because it negatively affects their performance. For individual employee, apathy reduction enhances the quality of life. Indeed, by acting to mitigate apathy, top-level managers position employees and their firms in ways that increase the likelihood that desired outcomes, both at the individual and organizational levels, will be achieved (Upson; Ketchen Jr & Ireland, 2007).

### **3. Methodology**

In order to develop the framework for the research, psychological constructs such as attribution theory, self efficacy and Locus of Control had been utilized.

Attribution refers simply to how people explain the cause of another's or their own behaviour. It is the cognitive process by which people draw conclusions about the factors that influence, or make sense of, one another's behaviour (McCabe & Dutton, 1993). Both internal forces (personal attributes such as effort, ability and fatigue) and external forces (environmental attributes such as rules and the weather) unite additively to find out one's behaviour. It is the

*perceived*, not the actual, determinants that are important to behaviour. People will behave differently if they perceive internal attributes than they will, if they perceive external attributes (Luthans, 2001). Attribution theory has been shown to have relevance in explaining employee performance (Mitchell & Wood, 1980, Lepine & Dyne, 2001).

Using locus of control (Luthans, 2001), work behaviour could be explained by whether individuals perceive or sense their outcomes as controlled internally or externally. Individuals, who perceive internal control, feel that they personally can influence their outcomes through their own ability, effort or skills. Individuals, who perceive external control, feel that their outcomes are beyond or are afar from their own control; they feel that external forces e.g. luck or task difficulty control their outcomes. What is important is that this perceived locus of control may have a differential impact on their performance and satisfaction.

Self efficacy (how effective people believe they themselves are) will affect the attributions people make. If individuals have high self efficacy, they will tend to make positive internal attribution about their successes and attribute setbacks as situational, or as a fluke, or to think that probably they needed a new approach. By the same token, attributions also affect a person's self efficacy. If people make internal attributions for their successful performance, this will enhance and strengthen their self efficacy beliefs (Luthans, 2001).

From the preceding discussion it can be inferred that when teachers follow the internal locus of control, this enhances their self efficacy (they believe in their abilities), and show confidence in themselves regarding their work, they put effort towards their work, set goals for themselves and ultimately strive to achieve those goals. There is more of self confidence related to their work and they are more enthusiastic and more concerned towards achieving those goals which they have set for themselves regarding their work. Enthusiasm, effort, confidence in oneself are all opposite to the concept of apathy which means they are low on apathy and at the same time are showing effort and concern for their work, resultantly their performance will be better. The whole discussion helped to develop the following propositions for the study:

***Proposition 1: High effort and concern for work among teachers leads to better performance.***

On the other hand when the locus of control as perceived by the teachers is external, then they attribute their failure to external factors which are not

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under their control, say that whatever bad has happened to them (teachers are being considered from the perspective of their work), it is not due to something which they can control themselves, rather some forces beyond their control are responsible for their failure regarding work. In this scenario they show less self efficacy (they don't believe in their abilities) and when teachers have low self efficacy then they do not show confidence in their abilities related to their work and lack of confidence towards their work leads to less effort, less concern for work activities, lack of interest towards work, withdrawn behaviour towards work and ultimately due to this lack of confidence, effort, interest and concern, their performance will be affected negatively.

**Proposition 2: Less effort (which is the result of lack of interest and concern towards work) among teachers leads to low performance.**

It may be inferred that if a teacher is showing a feeling of lack of confidence towards his/her work, lack of interest for his/her work, withdrawn behaviour towards work, indifferent and impassive behaviour towards his/her work, these behaviours affect his/her performance negatively.

Feeling of lack of confidence towards work, lack of interest for work, withdrawn behaviour towards work, indifferent and impassive behaviour towards work etc, is termed as apathy towards work.

