

## ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN TO INCREASE JOB SATISFACTION OF GRADUATE TEACHERS IN SRI LANKA

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### **Abstract**

*The neglect of teachers' needs and job satisfaction have impacted negatively on our educational system in Sri Lanka. So while the teachers are working unsatisfactorily and the teaching profession has suffered untold hardship for quite sometimes now. This research was conducted using a survey method with the primary objective of uncovering actions to be taken to increase job satisfaction of teachers. Seven hundred teachers from IAB and IC schools belonging to the North Central Province of Sri Lanka were randomly selected to collect data through questionnaire and interview. Maslow's theory of interests was used as the theoretical basis. According to the data obtained from the questionnaires and interviews, improving welfare, impartiality and making direct decision are the actions that principals should take to increase the job satisfaction of teachers. Granting promotions and salary increases on time, providing opportunities for the teaching and learning process and exempting outsiders, and employing qualified people for in-service sessions are also actions that education authorities should take. It was also suggested that the government should take steps to increase salaries, formulate a Develop a subject policy appropriate to the work world and filling posts on qualification without giving posts on political affiliation. Thus, it can be concluded that Sri Lankan secondary school teachers need job satisfaction in a proper administrative and organizational structure and better condition of service. Recommendations have been made to well organize the Administrative and organizational structure, to increase teachers' salaries and to promote on time.*

**Keywords:** *increase, job, satisfaction, graduate teachers, Sri Lanka*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The teacher is the backbone of the education system. The teacher has a greater role to play in establishing national goals and common competencies in students. For that, the teacher needs physical and mental satisfaction. The teacher will be satisfied with his work if the administrative pattern, the study environment, the promotion process, the evaluation system, the adequate salary etc. are fulfilled. Rajkatoch (2012) declares that when teachers are satisfied with their jobs, they fulfill their responsibilities with more focus and devotion. The success or failure of education depends on the satisfaction of the teachers. Teachers spend most of their time in the classroom with students. Lumsden (1998) states that job satisfaction has a profound effect on teacher performance as well as student performance. Therefore, teacher satisfaction also has a greater impact on student success. Omar & Bing (2005) state that in fulfilling its role, the teacher cannot be satisfied with the effects of globalization, complex intercultural communication, teaching challenges, student disciplinary issues, and external factors such as school facilities. The teacher must provide his services under the principal. The principal should assign duties and responsibilities with a good understanding of the capabilities of the teachers. Similarly, the views and opinions of teachers should be sought to make the school education system effective. According to Gunasekera (2000), the diligence of the principal is one of the

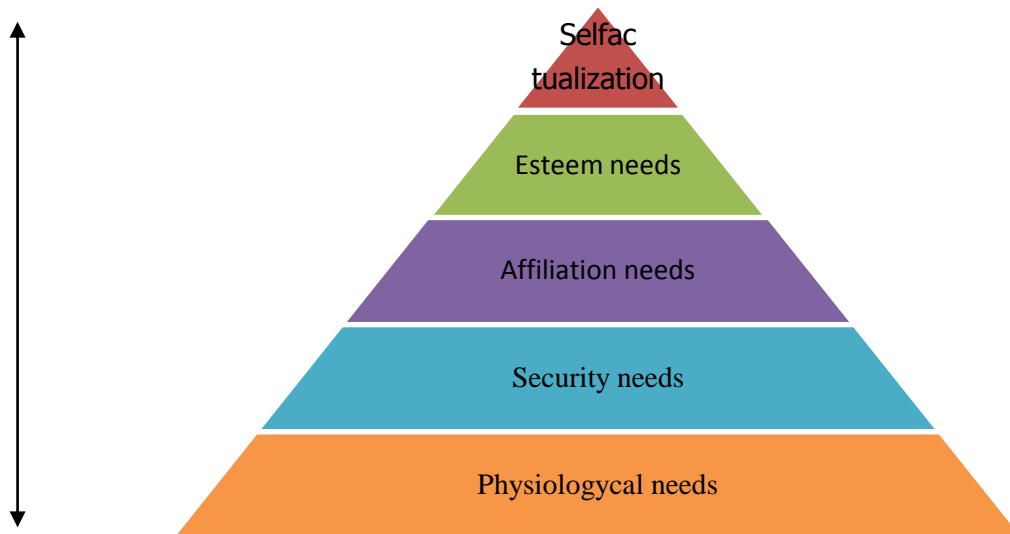
reasons for the declining educational efficiency of the teachers in the schools where the principals have a monopolistic attitude of ignorance and indifference towards the needs of the teachers. Sener & Oshan (2017) states that the satisfaction or dissatisfaction experienced by school administrators and teachers is influenced by the structure and efficiency of the school in which they work. It is clear that the diligence of the principal directly affects the job satisfaction of the teachers. Saiti (2007) states that job satisfaction has a direct impact on teacher performance. It is therefore the responsibility of the authorities at all levels to enhance the quality and productivity of teachers' performance. It is essential to motivate dedicated teachers to successfully implement educational policies and achieve goals. Efficient use of physical and human resources is essential to achieve efficiency in the school system or in the teaching and learning process. Teachers must be employed satisfactorily in order to achieve national goals and common competencies. According to Luthans (1998), it is easier for them to get to work if they work in a clean, friendly environment. It will be difficult to perform tasks when the opposite happens.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Job satisfaction is the happiness that a teacher gets from doing his or her teaching and learning tasks properly. Collins Co-build English Dictionary (2013) states that job satisfaction are when a person has a sense of happiness and self-esteem in successfully completing a task assigned to him or her. According to Bolin (2007), research has shown that factors that affect a person's job satisfaction are not the same. But their basics are the same. Terms of employment, interpersonal relationships, nature of employment, and demographic variables have been identified as variables that contribute to job satisfaction. Mullins (2005) points out that there is a theoretical link between job satisfaction and motivation. Motivational theories are described as the basis in the study of job satisfaction. Several theories of motivation have been put forward, and they have presented factors that influence motivation.

