

REINFORCEMENT MECHANISM FOR QUALITY WORK LIFE: A CASE OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS IN QUEZON PROVINCE, PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

The total success of education depends on the quality workforce equipped with high-quality standard, competence, and excellence. Supervisors, principals, school heads and teachers all work in synergy to ensure pupils get the best education. This study aimed to determine the job satisfaction and quality of work-life of public elementary teachers in Quezon Province, Philippines, with the end view of proposing reinforcement mechanisms. This covered the demographic profile of respondents in relation to age, gender, civil status, educational attainment, and length of service; assessment on their job satisfaction in terms of teaching assignment, designation, promotion, training, and fringe benefits and quality of work-life with regard to work environment, interpersonal skills, professional relationship, and time management. Likewise, this looked into the significant difference in the assessment of respondents on job satisfaction and quality of work life. Descriptive method of research was used with questionnaire as its main tool in gathering data complemented with unstructured interview. The statistical tools used in the analysis of data were percentage, weighted mean, and t-test. Results revealed that majority of teachers are 29 years old and below, female, married, and have bachelor's degree, with five years and below in service. Also, the teachers assessed job satisfaction as moderately evident in terms of teaching assignment, designation, promotion, training, and fringe benefits and assessed quality of work-life as moderately evident in terms of work environment, interpersonal skills, professional relationship, and time management. Moreover, there is significant difference in the assessment of the respondents' job satisfaction relative to mentioned variables when grouped according to educational attainment. Similarly, there is significant difference in the evaluation of the respondents' quality of work-life relative to work environment, professional relationship, interpersonal skills, and time management when grouped according to age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, and length of service.

Keywords: Education, Quality work-life, Quantitative Research, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Education is a basic human right for individuals. It is in the thinking that when people are educated, they are empowered and contribute to societal and economic development. Education and its development are left to schools where learners are taught and skills are acquired. It is also in schools where morals and values are shaped which in part determine the kind of citizens they will be. Thus, positive reinforcement must be rendered by the school administrators to their teachers. This is mandated in the Philippine context embodied in

the Education Act of 1982 which requires such administration to lead in the efficient and effective administration and management of the school; develop and maintain school atmosphere conducive in learning and maintain professional relationship. The success of education lies entirely on the hands of the competent supervisors, principals, school heads, and teachers and with high quality standard educational system. With the synergy of these personalities, it is ensured that pupils get the best education. For its part, teachers specifically, plan lessons in line with national objectives to ensure a healthy culture of learning. They try to keep up

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to date with developments in their subject area, new resources, methods and national objectives. Their role involves liaising and networking with other professionals, parents, and careers, both formally and informally. These key roles of teachers will be attained if teachers, school heads, and stakeholders strengthen job satisfaction. Reinforcement is needed then as this is a mechanism that elicits and boosts quality of performance by adding rewards and incentives. It can be applied through promotion, fringe benefits, and training. Through the use of positive reinforcement mechanism, teachers may delve on effective time management, develop interpersonal skills, seek professional relationship, and enhance personal qualities which all lead to better performance of the school. According to Greene et al. (2010), teachers are not only tasked with imparting knowledge, but they often have the power to inspire or on the contrary, suppress intellectual curiosity. Elementary teachers in particular help to lay the foundation upon which students' attitudes towards education are built. Rewarding desirable teachers is a good practice of positive reinforcement that strengthens quality of work life. This is an essential key to motivate teachers to be more effective and productive. This method brings benefits to boost self-confidence, eagerness to learn, advancement, responsibility, and increased job commitment and organizational loyalty. Teachers with quality of work-life will be motivated and be dedicated to high quality performance that increases societal productivity, quantity, and quality of achievement. Quality of work life will ensure enthusiasm in the work environment with opportunities for teachers to give their best. Such kind will provide job satisfaction and pride to the company (Gaurav, 2012). In this study's context, such job satisfaction was believed to affect teachers' performance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to determine the job satisfaction and quality of work-life of public elementary school teachers in Mulanay, District,

