

Socio-Demographic and Economic Characteristics as Correlates of Work Attitudes of Elementary School Teachers

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Abstract - The main objective of this study was to determine the work attitudes of the Katangawan Central Elementary School teachers as influenced by their socio-demographic and economic characteristics. Included as respondents in this study were 31 teachers from Katangawan Central Elementary School, Buayan District, General Santos City Division of School Year 2006 – 2007. The result showed that majority of the teachers belong to the 23 to 30 age bracket, non-Ilocano, females, single, and living in a rural area. Most of the teachers belong to the lowest salary level and have the least trainings too. Moreover, most of them have already taken some masters degree units. Thirty teachers have claimed that they are a member of a religious organization while one claims that he/she is not a member of any religious organization. As to the work attitudes of the teachers, they moderately agree that their work is a therapy and livelihood. The teachers disagreed that they do not look for other source of income aside from teaching. The teachers

however agreed that their work is a service. It was revealed in this study that the socio demographic and economic characteristics of the teachers have no influence on their work attitude as a therapy, service and livelihood.

Keywords - Work attitudes, socio-demographic, economic, Katawangan Elementary School, teachers

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, work plays an important role in human lives. In fact it could be considered as the most abused human activity. This is so because of the universal characteristic of work. It prevails from the simple manual work to the more complex administrative work and is done by the least learned individual to the university graduates.

With the advent of industrialization and the wide opening of the job market to the international community, work has become more and more indispensable. It then follows that the wider the scope of the work becomes, the harder it is to define.

This complexity leads to various meanings and interpretations from the different members of the society. One particular and popular definition of work is made by Johanson (1996) and her colleagues. According to them, work can be distinguished between its absolute centrality and relative centrality. In the former, the meaning of work is evaluated in absolute terms without relating it to anything else. In the latter, work is seen in relation to other important aspects of life, such as family and leisure.

From the mentioned distinctions of work, it is possible to generate many attitudes towards work from workers. For according to Apodaca (1996), it is but normal for a good worker to possess the proper balance of three elements. One element is skill, the other is knowledge and another is the attitude toward work. These three elements are required in varying proportions on every job. Work as a therapeutic activity, as a way of serving people and as a means of livelihood are just some of the many attitudes of workers towards their work. These attitudes will

be discussed in this study.

How these attitudes are viewed by workers, varies from one worker to another because it is affected by many factors. Socio-demographic variables for example could be considered as causal factors why these variations occur. Alongside with the socio-demographic is the economic factor of the worker. And yet another are more qualitative factors like emotional or cultural or even political backgrounds of the workers.

Moreover, questions like which of these factors affects more the workers attitudes and how did these factors affect the attitudes of the workers should also be taken into consideration.

With these complications governing the attitudes of workers towards their work, it is important that it would be given a just clarity. And one of the avenues in laying out the causality of the mentioned factors is through research. Here lays the commencement of this study. As a learned individual, it is one of the mandates of the researcher to find answer to these questions.

FRAMEWORK

Teaching as a work plays an important role in the society. Because of this profession, the literacy in the country is 89%, one of the highest in developing countries, the ideals of our people – freedom, democracy, and free enterprise was preserved, and leaders in business, executives in government, law makers in Congress, magistrates in the court system, delegates to international bodies, and presidents of the country were produced (Galang, 2001).

It is then important that researchers should continuously focus on the development of the teaching profession especially for the development of teacher for he as always is in the heart of the problem being the single most important factor in education.

This research is then focused on the work attitudes of the teachers towards work. In this study, these attitudes are specifically defined to be the attitudes of the teachers towards work as a therapy, service and livelihood. These attitudes were considered as the dependent variables.

Further this study dealt on the profile of the socio-demographic

and economic characteristics of the teachers. The socio-demographic and economic characteristics were delimited to age, tribe, sex, civil status, location of residence, monthly salary, number of trainings attended, educational attainment, and membership in religious organizations. The socio-demographic and economic characteristics are then considered in this study as the independent variable.

The relevance of this study is greatly focused in determining whether the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the teachers influence the work attitudes of the teachers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Primarily, this study is concentrated in determining the work attitudes as influenced by the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the Katangawan Central Elementary School teachers.

Specifically, this study pursued the following objectives:

1. to determine the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the respondents in terms of sex, age, tribe, civil status, location of residence, monthly salary, number of trainings attended, educational attainment, membership in religious organizations
2. to assess the attitudes of the respondents towards work as therapy, work as service, and work as livelihood
3. to relate the socio-demographic and economic characteristics and the work attitudes of the teachers.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted at Katangawan Central Elementary School, Buayan District, Division of General Santos City. The socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the teachers were considered as the independent variables in this study. In order to gather data for the independent variable a survey method was used using a prepared questionnaire.

The dependent variables of this study were the work attitudes of the teachers. The work attitudes that were used in this study were the work as a therapy, work as a service and work as a livelihood. Another set of questionnaire divided into three parts relative to the work

attitudes considered in this study was prepared in order to gather the needed data for the dependent variable.

Both the independent and dependent data were considered as primary data in this study. Descriptive statistics such as mean, weighted mean, frequency counts, and multiple regression analysis were used to treat the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study is primarily concerned with the age, tribe, sex, civil status, location of the residence, monthly salary, number of trainings attended, educational attainment, and membership to religious organizations.