Effectively motivating employees is one of the most important and challenging duties of many managers. They use various technologies to satisfy their employees' job satisfaction in order to achieve a certain goal. In order to achieve organizational goals, the psychological environment must be understood in terms of employee job satisfaction. Maslow (2013) states that people strive to fulfill a particular need at one time, and that people do not skip the steps of this hierarchy to meet their needs. Maslow (2013) further states that human needs as a whole range from physical needs to mental needs, and that there is a sequence to meet those needs. The hierarchy of requirements presented by Maslow is summarized by Rue & Byars (2000) in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Maslow's theory of needs.



(Source: Rue & Byars, 2000, 117)

It is clear that in order to satisfy the needs of teachers, it is necessary to satisfy these basic needs along with the higher needs. Robbins & Judge (2008) describe, according to Maslow's theory of need, food, water, sleep, social and occupational safety, affection, social acceptance, self-esteem, leadership, self-actualization, etc. Lunenburg and Ornstein (2004) summarize Maslow's hierarchy of needs and present table 1 how to satisfy and motivate their employees.

**Table 1 How to satisfy employees according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs**

Higher Need	General factors	Levels of needs	Organizing factors
	Development	Self-actualization	Challenging jobs
	Victory Development Self-esteem Respect for others	Esteem	Development Victory in work position Situation Promotions
	Recognition Love Friendship	Love/ Belonging	Monitoring status Appropriate work teams Professional friendship
	Safety Care Stability	Safety	Safe working condition Additional benefits Job security
<b>Basic Needs</b>	Water Foods Accommodation Rest	Physiological	Basic salary Working conditions Heat, air and light

(Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2004)

From the above table, it is clear that the job can be done satisfactorily if the important needs of the people are met. If not, service productivity cannot be expected from them. Teachers' needs must be met according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Then we can expect good efficiency from the teachers. Otherwise, the desired goals will not be achieved. Akyeampong and Bennell (2007), Maslow's theory of interests is particularly important for low-income countries. As Sri Lanka is also a developing country, this theory can be used in practice to achieve the desired goals through education. True job satisfaction and motivation can only be achieved by fulfilling the basic needs before the highest requirements are met.

