

Examining the Underlying Variables of Faculty Professional Advancement in State Colleges and Universities in Southern Philippines

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the underlying variables for the professional advancement of the faculty members from the state colleges and universities in Mindanao, Southern Philippines. The study revealed that majority of the respondents were female, aged 31-40 years old, below 10 years of experience in teaching, have acquire units in the master's program, and with permanent status. Corollary, the factors that motivated that faculty members to continue their professional advancement were ranked in order as follows: first is for professional growth ; second is for enhancing educational qualification; third is for promotion and rank; fourth is for salary increase; fifth for job security; sixth is for compliance of government mandatory policy; seventh is for gaining prestige or recognition; eight is being driven by school positive environment; and ninth is influence from colleagues in the work place. Further, there was no significant difference found on the responses of the faculty members on the factors that motivated them to pursue professional advancement according to gender. Meanwhile, significant differences were found on their responses in terms of age, educational attainment and length of service.

Keywords: Variables, Faculty, Professional Advancement, Motivation, State Colleges and Universities

Introduction

Quality Education cannot rise above the quality of the teachers, so the old Maxim goes. Every teacher must be in full force in delineating the old odd tasks in concomitant with the philosophy, goals and objectives of every educational enterprise. Further, this intensifies the belief that teachers shall be at the forefront of our battle against mediocrity in today's educational landscape. The faculty members therefore shall endeavor to make sure that they can give the best in their efforts at improving their classroom in learning. In other words, they must ensure the efficiency and effectiveness in the performance of their daily task. On the basis of the above premise, Majeric, Leskosek & Erpic (2011) as cited by Tynjala (2015) recommended that there is a need for every faculty member to train and upgrade their skills in concomitant with the requirements in education in a global educational village. To attune into the current techno-era, faculty members should strive to continue polishing their craft to grow professionally. While it is argued, the pre-service training in teacher education is far more short in terms of knowledge and skills which is required for a life time (Heikkinen, Jokinen & Tynjala: 2012). Also, the issues of

teacher development is entangled with entrenched problems. When environment does not encourage teachers' engagement in professional development, there is no any recognition or reward for those teachers who actively engage in professional development. This practice not only kills the motivation to participate but also convey a message that professional development is not important.

In this study, the researcher aimed at examining the underlying motivating factors for professional advancement of the faculty members in state colleges and universities in the Southern Philippines. Since our country is belonging to the third world, education must be built upon strong foundation with fully-equipped faculty force to address directly or indirectly the country's social and economic peril. Corollary, faculty development is a never ending cycle of teacher learning that begins with initial teacher training and continues for as long as a teacher remains in the profession. The fact that teaching is a public profession places teachers in the spotlight of societal expectations of continually finding ways to improve student learning. The way to make this possible is by enabling faculty members especially in the tertiary institutions to continue to evolve in the use, adaptation and application of their art and craft" (Lange, 1990:250). Hence, the term continuing professional development implies- all the activities in which teachers engage in during the course of a career which are designed to enhance their work" (Day & Sachs, 2004:3). Such activities are intended to result in on-going teacher learning, a process by which teachers move towards expertise (Kelly, 2006).

In some tertiary institutions in the country, several faculty members have strived to pursue graduate studies mainly relying on their own resources despite their financial constraints. Most of them have not availed of the scholarship grants given by the Commission on Higher Education and from any other institutions. But because of their aspiration and commitment to the teaching profession, they have even sacrificed the portion of their own time, material and financial resources just to engage in continuing professional education. As to what really motivated these faculty members to pursue graduate studies and what expect to gain in enhancing higher educational qualification, is something that is very important and interesting to evaluate, hence this study is conducted.

Objectives

To determine the demographic profile of the respondents as to their gender, age ,educational qualification, length of service and status of Appointment

To examine the underlying motivating factors for the faculty professional advancement of the state colleges and universities in the Southern Philippines.

