A PRELIMINARY STUDY ON THE BASIC EDUCATION FILIPINO TEACHERS’ PSYCHE: WHAT MAKES THEM TICK?

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Abstract

This study was conducted to find out what teachers in the basic education consider the most important motivating factor(s) in their job and to determine whether their motivation level is affected by gender, age, educational attainment, and length of service. Fifty teachers, half coming from the public and the other half from private schools, were surveyed. The result gave the following ranking of the indicators in decreasing order of importance: 1) relationship with superiors and colleagues, 2) mission/vision of the school, 3) job security, 4) work environment, 5) the work itself, 6) salary, 7) benefits, 8) challenging tasks, 9) recognition, and 10) promotion. However, the Kendall Coefficient of Concordance indicated that the respondents had no consensus in ranking the said factors. This implied that there was a significant variation in the motivator as deemed important by each respondent. Thus, in this preliminary study, it showed that the said factors were equally important to the teachers. Gender, age, educational attainment and length of service did not significantly result to varying degree of motivation level among the teachers. It is recommended to get a wider scope of sampling to represent the entire country in order to obtain a conclusive understanding of what really makes the Filipino teachers motivated.

I. INTRODUCTION

The positive correlation between teacher’s motivation and performance level is supported by results of many researches (Gottelman & Yekhlef, 2005). Thus, in the current drive of the Department of Education to strengthen its workforce, the teachers in particular, there is a need to clearly determine which factor(s) will have the greatest effect on the basic education Filipino teachers’ motivation that will translate to increasing the quality of service being delivered. Having a deeper understanding on the effect of gender, age, educational attainment, and length of service to the level of motivation of teachers will also guide the school administrators and policy makers in addressing teachers’ concerns. It is in this context that this study was conducted.

Statement of the Problem

This study determined what makes
the basic education Filipino teachers motivated. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:
1. What is the ranking pattern of motivation indicators among the Filipino teachers?
2. Is there a consensus among the respondents in ranking the motivation indicators?
3. Is their level of motivation affected by gender, age, educational attainment and length of service?

Hypotheses
1. Salary and benefits are the prime motivators among Filipino teachers.
2. There is a consensus among the Filipino teachers in rating the most important factors that affect their level of motivation.
3. Gender, age, educational attainment, and length of service do not result to significantly different motivational levels among teachers.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Motivation
The significance of a teacher in nation building cannot be overemphasized. Teachers are in the forefront of molding the youth to become productive and responsible citizens. However, the declining quality of education in the country identifies teacher factor as one of the contributors. Like in many developing countries, issues like demoralized and fractured workforce, little and delayed payment, neglected educational and training needs, bureaucratic processes affecting effective job performance and career progression, declining status, high attrition rates, constant turnover, lack of confidence and varying levels of professional commitment are experienced ("What Makes Teachers Tick?", 2002).

In response to the said problems, the current government administration allocated the highest budget among the government sectors. According to DepEd Secretary Luri stro in 2013, this additional budget would be used to 61,000 additional teachers, construct 66,000 classrooms and 90,000 toilets for public schools to erase the backlog (Education in Crisis, 2013). Another approach of the government addressing concern for the teachers is by raising its basic pay. Angara's Senate Bill No. 61 aims to raise the current base pay of P18,549 to P33,859. It is hoped that with this salary package, the government will be able to attract the best and the brightest graduates of the country to become teachers.

The positive correlation between teacher performance and quality education is well-documented (Gottelman & Yeklef, 2005). Hence, the government is right in alleviating the economic status of the teachers in order to make them more focused with their job. However, in the case of other developing countries, it is not only the salary that needs to be considered to make the teachers highly motivated and more effective. In a study done by the Save the Children which involved developing countries, they identified the following factors which also need to be considered (Guajardo, 2011):
1. Address basic needs first followed by intrinsic motivators.
2. Interconnectedness

Factors identified in the decline are:
   a. workload and challenges
   b. remuneration and incentive
   c. recognition and prestige
   d. accountability
   e. career development
   f. institutional environment
In Rawalpandi, Pakistan, a study was conducted by Alam (2011) to examine the motivational level of secondary school teachers. The result showed that teachers were not satisfied with their socio-economic status, choice of profession, students' behavior, and examination stress.