**Proposition 3: Apathy will negatively affect the performance of teachers. When apathy will be high it will affect the performance more intensely and vice versa.**

Hence research hypothesis has been derived from the previous discussion which states:

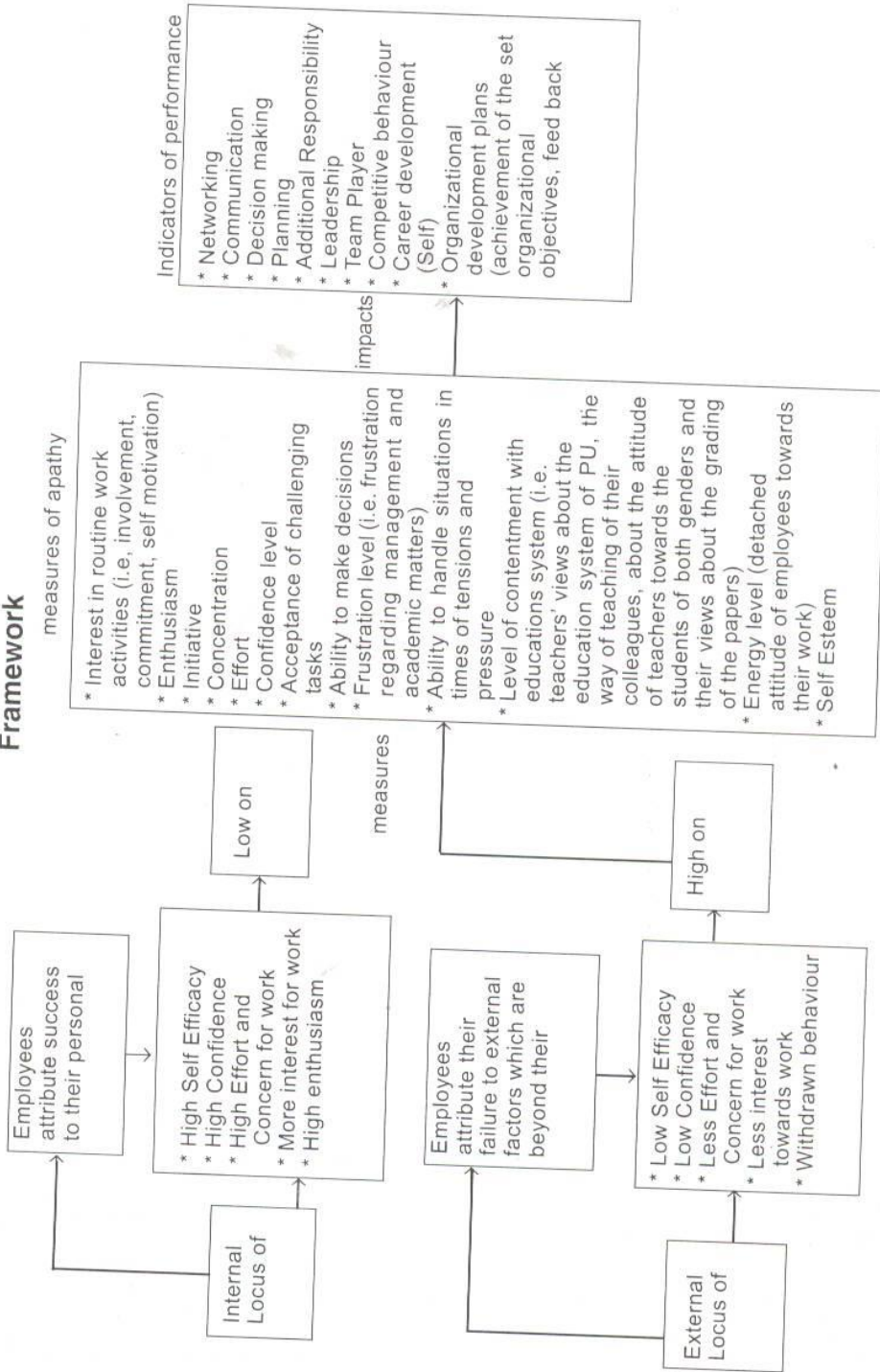
**"Higher the level of Apathy towards work among teachers, lower will be their Performance"**

Work refers to the teaching as well as administrative activities of teachers.

#### **4. Data**

Self administered questionnaire was used to collect the data. Interviews were also conducted to get data as well as to cross check the validity of numeric data collected via questionnaires. Population of the study included heads of various departments, deans of various faculties, principals, directors, chairpersons of different colleges, institutes and centres and senior faculty members of the

**Framework**



teaching departments of the Punjab University. Population consisted of 181 teachers.