To determine the significant difference of their perception on the underlying factors of motivation as to their age, sex, civil status and educational qualification and employment status.

Methodology

The study used descriptive survey design to examine the underlying motivating factors of the faculty members of some state colleges and one university in Mindanao, Southern Philippines. 80 faculty members were conveniently taken as participants of the study from four tertiary institutions in the province of Sulu, Mindanao such as Sulu State College, Notre Dame of Jolo College, Sulu College of Technology, and Mindanao State University-Sulu. The researcher

utilized a self-devised questionnaire which has two parts validated by three panel of experts. The first part entails the demographic profile of the respondents and the second part consist of the evaluation of the factors that motivated the faculty members to pursue their professional advancement.

Furthermore, considering the covid-19 pandemic today, the researcher used convenient sampling to select the respondents of the study. Convenience sampling is non-probability sampling used to create a sample from the entire population who are readily available at the time of the study. For the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher asked formal permission from the college presidents of the four colleges to allow him to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researcher launched the questionnaire and retrieved a week after with 100 percent response rate.

Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyse the demographic profile of the respondents. Similarly, mean was used to rank the motivating factors that drive that faculty members of the state colleges and universities to advance their professional development. Meanwhile, t-test was employed to find out the significant difference on the respondents perceptions according to gender; and ANOVA was utilized to analyse the differences of their responses in terms of age, educational attainment and length of service.

Discussion

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

It could be gleaned from table 1 that the majority of the faculty members from the state colleges and universities were female, aged 31-40 years old, below 10 years of experience in teaching, have acquire units in the master's program, and with permanent status.

Traditionally, female teachers are confined to teach children since childhood. They are charged with the responsibility to carry the burden of teaching of their children. It is appropriate therefore to appoint female teachers because they have the emotional touch on the part of the learners. Hence, majority of the respondents in this study are female. In like manner, the findings of this study revealed that male teachers constitute only 20% of the entire respondents. Part of the reason is found in Locsin (1992) as cited by Abbas that low salaries aggravated by teaching overloads which prevent the teacher from taking a second job, and that in turn, has driven off many male teachers with the families. In fact, Only 1 out of 100 teachers are men (Locsin, 1992). In addition , Bucu as cited by Butuan (2005) stressed that male teachers perform better than female. The difference is not due to intelligence but more on cultural influences.

Seers (1998) as cited by Mante-Jali (2000) in Lagasan (2001) mentioned that in public schools, younger and less experienced teachers have higher level of satisfaction than old and more experienced teachers and they are therefore craving to pursue professional advancement. This is in order to prepare themselves to the tasks lie ahead of them brought about by the changing educational landscape. Aside from equipping themselves with the necessary skills, they also are also advancing their educational qualifications in order to be ready for professional promotion and other moonlighting opportunities.

Educationally, teachers nowadays are engaging in a continuing graduate program to cope with the educational dynamism. Nattu as cited by Petinco (2000) in Bulosan (2002) found out in her study that graduate education for teachers leading to masters, doctoral or post-doctoral is geared

toward increasing the knowledge and the skills of the teachers in the teaching profession. It is good to note, that majority of the respondents of this study are pursuing their graduate studies.

Factors That Motivates Faculty Members to Pursue Professional Advancement

The complexity of factors motivating professional development has dramatically increased since the studies on factors of adult student participation in higher and continuing education began (Houle, 1963; Sheffield, 1964; Burgess, 1971; and Boshier, 1971, 1976, 1991; Morstain and Smart, 1974 and Fujita-Starck, 1996). In table 2, the result revealed the several factors that motivated the faculty members of the colleges and universities in Mindanao, Southern Philippines to pursue graduate studies. These factors are presented in rank order as follows (1) for professional growth ; (2) For Enhancing Educational Qualification , (3) For Promotion in rank, (4) For salary increase (5) for job security, (6) for compliance of government mandatory policy, (7) For gaining prestige or recognition (8) Driven by school positive learning environment, and (9) Influence of colleague's in a workplace.