The above scenario may apply to the Philippine situation as well. It is then very important to analyze the psyche of Filipino teachers in order to come up with the right solution since motivation is also culture-based. Different motivational theories underscored differences in human nature, which would be necessary to understand and identify the most applicable in the case of the Filipino teachers. To cite some of the most important theories, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs identified five levels in increasing importance. The four levels (lower-order needs) are considered physiological needs, while the top level of the pyramid is considered growth needs. The lower needs must be satisfied before higher-order needs can influence behavior. The levels are as follows: self-actualization which includes morality, creativity, problem solving, etc.; esteem that includes self-confidence, self-esteem, achievement, respect, etc.; belongingness which includes love, friendship, intimacy, family, etc.; safety - includes security of environment, employment, resources, health, property, etc.; and physiological which includes air, food, water, sex, sleep, other factors towards homeostasis (Warrilow, 2011).

The reinforcement theory of BF Skinner identified four types of operant conditioning that would determine the consequences of a behavior on the future occurrence of the same behavior. In positive reinforcement, a behavior is strengthened when it has been rewarded. Negative reinforcement, on the other hand, strengthens a behavior by withdrawing the stressor as a consequence of a behavior. Extinction weakens a behavior by giving nothing when a behavior is exhibited. For instance, not giving any recognition for a job well done may cause the person in giving extra effort. Last among the operant conditioning type is punishment given as a consequence of a behavior.

Cognitive evaluation theory recognizes two motivation factors: intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Intrinsic motivators make people do the things that make them feel satisfied without giving them any external reward as opposed to external motivators. Herzberg’s two factor theory proposes hygiene factors and motivators. Hygiene factors are those whose absence cause dissatisfaction but when present does not result to motivation. Motivators are factors which do not cause dissatisfaction when absent but make people motivated in the work when present (Warrilow, 2011).

There are only a few available literature that involve studies on motivations of Filipino teachers. In the study conducted by De Guzman (2005) among teachers from Manila as respondents, reported that the students, the uniqueness of the teaching profession, and the nature of the teaching-learning process were the three significant motivators of the teachers. In another study conducted in Cebu, the teachers’ length of service, salary, incentives, and commitment influence the motivation of teachers (Dayagbil, 2013).

Job satisfaction among Cotabato teachers were found out to be significantly affected by age, educational attainment, and length of service but not by gender and
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Job Satisfaction

According to Teck-Hong and Waheed (2011), job satisfaction is an emotional response accompanying actions or thoughts relating to work. This satisfaction is an attitude; it is possible for a worker to be satisfied with his job. Bisen and Priya (2010) consider it as an attitudinal variable that can be considered as a global feeling about the job.

Locke (as cited in Aamodt, 2010) developed the idea known as discrepancy theory. This theory suggests that a person’s job satisfaction comes from what he/she feels is important rather than the fulfillment or unfulfillment of needs. Dissatisfaction will occur when a person receives less than what he/she wants. Furthermore, he said that “employees come to a job with certain needs, values and expectations. If there is a discrepancy between these needs, values and expectations and the reality of the job, employees will become dissatisfied and less motivated “ (Aamodt, 2010, p. 371).