The sampling technique was convenient sampling. Response rate for this study was 74 teachers which is approximately 41% of the population. Questionnaires were distributed to more than 140 teachers from which 78 were returned and 4 were discarded due to incompleteness and finally 74 were used. The ages of the respondents showed the range of 41-65 so three equal groups of ages was developed. First one was from 41 to 48 years inclusive, second one was from 49 to 56 years inclusive and the third one was from 57 to 65 years inclusive. All the questions included in the questionnaire were rated using a 5 point Likert Scale as follows.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

The scores were allotted to each question of the questionnaire. After allotting the scores to each question one summated score for independent variable and the other summated score for the dependent variable was obtained for every respondent by adding up all the scores of the questions of independent and the dependent variables for that particular respondent and this procedure was repeated for all the respondents. These two new variables i.e summated scores for 74 total respondents for apathy and performance were used throughout in the data analysis of the study.

For independent variable (level of apathy) minimum actual score was 68 and maximum actual score was 117. For dependent variable (performance level) minimum actual score was 72 and maximum actual score was 110. For both variables, low category started from the actual minimum summated score and the high category ended at the actual maximum summated score. The middle category was developed by adding and subtracting 0.43 Standard Deviation in the Mean. The reason behind using 0.43 Standard Deviation was that, the data, when analysed and summated scores were calculated, showed normal curve. Therefore, in order to divide the actual summated scores in three equal categories, 33.33% of the data must have to be allocated to each category. In the area table, at  $Z=0.43$ , the area is 0.1664 and as this area has to be taken on both sides of the mean, so it has to be double of 0.1664. i.e.  $0.1664+0.1664=0.3328$  which is approximately 33.33%. This process created the middle category that contains 33% of the total data and the remaining categories i.e. low and high categories will automatically

contain 33.33% of the data each. So the actual minimum summated score till 1 less than the lower bound of medium category was for low category and 1 more than the upper bound of medium category till actual maximum summated score was the high category and this was done in the same way for both the variables.

## 5. Results

Cross Tabulations, Multiple Regression, Chi-Square and Correlations were used for the analysis of data.

The data was categorized in three equal categories according to the method described in data section. Frequencies were determined on these two categorical variables for the whole data of 74 respondents. This generated two separate tables. Table 1 exhibits the frequencies and percentages of the teachers who were high, medium and low apathetic and table 2 reflects the frequencies and percentages of the respondents demonstrating high, medium and low performance

Table 1: Frequency Table

Level of Apathy

	Frequency	Percent
Low	22	29.7
Medium	27	36.5
High	25	33.8
Total	74	100

Table 2: Frequency Table

Level of Performance

	Frequency	Percent
Low	26	35.1
Medium	28	37.8
High	20	27.0
Total	74	100

Table 3: Apathy and Performance Cross Tabulation

Level of Performance	Level of Apathy							
	Low		Medium		High		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
High	12	54.5	6	22.2	2	8	20	27
Medium	6	27.3	16	59.3	6	24	28	37.8
Low	4	18.2	5	18.5	17	68	26	35.1
Total	22	100	27	100	25	100	74	100

After determining these frequencies, cross tabulation was run between the level of apathy and performance.

Table 1 shows that out of total 74 respondents, maximum percentage of respondents are medium apathetic which is 36.5 % of 74, 33.8% out of 74 total respondents are high apathetic and lowest ratio amongst the three categories is of low apathetic teachers which is 29.7% out of 74. Similarly regarding performance table 2 tells that the lowest percentage of respondents shows high performance i.e. 27%. Then comes the low performance that gives the figure of 35.1% of respondents and again the maximum percentage of respondents show medium performance showing 37.8% of cases out of total 74.

From table 3, out of total 33.8% of highly apathetic respondents out of total 74 respondents, 68% of them show low performance (this category contains the highest number of respondents). Similarly out of 36.5% medium apathetic respondents out of total 74 respondents, 59.3% amongst them show medium performance (category containing second highest number of respondents). The category containing third highest number of respondents out of total 74 respondents is of low apathy with showing high Performance. Out of 29.7% of respondents who are low apathetic from total 74 respondents, 54.5% of them show high performance.

In order to get the hypothesis statistically substantiated, Chi-Square was also run on the data. The value of Chi-Square came out to be 26.539 at 4 degrees of freedom.

The tabulated value of Chi-Square at 4 degrees of freedom with 95% confidence interval is 11.14. As the calculated value is larger than the tabulated value, so the research hypothesis of the study has been supported mean-

ing that “when the apathy towards work (teaching as well as administrative activities) among teachers will be high, their performance will be low”. Chi-Square is also significant i.e. 0.000.

