
TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND FOLLOWERSHIP IN RELATION TO WORK BEHAVIOR IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN REGION XII

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ABSTRACT

Teacher's work ethics can mirror his/her professional relationships. The study was conducted to determine the professional characteristics and followership of teachers in State Universities and Colleges in Region XII and its relationship to work behavior. A total of 406 students-respondents randomly identified from 4 HEIs, namely: Cotabato City State Polytechnic College, Sultan Kudarat State University, Cotabato Foundation College of Science and Technology and University of Southern Mindanao. It was found out from the study that the teachers in SUC's are highly professional. Teachers demonstrated high followership in most occasion. Furthermore, their linguistic, expressive and performatory work behaviors were all highly manifested in most occasion. Descriptive correlation methods with mean and Pearson r reported that teachers' professional characteristics and work behavior have significant relationship, as well as, followership and work behavior of teachers. The results suggested that the school should create and consistently implement new effective in-service programs aimed to develop professional qualities of teachers.

KEYWORDS: *Followership, Work Behavior, Teachers' Professional Characteristics*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' behavior can interfere both instruction and student learning (Hoose, 2004). This can be manifested through repeatedly letting students out of class early, returning the papers late, providing nonspecific evaluations on homework assignments, making tests too hard or too easy. These behaviors can become potential sources of student demotivation, dissatisfaction, and resistance. She also added that incompetent teachers do not care about students. In fact, they do not bother to learn students' names. They also make their tests too difficult. Many of them are unwilling to help their students succeed. There are also teachers who are often offensive, mean, cruel, and ugly. They humiliate and intimidate students. They play favorites. They are condescending, rude, sarcastic, self-centered, unreasonable and verbally abusive. There are also absent-minded professors who fail to show up to class, arrive late, forget test dates and subject to grade homework. She also added that if the teachers failed to stop and analyze the kind of impact they have on students and in the society, such incidents will cast an unhealthy shadow on these innocent minds, which is a matter of grave concern.

In the Philippines, the Funding Assistance for Private Education or FAPE linked the low quality of education of some State Universities and Colleges to the poor performance of the faculty. This study was supported by Tullao Jr. (2003) when he cited that teachers grossly suffer from instructional inadequacy.

Since these have brought immediate attention to proper authorities, teachers should be aware that what they say and do and how they are to their students and colleagues speak to what quality of teachers they are. In the case of some State Universities and Colleges in Region XII, Soberano (2006) reported that there are a number of teachers who showed inappropriate behaviors in class which include (1) uttering sarcastic comments or belittling students, (2) early dismissal of classes, (3) shunning away from the subject, (4) unfair testing practices, and (5) having a boring personality. It is in this context that the researcher conducted a study on teachers' professional characteristics, followership and work behavior.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the characteristics, followership and work behavior of teachers in Region XII. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of teachers' professional characteristics in term of:
 - 1.1 mastery of the topic content,

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- 1.2 knowledge about the learner,
 - 1.3 competence in instructional strategies,
 - 1.4 ability in communication, and
 - 1.5 high regard for teaching?
 2. What is the level of teachers' followership in terms of:
 - 2.1 Professionalism,
 - 2.2 Interpersonal communication skills, and
 - 2.3 Conflict orientation?
 3. What is the level of teachers' work behavior in term of:
 - 3.1 linguistic behavior,
 - 3.2 expressive behavior,
 - 3.3 performatory behavior?
 4. Is there a significant relationship between:
 - 4.1 Teachers' professional characteristics and work behavior?
 - 4.2 Teacher followership and work behavior?

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive-correlation research method was used in this study. The present investigation is concerned with the teachers' professional characteristics, followership and work behavior. This study is based on the perspectives of 406 students from the four State Universities and Colleges in Region XII namely: Sultan Kudarat State University, University of Mindanao, Cotabato Foundation College of Science and Technology and Cotabato City State Polytechnic College. The instruments used in gathering data were adopted questionnaires and modified to suit the study. Permission was sought to the different SUC Presidents to administer and distribute the questionnaire. The gathered data were scored, recorded and classified. Results were analyzed and interpreted based on the purpose of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Level of Teachers' Professional Characteristics

Presented in Table 1, is the data on the summary of the level of teachers' professional characteristics in State Universities and Colleges in Region XII. It has an overall mean score of 4.19 with a descriptive equivalent of *high*. Based on the result, all indicators are reported to be highly manifested by the teachers with the ability to communicate has the highest mean of 4.29, followed by mastery of the topic content (4.27), and high regard for the teaching job (4.16). This means that professional characteristics were manifested oftentimes by teachers in SUC's in Region XII. This further means that these teachers are good and effective since they highly possess such professional characteristics. Caliphate (2006) posited that good and effective teachers consider knowledge of the subject important, take account the personal and intellectual differences among students, and facilitate the learning situation on a daily basis. The teachers' positive and unique helping relationship with the students inspires, develops and challenges students' needs. They set aside their own needs while helping the students.

