Assessment of Work Morale and Profesionalism of Tenured and Non-Tenured Collegiate Teachers in an Asian University

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Abstract: Career attitudes such as work morale-- job satisfaction, skill development and work involvement and professionalism are integral to collegiate teachers of a state university as they will subsequently transcend these to students they are teaching. The productivity of collegiate teachers may depend on their tenure, work conditions and treatment received from the affiliated university will invariably trickle down to their job performance.

Objectives: This study dealt with the morale and professionalism of tenured (permanent faculty) and non-tenured (part-time lecturers) collegiate teachers in Bicol University, Philippines. It attempted to identify their awareness and level of professionalism based on R.A.7836, or the code of ethics for professional teaching and their work morale based on their job satisfaction, skill development and work involvement scores from a psychological test.

Method: A total of 220 collegiate teachers from 12 campuses/colleges participated in this study. Stratified Random Sampling and the use of proportionate sample size (quota sampling) were utilized. The study conducted a self-made survey questionnaire to determine the level of professionalism of the respondents based on R.A. 7836 and levels of work morale based on the administration of a psychological test, the Career Attitudes and Strategies Inventory (CASI).

Results: The data show that (1) Most of the respondents, show high level of professionalism, indicative of practicing ethics in teaching, their moral responsibilities towards the state, the university, their discipline, the clientele and to themselves. However, the most of the non-tenured respondents did not find the code of ethics for professional teachers entirely applicable to them, due to their temporary status with the university which may have affected their attitude towards teaching. (2) The respondents' work morale level is seen within the average range. Respondents' work morale depend on their tenure: Tenured faculty are generally satisfied by their work but sometimes aggravated by their jobs or work situations due to designations or school-related activities. On the other hand, non-tenured faculty have more tendencies to become dissatisfied with work and may seldom seek ways to improve work performance because of their status in the university.

Conclusion: Policy review and ensuring the university's Professional Development Plan for both tenured and non-tenured faculty are directions for further inquiry.

1. Introduction

Teachers, educators, instructors and professors are some of the interchanged terms to describe people who are in teaching or education field. These are people who are experts in their fields and are usually affiliated with universities to provide special knowledge, skills, trainings related to their educational preparation to students of different levels and capacities.

Various researches would mention the need for good teachers to produce good students. But over the years, starting the 1990s, good is not anymore sufficient, as it paved way to quality teachers. *"When students have as few as two inferior teachers in a row, they almost never catch up academically with their peers."* (Cooper J, 2006) Aside from the quality of teachers, another current issue is the quantity of teachers who will fill in the need for teaching.

"On the international level, UNESCO estimates that 18 million new teachers are needed by 2015 to meet 'Education for All' goals and ensure universal access to basic education for students in all countries in the world." (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2005). Research studies established that the performance of students is related to the teacher's character or attitude (e.g. Davidson & Lang, 1960; Lee & Loeb, 2000; Rist, 2000; Wentzel, 1991), student-teacher interactions (e.g. Baker, 1999; Peterson, 1977) and teaching-learning styles (e.g. Charkins, O'Toole, & Wetzel, 1985; Dunn, R. & Dunn, K.,1979; Witkins, 1973). Collegiate teachers, with their life and human sciences teach human/mental service subject courses that not only incorporate the culture of peace and gender equality perspectives in the curriculum but also have the task to 'walk the talk' and to cultivate themselves the morality and values which their lessons largely talk about.

This present study aims towards the recognition of Bicol University Quality Policy; "meeting the highest level of clientele satisfaction and adhering to quality standards". By providing the demographic profile, morale and levels of professionalism of teaching personnel in Bicol University, Art.14, Sec. 5 of the Philippine Constitution will also be complied. In particular, these are: "The State shall enhance the right of teachers to professional advancement" and "The State shall assign the highest budgetary priority to education and ensure that teaching will attract and retain its rightful share of the best available talents through adequate remuneration and other means of job satisfaction and fulfilment." (Lawphil.net)Teachers are primarily attracted to teaching by intrinsic motivation, but extrinsic factors play a major role in retaining them. Being tenured is also an important factor for job satisfaction and fulfilment (Baldwin, 2001; Bozeman, 2011).With this proposal, a further inquiry may be ensued to address the needs of collegiate teachers in terms of career advancement, teacher effectiveness and an enhancement of teacher work morale.

1.1 Implicit and Self-Attributed Motives

Brunstein & Maier (2005) expressed that individuals feel the achievement motivation if their aspirations are successfully reached. This is interplay of situational variables and the person's intention for accomplishment. If the individual finds satisfaction on the incentives which come with the tasks, he will find the motive to continue. It is also possible that his performance is not based on what he finds interesting in his tasks but finds other factors satisfying to compensate for his lack of interest. In this study, this theory will be the basis to validate what factors may lead to the faculty's situational variables that lead to his feelings of accomplishment or better job performance as a teacher.