### Regression Analysis

Multiple Regression via enter method was also run on the total data of 74 respondents. Regarding the regression analysis, instead of summated scores, the mean summated score for every respondent was used for both the variables. The first model used age and gender of the respondents as independent variable with performance as dependent variable while second model used age, gender and apathy as independent variable with performance as the dependent variable. Regression model 1 (age and gender) only explains 10.5 % (R square is 0.105) of the variation in the dependent variable (performance) while regression model 2 (age, gender, apathy) explains 21.9% of the variation in the performance of the teachers. Model 2 shows that age, gender and apathy altogether explains only 21.9% of the variation in the performance which shows that there could be many more factors apart from these three (age, gender and apathy) that could be contributing positively or negatively towards the performance of the respondents.

In order to see the affect of another factor apart from age, gender and apathy on the performance, an interaction term of apathy and gender was created. This was done by multiplying apathy and gender. Again multiple regression was run and three models were generated at the same time. Model 1 used age as an independent variable, model 2 used age, apathy and gender as independents and model 3 used age, apathy, gender and apathy×gender (interaction term) as independent variables with performance as the dependent variable in all the three models. Models with model summary is presented in the table 4 and 5.

Table 4: Models

Variables Entered/Removed<sup>b</sup>

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Age <sup>a</sup>	—	Enter
2	Apathy, Gender <sup>a</sup>	—	Enter
3	Apathy×Gender <sup>a</sup>	—	Enter

<sup>a</sup> All requested variables entered

<sup>b</sup> Dependent Variable: Performance

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the estimate	R Square change	Change Statistics F	df1	df2	Sig. F change
1	0.074 <sup>a</sup>	0.006	-0.008	0.3524	0.006	0.401	1	72	0.528
2	0.468 <sup>b</sup>	0.219	0.186	0.3167	0.213	9.567	2	70	0.000
3	0.521 <sup>c</sup>	0.271	0.229	0.3081	0.052	4.952	1	69	0.029

<sup>a</sup> Predictors: (Constant), age

<sup>b</sup> Predictors: (Constant), age, apathy, gender

<sup>c</sup> Predictors: (Constant), age, apathy, gender, apathyxgender

From table 5, third model explains 27.1% of the variation in the dependent variable. In the model 2, interaction term of apathyxgender was added and third model was obtained. By adding the interaction term the R square change came out to be 5.2%. This means that gender does explain some sort of variation in the performance when gets combined with apathy.

Further in order to see that which of the two genders was creating more affect on the performance, regression was run separately on both of the genders.

Regarding regression for total 16 females who participated in the study, first model used only age as independent while performance as the dependent variable while second model used age and apathy as independent while performance of the female teachers as the dependent variable. For both the models, R square change remained the same i.e. 0.007. No change in the R square means that females are not very much responsible for the variation in the performance.

Regression on males was run on the same pattern as was done for females i.e. age as independent and performance as dependent for 1<sup>st</sup> model while age & apathy as independent with performance as dependent for the second model. R square change for males data came out to be 21.9%. In females there was no change in the R square change while for males R square change did show change which shows that males create impact on the performance while females did not, in the study.

In order to show the direction and strength of relationship between the independent and dependent variable, correlations were also run on the data.

The value of Pearson's  $r$  came out to be  $-0.367$ . Negative sign indicates that there is negative relationship between the two variables. The value of correlation shows that the relationship between both of the variables is towards weaker side. Correlation was also significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) i.e 0.001

In order to see the relation ship between gender, apathy and performance, cross tabulation was run between gender and apathy and also between gender and performance for the total 74 respondents. Results of cross tabulation of gender, apathy and performance are presented in tables 6 & 7.

Table 6: Gender and Apathy Cross Tabulation

Level of Apathy	Gender					
	Female		Male		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Low	6	37.5	16	27.6	22	29.7
Medium	5	31.3	22	37.9	27	36.5
High	5	31.3	20	34.5	25	33.8
Total	16	100	58	100	74	100

Table 7: Gender and Performance Cross Tabulation

Level of Performance	Gender					
	Female		Male		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Low	2	12.5	24	41.4	26	35.1
Medium	6	37.5	22	37.9	28	37.8
High	8	50	12	20.7	20	27
Total	16	100	58	100	74	100

From table 6, it becomes clear that out of 16 female teachers, 37.5% are low apathetic while 31.3% are medium and again 31.3% are high apathetic. Amongst male teachers, then 37.9% are medium apathetic, 34.5% are high apathetic while low apathetic are 27.6% out of 58 male respondents. This shows that although maximum percentage of males are medium apathetic but they



are more prone to getting high apathetic as the difference between being medium and high apathetic is very less.