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Professional Growth

Result revealed in Table 2 that faculty members of the state colleges in universities in Southern Philippines rank professional growth as the top factor why they pursue graduate studies. In this light, Bickham (1998) pointed out that), Continuing professional education allow professionals to learn new techniques and develop awareness of new knowledge in their field. Most significantly, however, continuing professional development must be effective in helping practitioners enhance their performance. In a casual Interview of Clark (2007) to a group of professionals while investigating the factors that motivated them to continue adult schooling, he found out that they continue professional development to enhance their skills so that they could carry out the requirements of their employment with greater satisfaction for themselves, their students and their employer. In the same vein, unprecedented changes in communication and information technology have produced the need for all professionals to constantly update knowledge and skills (Ingvarson, 1989; Beeson, 2000). In this vein, Kerka (1994) suggested that being professional implied a commitment to continue with professional education and pursuing practice-enhancing learning, providing the professional educator with the knowledge and skills to perform to appropriate standards. On the contrary, if faculty members failed to advance professionally, they might lost the opportunity of getting promotion in the work place whether vertically or horizontally especially in a higher institution where professional competition is tough.

For Enhancing Educational Qualification

Faculty members have placed enhancing educational qualification second in rank. This means that faculty members pursue their professional advancement in order to enhance their educational qualification. It cannot be denied that in today's educational landscape, professional qualification matters. Hence, Clark (2007) attested that teachers or faculty members undertaking formal professional development in order to enhance their educational qualification to gain promotion or

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to move to a new professional situation. According to Barber & Mourshed (2007), the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers. This appears to be the area that resources should target; knowledge-intensive training institutions and knowledge-rich teacher development centres should be provided. Falus (2002) added that requirements defined in terms of teacher competences cannot fully replace qualification requirements since the latter must be measurable in an unambiguous and economical way. According to TDA (2005), indicators of teachers' qualifications, the so-called standards define levels of competence in a way that is sufficiently specific, explicit and simple to measure in order to provide a clear and reliable criterion for awarding qualifications regardless of where a candidate completed teacher training studies. For the assessment of teacher performance, in contrast, at present no indicators are available

For Promotion in rank

Getting opportunity for promotion ranks third as reflected in Table 2. This means that faculty members continue their professional advancements in order to be promoted. Many studies have been conducted to show that the teachers want to pursue graduate studies because they aspire for promotion or to be given designation. Obviously in teaching career, teachers should endeavor to develop their promotional growth and promotional ranking where the salary scheme is dependent on the former. Aside from the teaching experience, and ability of the teachers to engage in seminar workshop, conferences and trainings were merit and enhance their educational qualification which thereby increase their chances of having promotion. On this end, Pigors and Myers (1977) forwarded ideologies which states that when the basic needs are adequately met by the person, it loses its power as a motivator. They added that lower level of needs do not have to be completely satisfied before higher level of need can emerge as determinants of behavior. But different needs have priority at different times. For example, man cannot exist without satisfaction of the physiological needs like food, clothing, shelter, air, and water. But because man is more than an animal, he has social, psychological, and spiritual needs which must be met. Otherwise, he cannot develop his human potentials if he only concerns himself of satisfying his physical needs. In other words, once the teachers were already satisfied in their position, they were no longer get motivated to stay in the same situation, they need to step up and acquire something bigger than before. Hence, they seek for professional promotion.

For salary increase

The opportunity for getting salary increase was only ranks fourth as gleaned from the table 2. This means that the faculty members of state colleges and universities in Mindanao, Southern Philippines have only moderately motivated for salary increase on why they pursue their professional advancement. While many researches have confirmed that teachers continue their professional schooling so as to have at least increase their income. In a recent study by Iran (20018) at Mindanao State University-Sulu, Philippines, she confirmed that teachers pursued their professional development so as to be given opportunity to engage as part time lecturer in other college or university ; to lecture on seminars, trainings, and conferences; and to speak in such big occasion like graduation, symposium, etc.