Table 1: Level of Teachers Professional Characteristics in State universities and Colleges in Region XII

Factors	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Mastery of the Topic Content	4.27	High
Knowledge about the Learner	4.14	High
Competence in Instructional Strategies	4.07	High
Ability in Communication	4.29	High
High Regard for the Teaching Job	4.16	High
Weighted Mean	4.19	High

3.2 Level of Teachers Followership

Presented in Table 2 is the data on the summary of the level of teachers' followership in State Universities and Colleges in Region XII. It has an overall mean score of 4.29 with a descriptive equivalent of *high*. Based on the reported data, all indicators under this variable are highly manifested by the teachers in most situations. The interpersonal communication skills got the highest mean score of 4.35, followed by professionalism (4.32), and conflict orientation (4.16). This result proved that these teachers are good followers since they tend to build good relationship to their leaders and other followers. This conforms to the theory of Jehn and Bezukuva (2003) that followership is a people-oriented behavior which builds relationship between leaders and other followers, providing an environment that promotes all organizational members to focus on common goal. A good follower can be a catalyst for change in an organization. They inspire others to follow toward a common goal, create enthusiasm and desire to excel, fully engage with others, build confidence and move with the organization head as one entity rather than separate parts. However, teacher followership may vary from one another depending upon their tasks. According to Delima (2004), teachers' task, in some instances, dictates only a narrow range of followership that teachers may need to demonstrate. But as expected, not all teachers can be expected to follow the same way in all situations. Tasks vary, just as teachers vary in abilities.

Table 2: Level of Teachers' Followership in State Universities and Colleges in Region XII

Factors	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Professionalism	4.32	High
Interpersonal Communication Skills	4.35	High
Conflict Orientation	4.19	High
Weighted Mean	4.19	High

3.3 Level of Teachers' Work Behavior

Presented in Table 3 is the data on the summary of the level of teachers' work behavior in State Universities and Colleges in Region XII. It has an overall mean score of 4.31 with a descriptive equivalent of *high*. Based on the presented data, all indicators under this variable are highly manifested by teachers in most of the occasions in SUCs. The linguistic behavior has the highest mean of 4.39, followed by expressive behavior (4.32), and performatory behavior (4.21). Aquino (2003) classified the classroom activities or teaching behavior into linguistic, expressive and performatory. Accordingly, linguistics includes what teachers say, for instance, teachers make assignments, give directions, explain, narrate, elaborate, ask questions, comment on responses, encourage and praise and sometimes exhort and scold. Expressive behavior, on the other hand, accompanies all speeches. It includes the tone of voice, facial expression and motion of the hands, arms, eyes, head or other parts of the body. While performatory behavior includes all physical activities such as writing on the board, operating projectors and record players, manipulating models and using laboratory equipment, tools and machines and other instructional materials. Rellon (2006) asserted that appropriate teaching behaviors can help distinguish a good or effective teacher from poor or ineffective ones. The kinds of questions teachers ask, the way they respond to the students, their expectations of attitudes towards students, classroom management techniques, teaching methods and general teaching behavior all make a difference.

Table 3: Level of Teachers Work Behavior in State Universities and Colleges in Region XII

Factors	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Linguistic Behavior	4.39	High
Expressive Behavior	4.32	High
Performatory Behavior	4.21	High
Weighted Mean	4.31	High