Regarding performance (from table 7) then out of only 16 females, half of them i.e. 50% show high performance, 37.5% show medium and only 12.5% of them have low performance. For males, than maximum percentage shows low performance i.e 41.4% out of 58 while 37.9% of the cases have medium performance and only 20.7% of the respondents have high performance. Table 7 presents very interesting results showing that despite a small number of females (only 16) participating in the study half of them i.e. 50% show high performance while from males data (58 males) only 20.7% shows high performance. The findings point to the significant gender differences in terms of performance that may have implications for organizations in terms of future hiring. From the participating females only 12.5% show low performance while from males 41.4% show low performance and females overall are also proved less apathetic (37.5% females are low apathetic while 27.6% of men are low apathetic) as compared to their male counterparts working with them in the same institute.

The age range of the respondents came out to be from 41-65 years which was divided in three equal groups. First group included respondents from 41-48 years (both years inclusive), second age group was from 49-56 inclusive and the third age group was from 57-65 inclusive. After analysis, from the 74 total respondents the first category (41-48) contained 30% of the respondents, second (49-56) contained 50% and the third category (57-65) contained 20% respondents. Cross tabulation was made for age group and apathy level and also between age group and performance for the total 74 respondents. Results for the cross tabulation are presented in tables 8 and 9.

**Table 8: Age Group and Apathy Cross Tabulation**

Level of Apathy	Age Group						Total	
	41-48 years		49-56 years		57-65 years		F	%
	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Low	7	31.8	11	29.7	4	26.7	22	29.7
Medium	8	36.4	11	29.7	8	53.3	27	36.5
High	7	31.8	15	40.5	3	20	25	33.8
Total %	22	100	37	100	15	100	74	100

Table 9: Age Group and Performance Cross Tabulation

Level of Performance	Age Group						Total	
	41-48 years		49-56 years		57-65 years			
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Low	4	18.2	17	45.9	5	33.3	26	35.1
Medium	11	50	12	32.4	5	33.3	28	37.8
High	7	31.8	8	21.6	5	33.3	20	27
Total %	22	100	37	100	15	100	74	100

Analysing to determine the impact of age on apathy level of teachers, from table 8, it can be inferred that in the category of 41-48 years which is the youngest of the available teachers, almost an equal number of respondent are low, medium and high apathetic. But in the category of 49-56 years of respondents, low and medium apathetic teachers are in same number while high apathetic are bit more than low and medium apathetic. i.e. 40.5% from this age cadre but it can also be said that as this category contains the majority of cases i.e. 50% of the cases out of 74, there was a possibility that if this category also had the same ratio of respondents as the other 2 categories of age then it might have given different results. Considering the third category that contains the most old of the respondents i.e. the category of 57-65 years of respondents, then it's very clear that despite of just containing 20.3% of respondents out of 74, this category has maximum number of cases in medium apathy. i.e. 53.3% respondents out of just 15 old and the category of low and high apathy from this age cadre contains 26.7% and 20% of the cases respectively. In the younger lot (41-48) and in older lot (57-65) maximum number of respondents are medium apathetic but in medium age group (49-56) maximum number of employees are high apathetic.

For performance from all the three age categories, it is evident from table 9 that in younger lot (41-48 years) maximum percentage of respondents show medium performance which is 50% of this category, 31.8% show high performance and lowest ratio of respondents in younger lot has low performance i.e.18.2%. In the medium age group (49-56 years) maximum number of respondents show low performance, second highest number of respondents fall in the category of medium performance and lowest ratio of respondents show high performance in this age category. In the third age cadre that contains

older employees (57-65), equal number of employees show low, medium and high performance.

From the above results, table 9 show that younger lot of teachers is performing well in Punjab University, medium age cadre is performing a little less as compared to the younger lot and the older lot is giving all kinds of performances which is low, medium and high in the same way. While table 8 exhibits that younger group of teachers (41-48 years) was low, medium and high apathetic in same way but despite of that majority gives medium performance (50%). Middle age lot (49-56 years) was high apathetic which can explain low performance by majority of them (45.9% cases out of 37) while older lot had majority as medium apathetic (53.3% were medium apathetic from this age category) but it gives all the three kinds of performances i.e. low as well as medium and also high.