Mulanay, Quezon, Philippines. Specifically, it sought to answer the following: (1) to determine the demographic profile of elementary teachers in relation to age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, and length of service; (2) to define how teachers assess their job satisfaction in terms of teaching assignment, designation, promotion, training, and fringe benefits; (3) to assess the teachers' quality of work-life as to: work environment, interpersonal skills, professional relationship, and time management; (4) to determine if there is there a significant difference in the assessments of respondents on job satisfaction and quality of work-life; and (5) to propose reinforcement mechanisms for quality of work-life for public elementary school teachers.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers used descriptive research design to accomplish this study. This design was preferred as it ensured to answer the questions raised since it followed a certain process of collecting and obtaining the necessary and accurate information needed in making this paper. Specifically, the information used in the study came from the perceptions and insights of the respondents through a researcher-conducted survey with the use of a designed questionnaire. On the other hand, the respondents of this study were 164 public elementary school teachers of Mulanay District, Quezon Province, Philippines taken from a population of 277 elementary school teachers in the district. They were determined using Slovin's formula employing stratified random sampling. Meanwhile, the main data gathering instrument used underwent the process of construction, validation, and dry run. Upon the approval of the letter from the Schools Division Superintendent of Quezon, the researchers administered the survey to the target respondents where she also clarified the purpose of the study. After which, the questionnaires were collected and the results were collated. The data were then tallied, tabulated, and were treated using appropriate statistical tools such as frequency count, simple percentage, weighted mean, independent t-test,

and One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Likewise, the study also employed Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with eight teachers invited to be part of the discussion. The results were presented and their comments, insights, and opinions on the findings were sought. An interview guide was prepared for this purpose.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Demographic Profile of Elementary Teachers

Results showed that majority of the teachers were 29 years old and below with 54 or 32.9 percent of them while comprising the lowest age bracket of 60 and above was one or 0.6 percent. The females dominated the males with 147 or 89.6 percent of them as against 17 or 10.4 percent males. Likewise, majority of the teachers were married with 115 or 70.1 percent of them while the lowest group was three or 1.8 percent who were separated. As to educational attainment, majority of the teachers had a bachelor's degree comprised of 102 or 62.2 percent. Also, 58 teachers or 35.4 percent had a masters' degree. Both teachers with one or 2.4 percent had doctoral units and the other, a doctoral degree. As shown as well, most of the teachers had five years and below service with 62.7 or 37.8 percent, while lowest group was 13 or 7.9 percent with 16-20 years of service.

2. Assessment of Teachers on their Job Satisfaction

2.1 Teaching assignment. Teachers always wore a smile while carrying out teaching assignment had the highest weighted mean of 3.59 and interpreted as strongly agree. However, the lowest weighted mean of 3.31, interpreted as agree indicated they enjoyed the facilities and resources available in the workplace in doing tasks and exerted effort to do good assignment not blocked by red tape. The composite mean of 3.42 indicates teachers agreed on teaching assignment. These actions demonstrate that teachers' satisfaction were highly evident with the teaching assignments since they were

enjoying the work and responsibilities they handled. It can be teachers enjoyed the light moments their students get and also learned from those in their class. As most were young, these new teachers enjoy working with children. During the FGD, the teachers shared that they were always amiable and pleasant so that pupils feel free to speak to them and open on their concerns. They also mentioned they showed enjoyment in their work so that pupils will likewise be interested in the work given them. These results find similarity to the conclusions of Chughati & Perveen (2008) which showed that overall government school teachers were flexible and satisfied with their working hours and working conditions. On this regard, it was cited that teachers should be encouraged by their heads to show better performance. The successful teachers showing good results in their subjects should be given incentives. Also, teaching assignment should be reasonable for every teacher. On the other hand, Ball & McDiarmid (2017) argued that pupils rarely develop deep understanding of the subject matter they encounter. Students and administrators, therefore, should not be surprised by teachers' inadequate subject matter preparation. Knowledge of subject matter is acquired in significant ways outside of schools; to assume that teachers' subject matter preparation is confined to experiences of formal schooling would be to ignore that there are other major sources of teachers' learning and ideas.