It is also important to look at research studies that have been done on job satisfaction. Kotelawala (1995), Gunaratne (1997), Hettige (1998), Premaratne (1999), Kalubowila (2000), Bogler (2001), Evans (2001), Jayalath (2002), Lehman & Stockard (2004), Nayanakanthi (2005), Upashantha (2006), Lankathilake (2006), Olube (2006), Lightwood & McAdie (2007), Akyeampong & Benneli (2007), Weiqi (2007), Wendakon (2008), Sancar (2009) have revealed that the leadership style of the principal, the decision making process, the involvement of the teachers in the decision making process and the friendliness of the teachers affect the job satisfaction of graduate teachers. Promotion also contribute to job satisfaction of graduate teachers. Among them are some important studies by Ranawaka (2006), Xiaofu & Qiwen (2007), Panditharatne (2013), Wei and Abdullah (2016), Ashi & Augustine (2016), Mebrate & Lemma (2017). In addition, studies from Ashi & Augustine (2016), Mebrate & Lemma (2017) have revealed that Salary is affected the job satisfaction of graduate teachers. It can be concluded from all the above studies that various factors affect the professional job of graduate teachers. Accordingly, attention has been focused on uncovering Actions to be taken to increase job satisfaction of graduate teachers in Sri Lanka.

## METHODOLOGY

The objectives of this study was uncovering Actions to be taken to increase job satisfaction of graduate teachers. To achieve the above objective, the survey research design was employed in the study. Although the target population was graduate teachers in schools 1AB and 1C in the North Central Province of Sri Lanka. Out of those teachers, 700 graduate teachers participated in the survey as a sample for the study The study used open questionnaires and interview schedule to collect the required data. The collected data was organized and the frequencies of the responses on the various questions were tallied and frequencies and percentages were used for the analysis for better understanding and interpretation. Qualitative data from the interviews was analyzed using Thematic Analysis as well as Verbatim quotations from interviews were transcribed.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Action to be taken by principals to improve job satisfaction of graduate teachers

The school is the closest institution to teachers. Although there are students as well as parents involved in the school, direct contact is maintained with the principal. Decisions made by the principal affect the job satisfaction of the teacher. The responses given by the teachers to the open questionnaire presented in the questionnaire on the measures to be taken by the principal to improve the job satisfaction of the teachers were encoded under the following themes.

**Table 2 Action that principals should take to increase job satisfaction**

Actions	Frequencies	Percentage
Improving welfare	583	83.28
Being impartial	439	62.71
Direct decision making	408	58.28
Non-political affiliation	368	52.57
Cooperative decision making	355	50.71

According to the table 2, the majority (83.28%) of the respondents stated that welfare should be enhanced as a major priority for the principal to increase the job satisfaction of the teachers. Free time cannot be used effectively when there is no place for it. Also, teachers will not be able to build relationships with other teachers during recess. It may have suggested that welfare

should be enhanced as it would reduce the job satisfaction of teachers. The sample of teachers who participated in the interviews also confirmed that this is a more essential factor by publishing this fact.

“For teachers to work happily, the workplace must be favorable. Teachers need to have facilities. Basically, teachers need to have a place to share experiences with other teachers, to prepare for lessons in their leisure time.” **(A Male Teacher at 1C School)**

It is clear from the above statement that job dissatisfaction has arisen due to the lack of teacher restrooms for teachers to be given in their free time. 62.71% stated that the principal should be impartial in order to create job satisfaction for the teachers. Everyone should be contacted. Don't be fooled by the opinions of just a few people. Decisions should be made without listening to the gossip of the people. Then the job satisfaction of the teachers will be able to increase.

“The principal must act as a leader to create job satisfaction for teachers. No one should be biased. Decisions must be straightforward.” **(A Female Teacher at National School)**

The above statement suggests that the principal should be impartial and at the same time show leadership qualities that can lead to job satisfaction for teachers. One proposal made by teachers to increase teacher job satisfaction was direct decision making (58.28%). When the decisions made by the principals are changed from time to time, the teachers who implement it become embarrassed. It may have suggested that direct decisions should be made because it affects teachers' job satisfaction.

“In general matters such as granting leave, teachers are informed of how to take leave in the future. It is said that leave will not be approved unless leave is obtained in accordance with the prescribed procedure. But it varies from teacher to teacher. The principal does not make direct decisions in such matters.” **(A Female Teacher at 1AB School)**

Teachers also suggested that the principal should not be a political slave (52.57%). It has been suggested that politicians should be non-partisan as they are involved in all activities of the school from the appointment of the principal of the school. It may have been suggested that being a non-political leader would enable school functions to be run with a free mind. Cooperative decision making (50.72%) was cited as a proposal that should be implemented by the principal to create job satisfaction for teachers.