In order to explore satisfaction with the compensation, three categories were developed for compensation. First one was not satisfied with compensation, second was satisfied with compensation and third category was for those people who were undecided regarding their satisfaction with compensation. Two questions measured satisfaction with compensation for which the theoretical score was 2 (minimum) and 10 (maximum). Respondents whose summated score ranged between 2 to 4 were declared not satisfied with their salary. Respondents whose summated score was 5 were considered undecided about their satisfaction level while respondents with summated score between 6 to 10 were considered satisfied with their pay. When analysis was conducted it was found that out of total 74 respondents, 46 (62%) respondents were not satisfied with their current salary while 6 (8%) respondents were undecided about their satisfaction level with their compensation and remaining 22 (30%) respondents were satisfied their current salary, at the time this information was collected.

Another interesting result regarding salary was that all of the female teachers (16) who participated in this research were not satisfied with their compensation. From remaining males' data 30 (approximately 52%) males were not satisfied while 22 (38%) were satisfied with their salary.

## **6. Conclusion and Summary**

Teachers of the various departments of the Punjab University who participated in the study tend to be very normal regarding both the variables that were being measured i.e. apathy and performance. The analysis of total 74 respondents who participated in this research endeavour manifested that

majority of total respondents expressed medium apathy with medium performance on the whole. Possible reasons for this finding are explained in following few important points.

Mostly teachers do get apathetic by multiple reasons such as excessive work loads, sudden change of policies, change of time tables or timings of classes, increase in workload due to the long leave by any of their colleagues and many more, at the same time they try to keep their performance moderate because they feel morally responsible for the duty which they perform. They also take pride in taking responsibility of teaching to the youth of their country.

They are in such kind of profession that if their performance stumbles, then it right away impacts the performance of many of their students just the way when the charismatic leaders stumble it right away affects his/her followers. This finding is consistent with Frost, 2004. The teachers' sense of duty towards their profession helps them in keeping their apathy apart to a certain extent and they try to perform to their level best even in apathetic periods.

Peer pressure was also found to be involved in keeping up the performance of the respondents with being medium apathetic. Knowing that they are being observed by their peers also helps teachers to perform better even if they are apathetic in order to maintain their self respect and respect in their peers' eyes.

Rising competition in higher education institutions was found another major factor maintaining the performance of the teachers up to a certain level. Today, teachers are being evaluated by their students along with their supervisors and bosses on several aspects of their knowledge, skills and attitudes. They are evaluated for their personality, their flexibility, whether they are co-operative with their students and fellow colleagues, how do they interact with students as well as with other teachers, how much grip of knowledge they pertain in their specific area, what kind of way of teaching they possess? Do they have motivating way of teaching or students are scared of them, how do they communicate and how do they transmit knowledge? What kind of attitude they possess regarding their profession, their students and colleagues and many more. In case of any serious lags on the performance indicators identified above, they may be held accountable. So in order to come up to the performance criteria set by the institution, they put a lot of effort towards their work. Even if they get apathetic, they show moderate performance to cope with the competition. Knowing that they are being observed by many people from many angles, they try putting up extra effort that helps them showing better performance. The finding is also in line with the study of Blau, 1993.

Personal growth may also be a major factor that keeps the respondents away from going into apathetic situations. If they are unhappy even then, at times, for the sake of their professional and personal growth they tolerate these bad times and keep struggling in hope of good times and better career path. The very hope for a better future keeps the respondents motivated towards their performance and helps them keeping away from getting apathetic. Again the finding is consistent with the findings of the Luthans, 2002; Luthans 2003 & Snyder, 2000.

Another important reason of moderate performance by these teachers in presence of medium apathy could be the poor job market condition which despite being apathetic kept the respondents' performance level moderate as suggested by other researchers (Price, 1997; Atkinson, 1999; Carlson & Perrewe2, 1999; Luthans, 2001; Sanchez, Spector & Cooper, 2000; WSJ, 1986)

The job market condition is extremely poor in Pakistan. People having professional degrees do not have jobs.

Teachers also try to perform well in fear of losing jobs because already jobs are short in market. Most of the teachers do not want to relocate in other cities so even after better pay offers they prefer to work at the same station/city, they already are working at.