In other words, job satisfaction depends on employees’ perceptions (beliefs). One perception is the employee’s assessment of what the job and work environment is currently providing. The second perception is what the employee wants the job to provide or what he believes the job should provide. One’s satisfaction is determined by the correspondence or agreement between these two perceptions. If an employee believes “what is” equals “what should be”, satisfaction will result. Dissatisfaction is predicted if the employees believe “what should be” exceeds “what is”. This is called an “under reward” discrepancy (Bisen & Priya, 2010). Job satisfaction creates confidence, loyalty, and ultimately improved quality in the performance of the workers. Sirot, Mischkind, and Meltzer (as cited in Tanner, 2007) mentioned some benefits of job satisfaction. First, it can be seen as yielding ethical capital, as promoting job satisfaction in the workplace is the “right thing to do” from a humanistic perspective. Second, it can reduce the costs of employee turnover, which can include lost productivity, temporary staffing wages, overtime pay, recruitment costs and training costs for new employees. Loyal employees are likely to stay in their jobs longer, resist competition job offers, refrain from actively seeking other employment and recommend the organization to others as potential employees and customers.

Farrel (as cited in Redmond & Powell, 2011) stated that employees’ response to dissatisfaction in the workplace can take four forms, each differ from the other on two dimensions, active versus passive and constructive versus destructive.

1. Exit refers to behavior aimed at leaving the company, such as looking for a new job. Exit is destructive and active response.
2. Voice refers to employees’ initiative to improve conditions at the organization, for example, offering ideas on how to do the business. Voice is an active and constructive
response.
3. Loyalty is the employee’s attitude of trust toward the organization. It can manifest itself as passive but optimistic and constructive.
4. Neglect occurs when an employee shows absenteeism, shows up late to work and expends less effort at work. Neglect is passive and destructive.

Clayton Aldefer (as cited in Aamodt, 2010) simplified Abraham Maslow’s five basic human needs in ERG theory with three categories: existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs.

Existence needs. These needs correlate with Maslow’s first two levels which are the basic requirements for material existence: psychological and safety needs. In a work context, this need is satisfied through pay, fringe benefits, a safe working environment and some measures of job security (Warrilow, 2011).

Pay. Syptak, Marshland, and Ulmer (1999) mentioned the old adage “you get what you pay for,” tends to be true when it comes to staff members. Kokemuller (as cited in Rhinendy, 2013) stated that fair salary is important in the most basic sense to attract and retain employees. Salaries and benefits comparable to other organization salaries may help raise satisfaction and motivate high performance. If individuals believe they are not compensated well, they will be dissatisfied working for an organization. If companies wish to produce a competitive product, they must also offer competitive wages.

Fringe benefits. When a company hires an employee, salary is not the only way of being paid. Fringe benefits are a form of compensation that does not show up on paycheck. It might be the incentive that makes a prospective employee work for a certain company or the thing that makes him go elsewhere for work.

Joseph (2011) said that fringe benefits are provided by companies in addition to money paid in the form of salaries, wages, commission or bonuses. Fringe benefits increase over an employee’s tenure, giving him more incentive to stay with a particular company. Companies may make a variety of fringe benefits available to employees. Common benefits may include retirement plans such as pensions, insurance products for life, health and disability paid vacation time and sick days, family and bereavement leave and health and wellness programs.

Job security. Job stability and medium to long-term security ensures that employees are motivated enough to be committed to organizational objectives and goals and reap to commensurate rewards and benefits (Dutta, 2011). When striving for job security, an individual offers his dedication and commitment to his task in an organization and focuses his skills and capabilities on being consistent performer. A secure and stable job with the right challenges gives peace of mind.

One of the most important reasons every worker aims for job security is to be able to provide for his family, be it a growing one or elderly parents. A stable job with an adequate compensation package, financial incentives and other benefits should ideally provide medium-to long-term financial security. In addition, Thornton (2011) describes job security as employees’ assurance or confidence that they will keep their current job. Employees with a high level of job security have a low probability of losing their job in the near future. Job security is also affected by a worker’s performance,
success of the business, and the current economic environment. A lack of job satisfaction can be a source of distraction and result in excess stress and low morale that hinder employee’s overall performance. Although the economy and job performance are the two most influential factors of job security, security may be increased through other avenues such as collective bargaining agreements, employment contracts or labor legislation that prevents arbitrary layoffs by the company.