Practically, Davis (1977) classified man's need into two types, namely: the physiological or primary needs, and the psychological or secondary needs. Most physiological or primary needs are those that are basic in the preservation of man's life. They are food, clothing, shelter, water,

sex, sleep, and air to breathe as well as satisfactory temperature. According to him, these are universally common to all people but they exist in different intensity while the psychological or secondary needs are those that represent that need for the mind and spirit rather than the physiological body. Many of these needs are developed as one matures. Some of these are rivalry, self-esteem, sense of duty, self-assertion, giving, belonging, and receiving affection. These secondary needs are the ones that could complicate the employees effort of motivating this employees because these types of needs vary in every individual. One individual maybe very assertive, but another individual may behave in the opposite manner, He may not be assertive, but instead may be submissive (Davis, 1977).

Relatively, Mulkeen et al. (2007) in report that in Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Tanzania and Uganda there are a variety of unattractive conditions of service for teachers that make teaching as a profession to be less attractive to school leavers. These unattractive conditions include perceived low salary, unattractive work locations, unprofessional treatment of teachers, arbitrary teacher deployment systems, lack of professional development opportunities and insufficient supportive supervision. In their study that examines 30 different countries with regard to teacher salary and national achievement, Akiba et al. (2011) revealed that low teacher salary often leads to teacher dissatisfaction and higher attrition rates. The following excerpt was taken from the focus group discussion in Gemed (2015)

... The teaching profession is the least paid and most disrespected profession in the country. The major reason for this is that the low salary of teachers. When we compare the salary and other benefits teachers gain with other professionals, it is disappointing. We have developed strong hatred toward the profession. These days the teaching profession is considered as a bridge occupation. Nobody wants to stay in the teaching profession unless she or he fails to find another job. That means we are coming to school to meet attendance demand. Our motivation to teach is dead. Our commitment to effect any change has been lowered. We lost our passion for the profession. All those things affect our effort to develop ourselves and perform the teaching profession effectively... The teaching profession is not only losing well experienced teachers to other professions but also failed to attract brightest candidates to the profession...

Schaffer (cited in Abdel Fattah, 2010) argued that individuals use monetary rewards and salaries not only to satisfy their physical needs such as food, shelter, and clothing but also their psychological needs as a symbol of achievement and recognition. If the salary earned by teachers' does not materializes in this way the fulfilment of basic needs, described by Maslow, wouldn't be met. Only when these basic needs have been met to make it possible for higher-order needs, which are the basis of true job satisfaction, to be realized (Bennell, 2004). For Herzberg et al. (1959), salary is a hygiene factor that leads to dissatisfaction when not experienced as adequate. Research by McShane and Glinow (2003) shows that people who are dissatisfied with their jobs often quit and pursue other careers, thereby increasing turnover. Equity theory also suggests that the amount of financial compensation that an individual receives should be perceived as equitable to satisfy and motivate workers (Zhilla, 2013).

As described earlier, teachers participated in the study unanimously stated that the salary for teachers is little and inadequate to cover their basic needs (foods, cloth and shelter). They also

felt that the situation demoralizes the teaching force and affect teachers professional commitment. Here is an example of excerpt taken from the data:

.... the government pays us the lowest salary, which can hardly cope up with the current expense of life. Moreover, there is no change in our salary despite the fact that the inflation rate is very high. For a long time since our primary concern has become the issue of basic needs. If the money you earned from your profession does not meet your basic needs, what is the meaning of staying in that profession? For a hungry teacher, the primary concern is addressing the basic needs, looking to fulfil the needs for food and accommodation. Our concern to address our basic needs surpass our concern to help students learn. Therefore, our attention is not on improving our knowledge and skills to help our students learn rather looking on ways by which we can find a better job outside the teaching profession...