From the interviews conducted, generally women were more fearful of being relocated as compared to males due to cultural factors as in Pakistani society, it's very difficult for women to relocate just for the sake of their job. Secondly women are also considered to look after their family along with their jobs. They are expected to strike a balance between their personal and domestic roles. Regarding men, it's easily acceptable to relocate just for the sake of job, leave family at home and move to the other city for work but when it comes to women, it's not that easy for majority of them to leave their home and family just for the sake of work.

The analysis of gender, age and satisfaction with compensation revealed interesting results and they are also somewhat related to each other.

Results on gender revealed that overall females were low apathetic and they showed high performance while out of males, maximum number of them were medium apathetic with low performance. At the same time males were also prone to get high apathetic as the difference between being medium and high apathetic was very minor. This proves that working in the same institute under same sort of environment, females are performing better than their male counter parts. They get less apathetic than males and also perform better than

them. Again these findings are in line with the research findings of Luthans, 2001.

The possible explanation for the findings in the context of Pakistan could be that male members are expected to share the main burden of responsibilities for up keep of their families, therefore, disruptive, upsetting or troublesome situations create more pressure for them that badly disturbs their performance. In Pakistani context still females are joining the work places as a challenge and are more ambitious to prove themselves in public sphere which is a new emerging phenomenon. In order to compete for their existence at workplace and to prove that they can perform at par or even more than their male counter parts, they work extremely hard, tolerate bad situations in much better way than their male colleagues, and try to prove themselves smarter. This supports their ambitious approach towards their career and inculcates lot of confidence in them, they show high self efficacy which makes them perform exclusively better than males. Increased effort on the part of females directly brings their performance at much better position than males. The findings are consistent with the findings of Bandura, 2000; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; and Blau, 1993.

Women are also aware of the hiring trends in modern organizations favouring women to strike gender balance or maintaining equity and diversity at work places. This fact leads them towards more hope and optimism that is a way towards better performance. One of the interviewee commented during the interview "women are also less involved in work place politic as compared to males so when one will not waste his/her energy in useless activities and will spend the same energy on his/her work, then definitely the performance will get better". This can be another explanation of females' better performance which corroborates the research findings of Luthans, 2002 & Luthans 2003.

It was proved from the analysis of satisfaction with compensation that majority of the respondents were not satisfied with their pay. Out of 74 respondents, 46 were not satisfied with the pay they were getting while all of the females teachers who participated in the study were not satisfied with their salary. This might lead us to think about some discriminatory pay systems prevailing in the organization i.e. women are less involved in additional paid responsibilities (allowances, honorariums, stipends etc.) and hence receive less pay than males.

Recalling results from gender analysis, females were found less apathetic than males and they also showed better performance as compared to their male

colleagues. It implies that even after not getting satisfied with the monetary rewards the females get from the university, they get less apathetic and also perform better. Nevertheless, the findings may have implications for organizations in terms of future hiring.

Majority of the teachers under this study were not satisfied with their current salary they get but despite of this fact majority of them kept their performance moderate. A possible explanation for this finding could be the job market condition as explained earlier. Due to the poor job market, economic and financial conditions people keep themselves going despite of the problems they face because they are not left with much better options in case of leaving their existing jobs.

The age wise analysis of the respondents depicts that in younger group of teachers which was 41-48 years old, almost equal number of respondent were low, medium and high apathetic with majority showing medium performance. In the category of 49-56 years old respondents, maximum number of cases were high apathetic with low performance and in the seniors most age category i.e. 57-65 years of age, maximum percentage of respondents was medium apathetic with all the three kinds of performances i.e low, medium and high in the same ratio.

Age can be linked to apathy level in a way that younger people (41-48 years old) are in the age bracket where they may have younger children who are dependent on them physically but comparatively they have less expenses as compared to the respondents of the age bracket 49-56 years who have grown up children that are at the ages of marriage. Interviews with respondents also supported the findings when some of the teachers expressed their heavy financial responsibilities towards their children. Due to greater financial responsibilities people of this age bracket (49-56) are more pressurized. Respondents of this age 49-56 years (medium lot) are also on the track of their career growth and advancement which adds to their pressure due to which they get even more pressurized as compared to younger and older lot, start showing extensive negative attitude towards their work that ultimately negatively affects their performance. The research findings are in line with the previous researches conducted by Jegadeesan, 2007 & Lakshmi, 2007. In the age bracket of 57-65 years (older lot), the respondents have grown up children who are married, well settled hence, parents do not have much responsibilities towards them. The respondents of 57-65 years (older lot) are in such stage of their career where they, because of their seniority, have better facilities, they have more connectivity with people around them, are at better positions as compared to the other two age brackets, they have no further career moves as they have

reached to the ultimate position in their career which may explain their moderate apathy with all kinds of performance i.e. low, medium and high.