**Working environment.** The environment in which people work has a tremendous effect on their level of pride for themselves and for the work they are doing. Keeping up to date facilities and equipment and making sure employees have adequate workspace may decrease dissatisfaction (Syptak, Marshland, & Ulmer, 1999). In addition Guidoccio (2011), managers and supervisors must take active steps to ensure that workplaces are safe and productive.

**Relatedness Needs.** These needs to co-relate in Maslow’s third and fourth levels focus on the desire to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships with family, friends, co-workers and employers, including the need to interact with other people. In a work context and given the amount of time most people spend at work, this need is normally satisfied to some extent by their relationships with colleagues and managers, such as interpersonal relations, supervision and management (Warrillow, 2011).

**Interpersonal Relations.** Syptak, Marshland and Ulmer as cited in Redmond and Powell (2011) as cited in Rhinendy (2013) added that it is becoming more important for an employer to recognize the delicate balancing act (work-life balance practices) that its employees perform between their personal life and work life. Policies that respond to common personal and family needs can be essential to maintain job satisfaction. According to Martins and Coetzee as cited in Lumley, Coetzee, Tladinyane and Ferreira (2011), “Work fulfills an individual’s social factor need” (p.104). Therefore, having friendly and supportive co-workers leads to increases job satisfaction. Allowing employees to develop a social aspect to their job may increase satisfaction as well as develop sense of teamwork. Co-workers relationships may benefit the organization as a whole given that, teamwork is a very important aspect of organizational productivity and success. Moreover, when people are allowed to develop work relationships, they care more about pulling their own weight and not letting co-workers down.

**Supervision.** Supervision is the act of management by overseeing the activities of a person or group. The owners of companies hire supervisors to ensure employees are using company time productively and effectively. A supervisor is team leader, coach, overseer, area manager or facilitator in a company or department of a company they work for. The job of a supervisor is to properly instruct the employee on how to perform their work duties. If the skills the supervisor have are effective, it will show in the department’s overall performance (Girard, 2011). According to Spector, “an immediate supervisor’s behavior is determinant of job satisfaction” (Lumley, Coetzee, Tladinyane & Ferreira, 2011, p. 103).

To decrease dissatisfaction in this area, it requires leadership skills and the ability to treat all employees fairly. Supervisors should be taught to use positive feedback whenever possible and establish a set of means of employees evaluation and
feedback so that no one feels singled out (Syptak, Marshland, & Ulmer, 1999). Robbins as cited in Lumley, Coetzee, Tladinya, and Ferreira (2011) wrote that employee satisfaction increases when the immediate supervisor is understanding, friendly, offers praise for good performance, listens to employee’s opinions and shows personal interest in them” (p. 103). In addition, if the supervisor is supportive, fair and knowledgeable, then these will lead to JS among workers who show loyalty and sincerity toward their supervisors. The whole attitude toward their work will change if supervisor is good (Bissen & Priya, 2010).

**Management.** Managers must know the right management style to use with employees. Some employees prefer close supervision. They expect their supervisors to assign them daily tasks and check their work. Others like autonomy and they best respond to a leadership style that encourages creativity and self-sufficiency. Many companies use participative leadership style through which employees have some input in company strategies. However, when top managers make all the decisions, it can cause job dissatisfaction among talented employees (Suttle, 2011).

In addition to this, an organization’s policies can be a great source of frustration for employees as well if policies are unclear or unnecessary or if not everyone is required to follow them. Although employees will never feel a great sense of motivation or satisfaction due to policies, this can decrease dissatisfaction by making sure that policies are fair and equally applied to all.

**Growth Needs.** These needs correlate to Maslow’s fourth and fifth levels which are about the fulfillment of desires to be creative, productive and to complete meaningful tasks in order to build and enhance a person’s self-esteem through personal achievement. These needs are all about personal development. In a work context, a person’s job or profession can provide a significant satisfaction of growth needs through recognition, advancement and achievement (Warrilow, 2011).