2.2 Designation. Results revealed that teachers strongly agreed that they enjoyed teaching students who achieved the highest weighted mean of 3.59. On the contrary, carrying light workload had the lowest weighted mean of 3.21. The composite mean of 3.38 indicated strong agreement of their satisfaction considering designations. Results reflect that teachers' satisfaction lies in handling the pupils' discipline. This speaks well of the teachers who seem to be comfortable in the position they have. This being so, there is evident inspiration to perform their teaching work. This was affirmed by teachers themselves who cited that the



reason they took the course was because they love teaching. Moreover, it suggests that they have learned how to handle pupils and therefore have enjoyed teaching them. However, those designated with lot of jobs or in higher position have to do more with fewer resources. Increased workload and uncertainty regarding task performance are likely to be prevalent. This insight affirms that job description is an important component of job satisfaction with job designations not appropriate for teachers' performance may not be effective and efficient.

2.3 Promotion. Teachers agreed they developed awareness on possible career growth which achieved the highest weighted mean of 3.4. Meanwhile, the composite mean of 3.25 on promotion, interpreted as agree affirms that promotion inspires better performance among teachers. Evidently, when teachers get the promotion, they think they deserve, there is the motivation to do better. Teachers may perform well in their teaching, will try to upgrade themselves, have initiative and the cooperation to ensure the goals of the school and the care for the learning of pupils are attained. The findings support Megheirkouni (2017) who stated that the purposes and advantages of promotions are to recognize employees' performance and commitment and motivate them towards better performance, develop competitive spirit to acquire knowledge and skills for higher-level jobs, retain skilled and talented employees, reduce discontent and unrest, and fill up job's vacant position created due to retirement, resignation or demise of an employee. Similarly, according to the study of Usop, Askandar, Langguyuan-Kadtong, (2013), teachers were somewhat satisfied and were referred to be up-to-date to new trends or innovations. This finding implies that when teachers are up to date with new trends and innovations, this contributes to their job satisfaction. Thus, these teachers are willing to adopt such new trends and innovations in education to improve their instructional craft.

2.4 Training. Schools also provide training to teachers to increase their job

knowledge and skills consistent with the goals of education. On this, teachers strongly agreed that attendance to seminars within and outside the school is contributory to their upgrading, which achieved the highest weighted mean of 3.57. With this, the composite mean of 3.42 generally expresses agreement that teachers definitely appreciate training and seminars as these are ways of professional upgrading, particularly for those who are not into graduate studies. The trainings and seminars expose teachers to new trends and best practices which they may use in their teaching. This brings about job satisfaction. As cited by Bauer et al. (2012), experiences which bring about positive results are factors of job satisfaction. Moreover, training and seminars may improve teachers' quality of work-life as they are more confident in the kind of teaching. According to Wills (2013), providing employees with training and development opportunities not only contributes to the quality and effectiveness of the organization. It also serves to motivate and retain employees. Professional development should address both the competence required to achieve organization's goals and objectives and individual needs such as the competence employees required of their job that may reflect the organization's overall philosophy.

2.5 Fringe benefits. Teachers agreed they received compensation and benefits on time gave the highest weighted mean of 3.32. Meanwhile, they agreed that they expected the benefits package was equitable which got the lowest weighted mean of 3.22. The composite of 3.27 indicated teachers' agreement on fringe benefits that speaks well on the mechanism of the government in paying salaries on time. It is a reality that receiving benefits is important as teachers may have established monthly budgets which they follow to cope with day-to-day living. Thus, receiving salaries on time gives teachers the satisfaction that they may be able to respond and be accountable to financial responsibilities. Given these, teachers feel that they are satisfied with benefits accorded to them. This was affirmed by Aamodt (2013) that such are positive

reinforcements which consequently bring about positive behavior and action. They, however, expected the benefits package was equitable. On the other hand, dissatisfied teachers with the educational policies and administration, pay and fringe benefits, material rewards and advancement may invite poor performance and therefore lesser productivity. Better fringe benefits mean increased motivation, better performance and collaborative performance in school tasks and activities. Based on the conducted interview, it is mentioned that the significant aim of fringe benefits are to make and improve good industrial relations, boosting the morale of every employee as to acknowledge their needs by means of extending quality work surroundings and work-life and giving security of tenure for the employees.