The result shows that the most teachers belong to the younger age bracket of 23 to 30 having 25.8%; and the age brackets 31 to 38 and 39 to 46 both having 22.6% shares of the total population. As to the other socio-demographic and economic characteristics, the result shows that most teachers are non-Ilocano (74.2%), females (83.9%), married (80.6%), and living in a rural area (77.4%). Most of the monthly salary of the teachers belongs to the lowest salary bracket which is 11472 to 12548 (64.5%). As to the training, most teachers have the least number of trainings attended which are 3 to 8 (38.7%) and 9 to 14 (38.7%) trainings. Moreover, most teachers have already taken a masteral degree units (58.1%). And finally, though majority of the teachers claimed that they are a member of a religious organization (96.8%), there is one teacher who claimed that he/she is not a member of any religious organization (3.2%).

Three work attitudes were considered in this study. These work attitudes are work as a therapy, work as a service and work as a livelihood. It was also included in this study the overall work attitudes of the teachers. Presented below are the findings drawn from the data gathered.

This study revealed that the teachers moderately agree that their work is a therapy with a mean of 3.38. The teachers however agree that their work is a service having the highest mean of 4.38. Work as a service is also the work attitude that received the highest mean of

all the three work attitudes studied. The work as a livelihood on the other hand has the least mean of 2.72 and a qualitative description of moderately agree. In this work attitude too the teachers disagree that they do not look for other source of income with a mean of 2.32. The overall work attitude has the mean of 3.50 and a qualitative description of agree.

The teachers' socio-demographic and economic characteristics have no influence to their attitude towards work as a therapy. Even if the socio-demographic and economic characteristics are taken singly there is still no characteristic that has an influence to the teachers work attitude as a therapy. This has lead to the acceptance of the null hypothesis which states that the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the teachers have no influence to their work attitude as a therapy.

The same is true with the attitude of the teachers towards work as a service. Still, even if taken singly or in general, the work attitude of the teachers towards work as a service is not influenced by their socio-demographic and economic characteristics. Also, this result has led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis that the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the teachers have no influence to their work attitudes.

Only in the category attitude towards work as a livelihood did some of the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the teachers significantly influenced their work attitude. The result shows that the sex and civil status revealed to have influenced the teachers attitudes towards work as a livelihood. However, if all the socio-demographic and economic characteristics will be considered, it revealed that it has no significant influence to the teachers' attitude towards work as a livelihood. It also appears that the teachers disagree on the statement that they do not look for other source of income. Even in this work attitude the null hypothesis is accepted stating that the teachers' socio-demographic and economic characteristics have no influence to their work attitudes as a livelihood.

The above-mentioned results are congruent to the overall influence of the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the teachers to their work attitudes. This study revealed that the socio-demographic

and economic characteristics of the teachers have not influenced their overall attitudes toward work. This has led then to the acceptance of the null hypothesis stating that the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the teachers have no influence to their overall work attitudes.

CONCLUSIONS

It was revealed in the findings that not even a single socio-demographic and economic characteristic of the teachers has influenced their overall attitudes toward work. From this result, it further reveals that had there been any variables affecting the overall work attitudes of the teachers it is not the socio-demographic and economic characteristics which is also considered as the independent variable of the study.

This is also true in the specific work attitudes. In the attitude of the teachers towards work as a therapy, it is interesting to note that the teachers just moderately agree that their work is a therapy to them. This qualitative description is just one step higher from the teachers disagreeing that their work is a therapy. This scenario however is not at all being influenced by being young or old, tribe, sex, being single or married, location, monthly salary, trainings attended, educational attainment and membership to religious organizations of the teachers.

In the attitude towards work as a service, there is still no single socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the teachers that has influenced this attitude. Although the teachers agree, as shown in the high mean of this attitude, that their work is a service, the socio-demographic and economic characteristics have nothing to do with this.

It appears that the male teachers and single teachers consider their work as a livelihood. Only this two characteristics has an influence to this work attitude of the teachers. This is because most teachers are young males.

Being single on the hand entails a lesser financial responsibility compared to the married teachers. It then follows that single teachers are more contented with their work as a means of livelihood compared to the married teachers whose salary and benefits could hardly support

their families. It even appears in the result that teachers tend to find other sources of income aside from their work as a teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and conclusions of this study, it is recommended that:

1. The socio-demographic and economic factors of the teachers be improved by the Department of Education (DepEd) so that it could also influence the attitudes of the teachers toward work. The alleviation of the working conditions and the monthly salary of the teachers in particular be given priority in the development plan of the DepEd so as to help the teachers view their work more as a therapy and as a means of livelihood.
2. That efforts of the Department of Education in encouraging the teachers to see their job as a service to the Filipino people and country in general be continued. This is a good tool in helping the teachers become a better public servant.
3. The schools offering graduate degrees should reevaluate their curriculum, goals and standard so as to help the teachers have a more holistic and positive attitudes toward their work. The graduate school could also serve as an avenue for the graduate students to a) have introspection on what they could possibly do, b) create broader perspective and c) be independent in alleviating their working conditions.
4. Studies dealing with the intrinsic factors and its influence to the teachers work attitudes should also be conducted. This is to know further if the intrinsic factors instead of the extrinsic factors which are the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the teachers have influence to their work attitudes.
5. The results of this study can be used by other concerned groups or individuals for purposes relative to this research.

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