**Recognition.** Recognition is considered a form of positive reinforcement and serves as a motivator. Employees work even harder because their work is valued and appreciated (Suttle, 2011). Since individuals at all levels of the organization want to be recognized for their achievement on the job, taking time to acknowledge a job well done may lead to satisfaction. Positive and constructive feedback boosts an employee’s morale and keeps them working in the right direction (Syptak, Marshland & Ulmer, 1999). Guettler (2011) suggests recognition and reward be given to employees who do exceptional job. Employers must let the workers know they are noticed and appreciated. It is important to employees’ motivation to help individuals believe that the work they are doing is meaningful.

**Advancement.** According to Suttle (2011) the most ambitious employees often strive for more responsibilities as they gain experience. So, responsibility is a major factor that can influence job satisfaction. Employees who take on more responsibilities can learn more in their current positions. Subsequently, they are more prepared for promotions when positions are open. Employees who are goal-oriented seek advancement opportunities in companies. Thus, they have a greater chance of being satisfied with their jobs when they get promoted within their organizations. When feasible, employers must support their em-
employees by allowing them to pursue further education which will make them more valuable to practice professionally and be fulfilled.

**Achievement.** Most individuals sincerely want to do a good job. To do so, they must be placed in positions that use their talents and are not set up for failure. Set clear achievable goals and standards for each position, and make sure employees know what those are. Individuals must receive regular, timely feedback on how they are doing and should feel adequately challenged in their jobs, but not to overload them with challenges that are too difficult or impossible, as that can be paralyzing. Thus, it is important to make sure that employees are in the proper positions to utilize their talent and enhance satisfaction. When employees are in the proper role and feel a sense of achievement and challenge, their talents will be in line with the goals best suited for them.

**III. METHODOLOGY**

Fifty basic education teachers from Quezon City and Pasay City were randomly selected for the survey. Twenty-five came from the public schools and the other half were from private schools. The samples were distributed across the demographic variables such as age, gender, years of service, and educational level. A set of questions targeting variables on demographics, motivating factors such as job requirement, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which might affect job satisfaction were rated by respondents. Respondents were also asked to rank the following in terms of importance as motivator with 10 as the most important and 1 as the least important: salary, benefits, relationship with superiors and colleagues, job security, promotion, the work itself, mission/vision of the school, challenging tasks, work environment and recognition. Analysis of relationships among the variables was done using one-way ANOVA. Determining any consensus in the ranking of the factors was done using the Kendall Coefficient of Concordance.

The data for the respondents’ profile is summarized in Table 1. In terms distribution with respect to gender, female teachers outnumber its male counterpart. Sixteen (16) per cent of the sample came from the male population and eighty-four (84) per cent were female. In the age bracket, we can see that midcareer teachers (bracket 31-40 and 41-50) make up the bulk of the sample comprising forty-six (46) per cent of the population followed by the youngest representatives from the 20-30 bracket representing forty (40) percent of the sample and the remaining fourteen (14) percent was represented by teachers 51 years and above. The highest academic achievement attained by the respondents showed a majority from the bachelor’s degree with seventy-two (72) per cent, master’s degree holder with twenty-six (26) per cent and two (2) per cent for the doctorate degree holder. The distribution with respect to length of service showed that the bulk came from the 21 years and up bracket comprising twenty-six (26) per cent closely followed by the beginning teachers at bracket 1-5 years with twenty-four (24) per cent and 6-10 years with twenty-two (22) per cent. Midcareer teachers (combined 11-20 bracket) make up a total of twenty-eight (28) per cent.
From the data in Table 2, it can be deduced that the teachers gave intangible motivators of
prime importance. Salary and benefits do not appear to be the prime consideration of the teachers. This is consistent with the report of Carr et al. (2011) that we cannot generalize whether increasing the pay will increase the performance of public servants including teachers in the low- and middle-income countries. Filipino teachers are still idealistic giving more consideration to the nobility of the work itself and their relationship with people. With the low Kendall concordance, however, it implies that there is a significant difference in the standards used by the raters thereby resulting to weak consensus. This result is not totally unexpected knowing that each individual has his/her own motivators as explained by the abounding motivational theories. Thus, there is no single factor that can be considered most important in motivating Filipino teachers which is good news for school administrators and policy makers. It means that it is not only through the economic reasons that we can motivate our teachers but we can take advantage as well of the things which are inexpensive and can be controlled by the administrators like relationship with colleagues, clear mission/vision of the school, and a conducive work environment.