“Decisions regarding school activities are made only after discussions with a certain group. Others are not asked or informed. Therefore, decisions made fail when they are implemented. Then there is the real frustration. If everyone gathers and discusses and makes decisions, there is a greater chance of making successful decisions.” **(A Teacher at National School)**

The above affirmation confirmed that the decision making process of the principal has a direct impact on the job satisfaction of the teachers. Depending on the size of the faculty, there may be more room for success in decision making involving more people. Instead, the principal or some of his colleagues may have suggested that collective decisions should be made for the betterment of the school or for the success of the teaching and learning process of the students, as failure to do so would lead to job dissatisfaction among teachers.

### **Actions to be taken by the education authorities to improve the job satisfaction of graduate teachers**

The officers of the Education Administrative Service carry out all the work related to the work of the teachers. Therefore, all functions such as granting promotions, evaluating teachers and providing facilities are subject to the decisions of the education authorities. It affects the job satisfaction of teachers. The quiz presented an open question on what steps the education authorities should take to increase job satisfaction for teachers. The factors listed in the table below indicate that education authorities need to work harder to increase job satisfaction.

**Table 3 Action that the education authorities should take to increase job satisfaction**

Actions	Frequencies	Percentage
Giving promotions and salary increases on time	636	90.85
Provide opportunities for learning and teaching to be excluded from outdoor activities	593	84.71
Organizing effective programs and employ qualified resource persons for teacher training programs	549	78.42
Friendly Zonal Education Officers	497	71.00
Following an appropriate teacher transfer policy	468	66.85

Relevant functions for granting teachers' salary increases and promotions are carried out by the Zonal Education Office. When teachers are doing their job well, the support they should be given is timely promotions and pay rises. Otherwise their efficiency will decrease. Therefore, it has been suggested that promotions and salary increases should be given on time (90.85%). This was also confirmed by the comments of a graduate teacher of 1C schools involved in the interview.

“I have been a teacher for six years. Must be promoted to the next grade within three years of receiving the appointment. But so far it has not happened. I have no promotion and no salary increase related to promotion.” **(A Male Teacher at 1C School)**

It is clear that education authorities can work hard to increase teacher job satisfaction by giving teachers timely promotions and pay increases in a short period of time. The task of the teacher is to engage in the learning and teaching curriculum relevant to the subject or syllabus of the subjects relevant to his or her schedule. Job dissatisfaction is caused by having to do extracurricular activities in addition to the teaching and learning process. It was suggested that the education authorities should create opportunities for job satisfaction by providing opportunities for learning and teaching and eliminating them from extracurricular activities (84.71%). In the interview, the teachers made the following statements.

“We make appointments to teach. But there is nothing that is not done in the end. It would be nice if the environment was created to teach free from other activities.” **(A Teacher at 1AB School)**

It is clear that teachers are dissatisfied with the way teachers teach that learning cannot be done happily in the teaching process because there is so much more work to be done, including the preparation of documents than the teaching and learning process. It was revealed that the teachers had to do other extracurricular activities as well as teaching. Therefore, the education

authorities may have proposed to increase the job satisfaction of teachers by engaging teachers in the teaching and learning process.

The subject directors organize various programs to improve the subject knowledge of the teachers and to update the teacher training. It was suggested that qualified persons should be involved in organizing such programs and that a sufficient number of programs should be implemented (78.42%). It was revealed that there is dissatisfaction with the ineffectiveness of the current programs and the lack of knowledge from the resource persons involved.

Teachers' official files are filed by the Zonal Office. The Zonal Director of Education is responsible for this. Teachers have to go to the zonal office and inquire when work is delayed. It has then been suggested that Zonal Education Officers should be friendly (71.00%) as teachers are dissatisfied with the way Zonal Education Officers behave.

“When I went to the zone to work on the file, I was chased away on Wednesday without being asked why I came. When I go on a Wednesday, I have a lot of work to do and I ask for another day. Sorry about the zonal office work. There is a frustration. It would be nice if everything from the zonal director was humane.” **(A Female Teacher at 1AB School)**

It was revealed from the statements given by the teachers that the officers of the Zonal Education Office were dissatisfied with the teachers for not being friendly in going to work. Therefore, the Zonal Education Officer may have suggested job satisfaction by acting in a friendly manner. Getting a transfer to a school near or on the way home can lead to job satisfaction or else dissatisfaction. Some teachers have been working in difficult schools since the day of their appointment, while others have been working in schools close to home. It has suggested to the education authorities (66.85%) that an appropriate teacher exchange policy should be followed as it leads to teacher dissatisfaction.