3. Assessments of Teachers on their Quality of Work Life

3.1 Work environment. Teachers were proud to be identified with their school affirmed in the highest weighted mean of 3.38 but gave lowest assessment on school supporting education and learning which had weighted mean of 3.02 and both interpreted as agree. The quality of work-life in terms of work environment was given a composite mean of 3.24 indicating teachers' agreement on that teacher who enjoys their work and derives satisfaction from it can perform in the best perfect manner. The fulfillment of their personal needs and goals leads to satisfaction on well-being and happiness. Quality of education entails the design of work systems that enhance the working life experiences of teachers, thereby improving commitment and motivation for achieving their goals. In this regard, quality of work-life is very important to teachers. This is in agreement with the study of Manju (2014) which revealed that high quality of work-life is to be ensured by educational department to attract and retain teachers. The program should be designed to improve quality of work-life of teachers. High quality of work-life indicates a deep and stable values among its teachers and

therefore indicates job security, equitable pay, and rewards, justice in the workplace, meaningful and interesting work, control over self, work and workplace, work authority and contribute to individual and school effectiveness. Hence it should be ensured that the school environment and school practices cater to the improvement of these components of quality of work life.

3.2 Interpersonal skills. The teachers concurred that they got along well with colleagues affirmed in the highest weighted mean of 3.41. On the contrary, there was satisfactory communication, and information flow between the departments and consideration of views were taken into account in resolving work-related problems which had lowest weighted mean of 3.15. As such the quality of work-life in terms of interpersonal skills had a composite mean of 3.25 showing that teachers have good interpersonal skill and this is shown in their harmonious relationship with others. This results in better performance in the workplace, more cooperation in school-initiated projects and almost family-like relationship where teachers share resources, practices, and others, help each other grow personally and professionally. These feelings of ease in the workplace make working in the school a more pleasant experience. Thus, despite challenges, teachers are still motivated to go to work, an indication of appreciation of the quality of work-life they have.

3.3 Professional relationship. Teachers agreed that professional relationship existed between school heads and teachers which achieved the highest weighted mean of 3.49. Meanwhile, handling critical matters in school with strict confidentiality had the lowest weighted mean of 3.32 agreed on by teachers. Assessment on the professional relationship in school was 3.41 showing agreement among teachers.

3.4 Time management. Teachers concurred that they prioritized tasks in order of importance and urgency and made sure that task

was completed before attending to another activity which had the highest weighted mean of 3.39. Moreover, they agreed their working hour/pattern was suitable to personal circumstances but was given the lowest weighted mean of 3.35. The composite mean of 3.36 on time management indicates agreement of teachers that they need organizing and planning the time between specific activities. Good time management enables teachers to work smarter, not harder, to get things done in less time, even when time is tight and pressures are high. Failing to manage time, damages effectiveness and causes stress. When teachers practice good time management, routine work becomes established and stress and confusion are reduced. In such state, teachers' work-life does not become stressful and tiresome. This infers that time management addresses not only faculty but should also be practiced by administrators. Proper time management practiced by both administrators and teachers make school activities and operations run smoothly.

4. Differences on the Assessments on Job Satisfaction and Quality of Work Life when Grouped according to Profile Variables.

4.1 Age. As to job satisfaction, a test of hypothesis revealed no significant differences in the assessments of teachers as grouped by age considering their variables of teaching assignment, designation, promotion, training, and fringe benefits with p-values ranging from .19 -1.095. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. On the other hand, as to quality of work-life, there were no significant differences in assessments based on age on variables of interpersonal skills, professional relationship, and time management with p - values ranging from 0.345-89 higher than .05 level of significance and f-values which ranged from 0.0.287-1.13 were listed. However, assessments differed by age as to work environment given 0.034 p-values and f value of 2.665. The null hypothesis was rejected.

4.2 Sex. As to job satisfaction, a test of hypothesis revealed no significant differences in the assessments of teachers as per sex considering all variables with p-values ranging from 0.17-0.92 higher than .05 level of significance and f-values ranging from -0.208-1.39. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. On the other hand, as to quality of work-life, there were likewise no significant differences in assessments based on sex on all variables which ranged from 0.927-1.54. However, assessment differed by sex to professional relationship given 0.031 p-values and f-value of 2.17. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.

4.3 Civil status. As to job satisfaction, a test of hypothesis revealed no significant differences in the assessments of teachers considering civil status considering all variables with p-values range from 0.14-0.91 higher than .05 level of significance and f-values range from 0.18-1.84. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. On the other hand, as to quality of work-life, no significant difference in assessments based on civil status on all variables with p-values ranging from 0.62-0.80 higher than .05 level of significance and f-values which range from 0.33-0.60 were noted. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.