The Effect of Gender, Age, Educational Attainment and Length of Service to Level of Motivation of Teachers

Another aspect studied was the relationship between motivation level and gender, age, educational attainment and length of service of teachers. Fifteen questions were asked to probe their motivation level and the data were analyzed using one-way ANOVA. Interestingly, the results showed that male and female teachers showed no significant difference in their motivation level (Table 3). Gallarita, Conrad & Eleguen (2012) also reported in their study of performance of male and female teachers in Misamis Oriental noted that teaching performance was the same for both genders. Hence, regardless of gender, teachers can perform their job efficiently and effectively.

Another aspect studied was the effect of age on the motivational level. Data analysis showed that motivation level does not significantly vary among the four age brackets (20-30; 31-40; 41-50; 51 and up). This means that motivational level does not significantly decline as the teacher grows older. Hence, teachers can still be effective regardless of age (Table 4).

No significant difference was also noted in the motivation level of teachers with respect to their highest educational attainment (Table 5). Teachers have the same degree of motivation whether they are bachelor’s degree or graduate degree holder.

The last variable studied was the effect of length of service (Table 6). Again, there is no significant difference in the motivational level of teachers with respect to length of service. Teachers remain to be motivated no matter how long they have rendered service to students.
In the research conducted, a total of 50 respondent teachers from public and private schools were surveyed as a preliminary study on the overall behavior of Filipino basic education teachers towards motivation in their work. The result aims to serve as a guide to school administrators and policymakers in improving job motivation of the teachers since this is important if they were to deliver quality education.

The respondents ranked the following indicators in decreasing order of importance: relationship between superiors and colleagues, mission/vision of the school, job security,

### Table 3.
**One-Way ANOVA of the Effect of Gender**

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### Table 4.
**One-Way ANOVA of Effect of Age**

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### Table 5.
**One-Way ANOVA of Effect of Educational Attainment**

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### Table 6.
**One-Way ANOVA of Effect of Length of Service**

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### Conclusion and Recommendations

In the research conducted, a total of 50 respondent teachers from public and private schools were surveyed as a preliminary study on the overall behavior of Filipino basic education teachers towards motivation in their work. The result aims to serve as a guide to school administrators and policymakers in improving job motivation of the teachers since this is important if they were to deliver quality education.

The respondents ranked the following indicators in decreasing order of importance: relationship between superiors and colleagues, mission/vision of the school, job security,
work environment, the work itself, benefits, challenging tasks, recognition and promotion. Thus, it can be said that Filipino teachers can be motivated not simply by offering them monetary incentives but also by addressing their social needs like good relationships with superiors and colleagues and a work environment that would help in their job performance.

Gender, age, educational attainment and length of service did not show any significant effect in the motivational level of the teachers. Their willingness to serve does not decline with age and so with their length of service. Bachelor’s degree holders showed to be as motivated as the graduate degree holders. Male and female teachers showed the same degree of motivation, hence, both have the potential to become excellent teachers.

In order to make the study more conclusive and encompassing of the behavior of all Filipino basic education teachers, it is recommended that sampling be done in the entire archipelago. The students’ performance from the surveyed areas must also be obtained and analyzed so as to get a clear picture of the degree of motivation of the teacher and student performance. This would lessen the subjectivity of the survey since the ratings were given based on their personal perception only. The DepEd can then make the corresponding policies that would implement the corrective measures necessary in order to keep its teachers motivated and the students achieve.

REFERENCES