In the data, there appeared several teachers' observations that low salary coupled with high inflation rate makes the living cost unbearable for teachers. Owing to this, the quest for basic needs was described as dominating their activities. Student learning, which is the fundamental purpose of school becomes secondary issue. The situations, as the teachers explained, affect their motivation to perform teaching responsibility effectively and forced them to look for other payable job. Participants experience corroborated what Maslow (1954) states as physiological needs are the human instinct to survive, and remarked that they are the needs that human being will seek for and satisfy before the other needs in the growth needs will emerge. For instance, hungry teacher will not pay attention on the learning of his/her students, rather will be preoccupied with the need for food. Based on the application of this theory to organizational settings, it can be argued that people who do not meet their needs at work will not function efficiently. But in spite of all of these under ratings, faculty members of state colleges and universities in Southern Mindanao still placed their desire for salary increased not at the top of their priority agenda why to continue to pursue their professional education.

For compliance of government mandatory policy

Compliance to government policy ranks fifth as motivational factor for faculty professional advancement. The result implies that even if it is not a mandate of the government, still many of the faculty members are engaging and will engage in continues professional development because of the preceding like professional growth, opportunity for promotion, opportunity for salary increase and the like.. While under the Philippine law, there is a need for a professional in a various field to earn units in Continuous Professional Development (CPD). This is a requirement for a government of employees to renew their license and continue practicing their profession. Failure to comply the required units as stipulated for in under the CPD law would mean forfeiture of their rights to renew their licenses which thereby impacted their performance along with their profession.

For Job Security

As shown in Table 2, job security ranks sixth as motivating factor for faculty members to continue their professional advancement. This means that they moderately rated this factor as their driving force for professional advancement. Although, security is the among the basic needs in Maslow Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg Two Factor theory but the faculty members never put this matter at the helm of their purpose. Knowing that passing the licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) as the basic requirement for entrance in the teaching profession has given them security of tenureship in the teaching profession, these teachers were no longer bothered enough about their status in the school organization. Because, this law guarantee them to stay in their position so long as they were not charged of any administrative violations. Henceforth, they are already assured of their status in the school organization.

For gaining prestige or recognition

As described in Table 2, the faculty members rank prestige and recognition seventh as factor that motivate them to proceed higher education. This means that gaining prestige and recognition is not at the top of their interests in pursuing advanced education. Arguably, a study by Bennell (2004) indicates that the emergence of a sizeable private education sector has further diversified the teaching force and improved their recognition. Private sector teachers are often seen in a more positive light by parents and the wider public because they are harder working and usually less well paid, but achieve better learning outcomes. Bennell (2004) further noted that where private sector provision is growing rapidly with strong public approval (like in Masaka District); this is a strong intrinsic motivator to the otherwise downward pressures on teacher status.

The teachers participated in the study of Gameda (2015) deduced that the low income level of teachers has led the profession to lose the respect it deserves. One respondent in an interview opined:

...becoming a teacher is an economic suicide. We have been trying our best expecting that the situation might change one day. However, the situation is getting worse and worse. Now we lost hope about everything. Our attachment to the teaching profession is eroded. Being a teacher is a punishment and a sign of poorness. Since our today's society values people entirely with their income status, teachers lost the respect they deserve. Because of this, teaching has nowadays become the most disrespected profession in the country.

It is worthy to note that the faculty members were not motivated to continue their professional advancement just to regain the lost prestige of the profession. But they were doing these for the love of the profession, for educational growth, for enhancing educational qualification, salary increase and all other aforementioned factors discussed in this section.