“I have been working in difficult schools for thirteen consecutive years. Never got to go to a school in town. Those in the big schools are always moving closer and closer.” **(A Teacher at 1C School)**

According to the above statement, it was revealed that the teachers were dissatisfied with the transfers. Every teacher can be satisfied to work in a school of their choice if a suitable teacher transfer policy is in place. An appropriate teacher transfer policy must be in place to ensure equal opportunities for all. Teachers' job satisfaction can be alleviated and job satisfaction can

be achieved by educating the education authorities on a suitable policy for recruitment and transfers to the teaching profession.

### **Actions to be taken by the government to improve the job satisfaction of graduate teachers**

Teachers' job satisfaction depends on the policies implemented by the government. It was suggested to the Government that the following measures should be taken to increase the job satisfaction of the teachers as the decisions which are currently in force with regard to teachers are either unsatisfactory or have been reduced.

**Table 4 Action that the government should take to increase job satisfaction**

Actions	Frequencies	Percentage
Salary increase	583	83.28
Prepare a policy appropriate to the work world	548	78.28
Filling posts on qualification without giving posts on political affiliations	469	67.00
Recruitment to the teaching profession only from graduates and diploma holders in science faculties	425	60.71
Providing opportunities for higher education	414	59.14
Providing incentives	372	52.14
Facilitation	369	52.71

It was proposed that the salary increase (83.28%) should be taken by the government as the main course of action to be taken to increase the job satisfaction of teachers. It was revealed in the interview given by the teachers that they are dissatisfied as the salary received according to their educational qualifications is not adequate as compared to other public officers.

“The salary we get as teachers is not enough. We are paid less than other public officers. Therefore, we should receive the same salary as the professions recruited on the basis of similar qualifications. For that, the government should formulate policies.” **(A Female Teacher at 1AB School)**

It was revealed as an important factor by the teachers suggesting that the government should work hard to increase the salaries of teachers in order to create job satisfaction for the teachers.

There is criticism in the society regarding the school curriculum. The media reports that graduates are protesting against the government demanding jobs. Similarly, jobs related to the degree of study are not found in the world of work. Graduate teachers (78.28%) suggested that a syllabus appropriate to the work world should be formulated as this is a problem that is closely felt by teachers.

“Students who have studied with us have graduated and are unemployed. Or they may be working in a job that requires less than a bachelor's degree. It is sad to see them. Therefore, the curriculum that operates in Sri Lankan schools as well as universities needs to be adapted to the work world.” **(A Female Teacher at 1C School)**

Teachers are dissatisfied when they see students who have learned from them being unemployed, as revealed by the above statement made by a teacher who was involved in the interview. He may have said so because he wants to see a better future for the students who have learned from him. It was also suggested by the teachers that the syllabus should be narrow as the syllabus was wide. It may have been suggested that the syllabus should be narrowed down as teachers are dissatisfied with the coverage of a comprehensive syllabus and students cannot afford it.

A graduate is an expert in a particular field. Also a basic qualification to hold any position. Eligibility should be based on Skill and qualification in holding the post. Otherwise the qualified person will be dissatisfied with himself or the profession. Therefore, it was suggested to the Government that posts should be offered on qualification (67.00%) and not on the basis of



political affiliation. The following comments were made by a teacher of 1AB school who was involved in the interview.

“The field of education has been swallowed up by politics. Everything has to do with politics. The principal of our school is not a grader. But they take positions based on political affiliations. Not just in schools. Although he was a zonal director, he was appointed on the need of political authority. The government must formulate policies to remove politics from education.” **(A Teacher at 1AB School)**

The above statement revealed that the education sector is politicized and dissatisfied with the lack of qualifications. It may be proposed to formulate relevant policies to remove education from politics as talented individuals are unable to engage in appropriate places relevant to their abilities.

There are two types of teacher recruitment. That is, diploma holders and graduates of teaching science offered by the faculties are recruited to the teaching profession in accordance with the Teacher Service Act. On the other hand, it was suggested to the government that only graduates and diploma holders (60.71%) should be recruited to the teaching service as recruitment to the teaching service in violation of the service minutes in accordance with political decisions would create job dissatisfaction. The above proposal may have been made due to the lack of respect and recognition of the teaching service in the recruitment of teachers outside the service minutes.