2. Method

2.1 Participants: Facilitating a stratified random sampling and the use of proportionate sample size (quota sampling), a total of 220 collegiate teachers from 12 campuses/colleges participated in this study. The campuses/colleges are: College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP), College of Business, Economics and Management(CBEM), College of Industrial Technology, Institute of Physical Education, Sports and Recreation(IPESR), College of Nursing(CN), College of Science (CS), Tabaco Campus (TC), Polangui Campus (PC) and College of Agriculture and Forestry (CAF), College of Engineering (CEng), College of Education (CE) and College of Arts and Letters(CAL). Since this study made certain that the respondents signed a written consent form, those who did not agree on the terms or declined in participating for whatever reasons they posed, were not included anymore. Thus, only those respondents willing to take part were included in the total number of participants. The bulk of the respondents have an age range of 25-30, there were more female respondents than male respondents and most with Master's Degree.

2.2 Measures: The respondents answered a self-made survey questionnaire was to determine the level of professionalism of the respondents based on R.A. 7836 and levels of work morale based on the administration of a psychological test, the Career Attitudes and Strategies Inventory (CASI).

2.2.1. Self-made Survey Questionnaire: A 75-item checklist subjected to pre-testing and content validation consists of 8 subsections: Teacher and the state, teacher and the community, teacher and the profession, teacher and higher authorities, teacher and learner, teacher and parents, teacher and business and teacher as a person. The subsections are based on the provisions of the R.A. 7836 or the act on code of ethics for professional teaching.

2.2.2. Career Attitudes and Strategies Inventory (CASI): a 130-item career check-up that surveys beliefs, events, and forces affecting an individual's career and identifies influences or problems requiring further discussion and exploration. Authored by John L. Holland and Gary D. Gottfredson and published by Psychological Assessment Resources in 1994.

It is self-administering for 15 minutes and has nine aspects of career or work adaptation. In this study, only the scores on Job Satisfaction, Work Involvement and Skill Development were considered to determine the work morale of the respondents.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Professionalism: Based on the RA7836, the respondents showed high levels of professionalism with a percentage rating of 76.4. It is consistently noted that both tenured and non-tenured faculty have the maximum rating in the high level of professionalism. The faculty show high level of professionalism, indicative of practicing ethics in teaching, their moral responsibilities towards the state, the university, their discipline, the clientele and to themselves. However, some tenured may not find the code of ethics for professional teachers entirely applicable to them, perhaps due to their seemingly temporary status with the university which may have affected their attitude towards teaching. Research studies show that the teacher's status (direct.gov.uk), administration control and school policy (Ma & MacMillan,1999; Sergiovanni, T. (1967) and other factors such as being in entry level or newly hired (Examiner.com, 2010) affect job performance leading to job satisfaction. In this study, this was seen in the non-tenured faculty, where due to their temporary status, they lack the ownership to show and follow the code of professional ethics.

3.2 Work Morale: The respondents' Work Morale level is seen within the average range, with 65%, which is true to both tenured and non-tenured faculty members across colleges and campuses. Although there is only 1.7% difference between tenured and non-tenured faculty who had low work morale, it is noted that there is a higher number of non-tenured with low work morale than tenured faculty. This is consistent with research findings of McCleary (2008), that poor morale may not be necessarily the cause of problems such as poor productivity or increased absences, but instead a reaction to another part of the workplace that is not functioning proficiently. In this study, the case of not functioning proficiently to the perspective of the non-tenured faculty is their temporary status, which affects their job satisfaction, discourages skill development and work involvement. It also seemingly follows that between tenured and non-tenured faculty, there are more tenured faculty members with high work morale than with non-tenured with a difference of 22 in frequency or 3.7% difference. With Work Morale, faculty members of BU are generally satisfied by their work but sometimes aggravated by their jobs or work situations. These may be due to designations or school-related activities such as accreditation visits and meeting key result areas of the four thrust of the university: instruction, research, extension and production. They are about as involved with their work as most people but work does not overwhelm other activities. Finally, they take advantage of opportunities to develop job skills and improve work performance to about the same degree as most people. Further, non-tenured faculty have more tendencies to become dissatisfied with work and may seldom seek ways to improve work performance because of their status in the university. According to Ray (2010) low morale leads to poor productivity, thus, if non-tenured faculty will not be given attention on how to give morale-boosting activities and feel that they are an integral part of the university, decline in work performance may be expected. In this study, it shows that the implicit motives of the non-tenured faculty are influenced by their temporary status, while the tenured faculty is from the security, financial stability brought by their status. The self- attributed motives for non-tenured are beyond their status and this may be from the fulfilment in teaching students but not in their present working conditions. Invariably, the tenured faculty finds their explicit motives based on the stability of their income and privileges as being a permanent employee of the university.

4. Summary and Conclusions

Faculty members of the university show high level of professionalism, indicative of practicing ethics in teaching, their moral responsibilities towards the state, the university, their discipline, the clientele and to themselves. Faculty members who are concerned with professional ethics and *"possesses dignity and reputation with high moral values as well as technical and professional competence in the practice of their noble profession, and strictly adhere to, observe, and practice this set of ethical and moral principles, standards, and values"* (preamble, RA7836), also strive for job satisfaction and stability, high level of devotion to career and try to improve job performance and sharpen work skills.

However, some non-tenured faculty may not find the code of ethics for professional teachers entirely applicable to them, due to their seemingly temporary status with the university which may have affected their attitude towards teaching. Further directions imply a need for policy review and ensuring the university's Professional Development Plan for both tenured and non-tenured faculty. There is also a need create a program specific and comprehensive for non-tenured faculty to make them feel better welcomed and secured (financially and otherwise) in the university.

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