Driven by school positive learning environment

Driven by positive learning environment was ranked eight by the faculty members. This means that they are less motivated by this factor in their quest for professional advancement. Although,

positive learning environment has impact on adult learners while undergoing training and education. But this study shows negative relationship of positive environment with that of professional development. In other words, teachers' decisions to continue graduates schooling were not influenced by favourable working environment like processes, systems, structures, tools, rules, culture, resources, working relationship, work location and other internal and external environmental factors. On the contrary, there were lots of studies have shown positive relationship between professional development and learning environment this include the study of Ellet, Hill, Liu, Loup, & Lakshmanan (1997) on Administrative relationships and opportunities for professional learning; and Javaid (2009) study on and the effect of Pakistani teachers' feelings of being undervalued by society and working in the least sought after profession .

Influence of colleagues in the work place

In table 2, faculty members from state colleges and universities in Mindanao, Southern Philippines have placed the influence of colleagues as a motivating factor at the last rank. They believe further the learning must require individual passion and that must a part of every individual commitment to his profession. Professionals must be kept abreast with every dynamism in the educational playing field. Although, teachers do not work in isolation – their work environment is rich and involves interactive social contexts with a varied range of individuals. While successful teachers are likely to possess a strong sense of their own self-efficacy, successful schools are characterized by teachers' collective efficacy – “a group's shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 477). Although researchers have paid more attention to teachers' self-efficacy, interest in what the important relationship between teachers' collective efficacy can do for the teaching profession is growing (Klassen et. al., 2011). But collective self- efficacy shall not be the basis for teachers when it comes to their continuing professional education. Hence they place this factor at the last rank as factor of motivation for their career advancement.

Difference on Motivating Factors in Terms of Gender, Age, Educational Attainment and Length of Service

As portrayed in table 3, it could be concluded that there was no significant difference could be found on the perception of the faculty members on the factors that motivated them to pursue professional advancement according to gender. This was manifested by a significant value of .009 and above the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that, “there is no significant relationship on the perception of the faculty members of the state colleges and universities in the Southern Philippines according to gender was hereby accepted. It means both the male and female respondents perception on the factors of motivation were almost the same. Similarly, significant differences were found on their perception in terms of age, educational attainment and length of service. This was attested by a significant value of .000 in all categories. Hence, the hypotheses which states, ”that there is no significant difference on the perception of the faculty members in terms of age, educational attainment and length of service, was here by rejected. This means that their perception on the factors that motivated them to pursue higher education vary according to age, educational qualification, and length of service. The data

provide evidence that the mean difference $-.32880$ suggests that the perception of female teachers on the factors affecting the teachers' motivation significantly differed from the perception of the male teachers. This means that the perception of female teachers is a little greater intensity compared to the male teachers.

Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of the study, the researcher hereby made the following conclusion. On faculty members demographic profile, the majority of the faculty members from the state colleges and universities were female, aged 31-40 years old, below 10 years of experience in teaching, have acquire units in the master's program, and with permanent status. The underlying factors that motivated the faculty members to pursue their professional advancement were ranked as follows such as; professional growth, enhancing educational qualification, for promotion in rank, salary increase, compliance of government policy, for job security, prestige and recognition, school positive learning environment and influence of colleagues in the work place. Moreover, there was no significant difference on the perception of the faculty members on the factors that motivated them to pursue professional advancement according to gender. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that, "there is no significant relationship on the perception of the faculty members of the state colleges and universities in the Southern Philippines according to gender was hereby accepted. Likewise, significant differences were found on their perception in terms of age, educational attainment and length of service. Hence, the hypotheses which states, "that there is no significant difference on the perception of the faculty members in terms of age, educational attainment and length of service, was here by rejected.

Recommendations

In the light of the aforementioned conclusion, the following recommendations are hereby advanced:

The college president or the university chancellor should look into professional promotion of teachers since majority of teachers have already advanced their professional education.

The college president or the university chancellor should have one single focused- that is to raise the motivation level of the teachers since they are the determinants for the success and failure of the classroom instruction.

Teachers must continue to earn master or doctoral degrees to further maximize their pedagogical knowledge as well as their conceptual, administrative and human skills.

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