Moderate apathy and moderate performance by the young teachers (41-48 years of age) can also be explained in terms of their career ambitions. Since, they are young' enthusiastic and energetic they show motivation and hope regarding their future and come up with better performance while medium age group people are not as ambitious and hopeful as the younger people so their performance is not as good as is of the younger teachers. Again the findings of the present research are in line with the findings of the earlier research studies conducted by Luthans, 2002; Luthans, 2003; Snyder, 2000 & Lakshmi, 2007.

Overall, the findings of the present study reflect that even if teachers are facing some problems regarding their work then they try to cope with the situation by showing medium performance. They are showing medium apathy. This means that they do get disturbed due to the situations but they take it as a normal routine and try to cope up with the situation with showing medium performance.

The findings of the study also point to some very important cultural differences in Pakistan and other European and first world countries. Being Muslims, Pakistanis believe strongly in luck, fate and will of God and even after hurdles and problems, do not lose trust and hope which helps them in keeping their performance normal.

Findings of the qualitative data generated through face to face interviews also supported the findings of the quantitative data obtained on the issue understudy.

Since the study was concerned to find the presence of apathy among the teachers of the Punjab University and its impact on their performance, it provided useful information on the issue as explained through the results and their interpretation in light of the cultural context of Pakistan.

### **Limitations**

A number of limitations came across during the course of completion of the study. To name a few, time and financial constraints were found as the major constraints of the study. Due to the highly limited time convenient sampling technique was used for the study despite the realization that random sampling would have been a far better option. Financial limitations are also worth mentioning as researcher wasn't available with lot of money to spend openly for this research endeavour. This study has limited scope in a way that



other public sector universities were not included for the comparison between public sector institutes and one other kind of comparison was missing that could have been conducted between Punjab University and Private Sector Universities which may have implications for generalization of the results.

## **7. Recommendations**

The present study included teachers representing all the teaching departments of the Punjab University. It is recommended that in future further research could be conducted between two cadres of the departments i.e. between departments that are teaching management sciences and the departments that are not teaching management sciences. The reason behind this suggestion is that it is assumed that the marketability of the departments that teach management sciences is far better than those that are not related to management sciences. In order to determine the effect of marketability and effects of the image of educational institute on the apathy level and performance of teachers, it will be interesting to segregate the departments of the same institute and conduct research between them. Then comparison could be made between these two categories of departments.

Another kind of comparative research could be conducted between Punjab University and some private universities. It is generally assumed that private sector universities pay better to their teachers because they charge heavily from their students as compared to the public sector universities. To determine a linkage between better pay and increased motivation that may lead to effort and hard work with less signs of apathy and better performance may be another area of future research.

Similarly, an apathy comparison could be made among teachers associated with the departments that offer self-supporting programs and those offering no such programs.

Another suggestion is that systems of the departments of Punjab University needs to be checked and should be kept up to date with changing times as current systems are getting obsolete. For example, admission process, examination process, student registration, student advisory, career guidance and many more areas could be upgraded using the latest IT tools and techniques to make the system more efficient. Previously, admissions to the departments were made by displaying merit lists of the numbers student obtained in their BA, BSc or FA, FSc. exams but now a new system has been introduced in some departments of the University where along with the merit, applicants seeking admission have to appear in a written test devised either by the department or by

the National Testing Service (NTS). This is how institutions/departments can have control on quality of their input through an in built screening in the selection process. Such entry tests should be declared compulsory for other departments also to have better selection of candidates.

Lastly the present research did not measure the reasons of apathy. It just explored the existence or non existence of apathy among the respondents and its relationship with their performance. It's recommended that in future a more detailed and in-depth study could be undertaken that attempts to dig out the reasons of apathy and poor performance of employees. Higher education commission of Pakistan has already introduced many new research projects under its faculty development programmes to support new research areas leading to performance. Such a study that reveals the problems and reasons that affect performance of our teachers will help HEC as well.

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