3.4 Relationship between Teachers' Professional Characteristics and Work Behavior

Revealed in Table 4 is the relationship between teachers' characteristics and work behavior. As shown, the overall R-value of 0.71 is greater than the critical value of 0.098, which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Thus, there is a significant relationship at 0.05 level of significance on teachers' professional characteristics and work behavior. Noted also that the overall correlation coefficient ratings of teachers' professional characteristics in terms of mastery of the topic content, knowledge about the learner, competence in instructional strategies, ability in communication and high regard for teaching are 0.65, 0.48, 0.65 respectively. This implies that teachers in State Universities and Colleges in Region XII possess good character as manifested in their behavior at work since they use teaching strategies suited to the topic discussed, discuss lesson clearly without reading notes, consider students' strength and weaknesses in the class and in the subject, establish good and friendly relations among students, apply groupings and new seating arrangement as part of his/her classroom management, utilize different ways and activities in facilitating learning discussions, speak English and Filipino fluently, modulate voice and express thoughts clearly, extend time to help students who has difficulty in learning and keep abreast with recent developments in education. The findings also imply that teacher's professional behavior should set an example to their students. This is in consonant with the idea of Kurtus (2003), that teachers must be consistent in their character in school as well as in their time. Negative character traits of one can affect others even if they are trying to be on their best behavior.

Table 4: Significant Relationship between Teacher Professional Characteristics and Work Behavior

Independent Variable (Followership)	Dependent Variable (Work Behavior)			
	Linguistic	Expressive	Performatory	Overall
Mastery of the content	0.49*	0.36*	0.46*	0.52*
Knowledge about the learner	0.49*	0.35*	0.45*	0.52*
Competence in Instructional Strategies	0.53*	0.37*	0.59*	0.60*
Ability in Communication	0.56*	0.44*	0.53*	0.62*
High Regard for Teaching Job	0.58*	0.43*	0.59*	0.64*
Overall	0.65*	0.48*	0.65*	0.71*

Significant (Decision on Ho = Reject)

Critical value at alpha 0.05 = 0.098

3.5 Relationship between Teachers' Followership and Work Behavior

Presented in Table 5 is the data on the relationship between teachers' followership and work behavior.

As reflected, a significant relationship at 0.05 level of significance on teachers' followership and work behavior was found when the obtained correlation coefficient (r) value for teachers' followership and work behavior is 0.76 is greater than the critical value of 0.098, thus, leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Professionalism indicator got an overall correlation rating of 0.59 across the indicators of work behavior. It has a correlation rating of 0.58 for linguistic, 0.40 for expressive and 0.50 for performatory. Findings revealed that professionalism is significantly related to their work behavior. Interpersonal Communication Skills indicator has an overall correlation rating of 0.65 across the indicators of work behavior. It has a correlation rating of 0.61 for linguistic, 0.48 for expressive and 0.53 for performatory. Findings revealed that teachers' interpersonal communication skill is significantly related to their work behavior.

As to conflict Orientation, the overall correlation rating with work behavior is 0.67. Indicators such as linguistic, expressive and performatory when correlated with Conflict Orientation obtained the following correlation ratings of 0.61, 0.45, 0.62 respectively. This means that the conflict orientation of teachers is significantly related to

their work behavior. It can be noted that the overall correlation coefficient ratings of teachers' followership in terms of professionalism, interpersonal communication skills and conflict orientation are 0.71, 0.53, 0.65 respectively.

Finding shows that there is a significant relationship between teachers' followership and work behavior. This means that these teachers exercise professionalism at work; they are versatile follower since they communicate effectively with others at work and at the same time they can maneuver in situations of conflict. These promote a healthy working environment and enhance teaching and learning process.

This conforms to the theory of Jehn and Bezrukova (2003) that followership is a people oriented behavior which builds relationship between leaders and other followers, providing an environment that promotes all organizational members to focus on a common goal.

Table 5: Significant Relationship between Teacher Followership and Work Behavior

Independent Variable (Teacher Followership)	Dependent Variable (Work Behavior)			
	Linguistic	Expressive	Performatory	Overall
Professionalism	0.58*	0.40*	0.50*	0.59*
Interpersonal Communication Skills	0.61*	0.48*	0.53*	0.65*
Conflict Orientation	0.61*	0.45*	0.62*	0.67*
Overall	0.71*	0.53*	0.65*	0.76*

Significant (Decision on Ho = Reject)
Critical value at alpha 0.05 = 0.098

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the foregoing findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The teacher professional characteristics in State Universities and Colleges in Region XII are considered high.
2. The teacher followership in State universities and Colleges in Region XII is observed as high.
3. The work behavior of teachers in State Universities and Colleges in Region XII is high.
4. There is a significant relationship between teacher professional characteristics and work behavior with each indicator; and there is also a significant relationship between teacher followership and work behavior with each corresponding indicators.

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