4.4 Educational attainment. As to job satisfaction, a test of hypothesis revealed no significant differences in the assessments of teachers as to all variables with p-values ranging from 0.005-0.04 lower than .05 level of significance and f-values ranging from 2.38-4.51. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. On the other hand, as to quality of work-life, similarly no significant differences in assessments for all variables with p-values ranging from 0.001-0.02 lower than .05 level of significance t-values ranged from 3.45-6.09 were registered. However, assessment differed by educational attainment given 0.053 p-values and t-value of 2.61. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.



Table 1. Difference in the Assessments Terms of Educational Attainment

Variables	p-values	Computed t-values	Decision on Ho	VI
Teaching assignment	0.02	3.33	Reject	S
Designation	0.01	3.697	Reject	S
Promotion	0.005	4.47	Reject	S
Training	0.04	2.83	Reject	S
Fringe benefits	0.005	4.51	Reject	S
Work environment	0.053	2.61	Failed to Reject	NS
Interpersonal	0.001	6.09	Reject	S
Professional	0.02	3.45	Reject	S
Time management	0.009	4.02	Reject	S

Legend: S - Significant NS - Not Significant

4.5 Length of service. As to job satisfaction, a test of hypothesis revealed no significant differences in the teachers considering all variables with p-values ranging from 0.21-0.92 higher than .05 level of significance and t - values ranging from 0.28-1.46. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. Similarly, as to quality of work-life, there were no significant differences in the assessments based on length of service on all variables registered in p-values ranging from 0.01-0.90 higher than .05 level of significance and t-values which ranged from 0.32-3.07. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. Teachers' role is pivotal in providing education, creating knowledge, facilitating technological advancement and enriching the national culture. Education empowers human beings by developing their skills and abilities that provide competitive edge to them. These give strength to teachers. They get knowledge through education, evaluate the phenomenon and generate as well as share the ideas to learners. In order to attain these goals, teachers should not only be committed and devoted, but also competent and creative, and for that matter, they should be provided with better quality of work life.

Table 2. Difference on the Assessments in Terms of Length of Service

Variables	p-values	Computed t-values	Decision on Ho	VI
Job Satisfaction				
Teaching assignment	0.23	1.39	Failed to Reject	S
Designation	0.21	1.46	Failed to Reject	S
Promotion	0.41	1.02	Failed to Reject	S
Training	0.35	1.12	Failed to Reject	S
Fringe benefits	0.92	0.28	Failed to Reject	S
Quality of Work Life				
Work environment	0.01	3.07	Failed to Reject	NS
Interpersonal	0.81	0.45	Failed to Reject	S
Professional	0.64	0.68	Failed to Reject	S
Time management	0.9	0.32	Failed to Reject	S

Legend: S - Significant NS - Not Significant

5. Proposed Reinforcement Mechanisms for Quality Work Life

The study proposed reinforcement mechanisms for quality work-life of public elementary teachers in Mulanay, Quezon, Philippines. These served as a response to the findings of the study which garnered lowest assessments in the variables such as work environment, professional relationship, interpersonal skills, and time management. The proposed mechanisms included objectives, reinforcement mechanisms, strategies; persons involved, and expected outcomes which to the researcher's perspective may positively affect teachers' quality of work life.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Most of the elementary teachers are middle-aged females who are bachelor's

degree holders and have few years teaching service.

2. Teachers manifest job satisfaction and therefore find the job-related aspects of teaching assignment, designation, promotion, training, and fringe benefits acceptable.
3. Teachers appreciate their quality of work-life as to their work environment, interpersonal skills, professional skills, professional relationship, and time management with peers and administrators.
4. Teachers assess that their job satisfaction and quality of work-life are influenced by their educational attainment.
5. The proposed reinforcement mechanisms may help enhance the quality work-life of public elementary teachers in Quezon Province.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were offered:

1. The proposed reinforcement mechanism may be validated and evaluated for possible implementation.
2. A stronger partnership may be developed between the school and other stakeholders to enhance the implementation of reinforcement mechanisms.
3. Appropriate policies and guidelines may be formulated which respond to the research results to ensure proper implementation.
4. A similar study may be conducted to determine the job satisfaction and quality of work life of other public elementary school teachers in other areas.

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