The teacher must be equipped with day-to-day knowledge. Training on the teaching and learning process should be continued. Similarly, studies should be done on the teaching and learning process. The government should provide opportunities for that. It was suggested to the government (59.14%) that graduate teachers should be given opportunities for higher education as they will be given some financial assistance only to study for the Post Graduate Diploma in Education but no further concessions will be given thereafter. According to the above data, it has been suggested that more teachers should be facilitated to nurture their knowledge. It should provide new technological know-how and facilitate the purchase of them. The government should also intervene to direct students to postgraduate studies. If necessary, arrangements should be made to provide overseas training. Then the job satisfaction of the teachers can be increased.

Teachers are paid only for the service they provide. Apart from that, the only allowance that is available is the difficult allowance. Teachers are not entitled to any other allowance. But other public servants receive certain allowances according to their efficiency. It is a cause of dissatisfaction among teachers. It was suggested to the government that incentives should be given to teachers (53.14%) to overcome this situation and create job satisfaction.

“My hometown is kandy. I Work in Higurakgoda. But this school is not a difficult school. Therefore, I will not receive the difficult allowance. My school is not difficult but it is a difficult school 5 km away. The village teacher who works at that school receives a difficult allowance.

This is no transparency. Therefore, the payment of the difficult allowance should be regularized. Similarly, teachers will work happily if they are given an allowance for their achievements based

on their commitment. Likewise, everyone will be committed to achieving success in their subjects.” **(A Teacher at 1AB School)**

The above statement suggests that teachers should be paid a special allowance for achievements based on their intervention, indicating that teachers are dissatisfied with such opportunities available to other public officers. It was revealed that teachers are dissatisfied with the teaching profession by suggesting that incentives should be given to teachers to appreciate their service. Different classifications can be seen in the school system of Sri Lanka. According to those classifications, the facilities of each school can be varied. It may vary by school type, by region, by province. The government (52.71%) suggested that facilities in schools in general should be provided as teachers are dissatisfied with the diversity of facilities from school to school. The following statement was made by a science graduate teacher who was involved in the interview.

“The school does not have the facilities and equipment to make science lessons practical for our children. Losing study equipment can be frustrating. We lost but there are big schools” **(A Female Teacher at 1C school)**

The above statement may have suggested that every school should be provided with the necessary resources and facilities according to the number of students as teachers are dissatisfied with the disparity of resources and scarcity of resources.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The following conclusions were drawn from the data revealed by the analysis of the study conducted to identify Actions to be taken to increase job satisfaction of graduate teachers in Sri Lanka.

1. Analysis of the study data revealed that the principal's administrative support as well as the principal's leadership style affect the job satisfaction of school graduate teachers.
2. It can be concluded that the salary is a major factor affecting job satisfaction by revealing that graduate teachers are dissatisfied because the salary is not adequate.
3. It can be concluded that graduate teachers are dissatisfied with the fact that there is a strict system of promotion from grade to grade when they are appointed as a teacher, but it does not include a formal system that gives promotions to educational qualifications and pays them normally.
4. It can be concluded that teachers are dissatisfied with the provision of hardships and incentives and that dissatisfaction with the provision of incentives should be regularized and that incentives should be provided.
5. It was revealed that graduate teachers expect the principal, education authorities and the government to appreciate and motivate them and thereby create job satisfaction.
6. It can be concluded that the professional development programs organized and implemented by the subject directors of the Zonal Education Office affect the job satisfaction of the graduate teachers. It was revealed that the graduate teachers were dissatisfied with the non-involvement of subject matter experts as resource persons for professional development programs and the lack of adequate organization.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be made on Actions to be taken to increase job satisfaction of graduate teachers in Sri Lanka.

1. Development of management and leadership skills of principals through training programs.
2. Activation of professional development programs focusing on teacher aspirations.
3. Recruitment of only graduates with professional qualifications to the teaching service and giving promotions on academic qualifications under exceptional performance and Increase in salaries according to qualifications.
4. Evaluating Teacher Skills and Giving Gratuities Based on Zonal, Provincial and All Island Achievements.

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