

Sex and Age as Factors Influencing the Level of Stress and Commitment of Multi-Grade Teachers: Basis for a Proposed Intervention Program

Jabira D. Tato

Department of Education, Glan, Sarangani Province, Philippines

Abstract

This study aimed to determine the levels of stress and commitment of multi-grade teachers in Glan District, Sarangani Province. This is a descriptive survey research. The researcher utilized a standardized survey questionnaire to gather needed data and used weighted mean to analyze them. Findings revealed that the male teachers were more stressed than their female colleagues. In the age block, it was found out that the respondents aged 38 years old and above were highly stressed. Nevertheless, both multi-grade male and female teachers were committed to their work; with respondents who belonged to 23-38 age brackets found to be highly committed. This study finds its significance in providing baseline data to establish a viable and relevant intervention program to help multi-grade teachers cope up with stress and become more motivated and committed at work.

Introduction

Stress was defined as a mental tension caused by problems in life; something that causes strong feelings or worries; physical force, or pressure (Lyon, 2012). It could be handled but not evenly done away because stress interfaces between an individual, the environment, and another person.

Knowing that teachers were exposed to various changes in the curriculum and the department itself, they are viewed as recipients of stress. Their productivity and commitment to work were influenced by stress. Productivity and commitment to work play vital roles in making an institution successful in its goals. Hence, to achieve the goals, the stress levels of the members of the organization should be managed efficiently.

Borg (2010), who conceptualized teachers stress as a negative and potential harmful to their health, accentuates that the teachers' welfare should be given attention to prevent the workforce from failing to meet the desired outcomes. Hausman and Goldring (2011) define teacher commitment as the central matter in improving mentor's performance, and student's learning; and to reducing teacher turnover or intention to leave the profession.

The teacher's commitment characterized the relationship with his or her profession. If the teachers in the school do not have a powerful commitment to their profession, it may further reduce the stress they experience, which may lead to withdrawal from teaching as a response to stress.

The multi-grade teachers in Glan District experienced stress. It could see in works done not only in teaching per se but in doing papers works, preparing varied activities for differentiated learners, poor workplaces, the long-distance they travel from their homes, and the bad weather conditions.

The researcher is also a multi-grade teacher assigned in DepEdGlan District. Hence, she is very interested in conducting this study. She aims to determine the levels of stress and commitment of the multigrade teachers as basis for a proposed intervention program. The researcher feels she will benefit from the intervention activities as she, too, experienced the same levels of stress and commitment issues.

The study aims to determine the sex and age influencing the level of stress and commitment of multi-grade teachers. Specifically, it seeks to answer what is the level of stress and commitment to work of the multigrade teachers when analyzed according to sex and age.

Methodology

This study utilized the cross-sectional survey method to determine the level of stress and commitment of multi-grade teachers in Glan District. The researcher used this approach to describe the level of stress and commitment of a group of multi-grade teachers. The study used two standardized questionnaires. These were the questionnaires on the level of stress and commitment of multi-grade teachers. The instrument in determining the stress level of multi-grade teachers was used and adapted from the study of Khoza (2010). It has items measured using the 3-point Likert scale where one (1) is the lowest and three (3) is the highest. Not stressed, less stressed, and highly stressed were the descriptions used to analyze if the level of stress being felt by the respondent was low, high, or very high.

To measure the level of commitment of multi-grade teachers, the researcher adopted an instrument from the study of Abdul Salam Jameel Mohammad Abdul Raheem (2010). It contained 28 items that used the 3-point Likert scale where (1) is the lowest and three (3) was the highest. It used the descriptions such as very high commitment, high commitment, and low commitment. This study was conducted in Glan District, Glan, Sarangani Province. It included the three (3) districts: Central Glan District, North Glan, and South Glan District. The respondents were composed of 50 multi-grade teachers of DepEdGlan District, Division of Sarangani.

Results and Discussions

This part presents the results of the survey conducted to the multi-grade teachers and provides interpretations and discussions to the data corroborated with the related literature and studies.

Multi-grade Teachers' Level of Stress (Sex & Age)

Table 1. Level of Stress of the Multi-grade Teachers according to Sex

Indicator	Mean (Male)	Description	Mean (Female)	Description
1. I am working overtime.	2.80	HS	2.60	S
2. Assignment of unfamiliar duties	2.65	HS	2.20	S
3. Colleagues were not doing their job.	2.85	HS	2.24	S
4.The principal maintains definite standards of Performance	2.65	HS	2.20	S
5.Performing tasks, not in job description	2.80	HS	2.08	S
6. Inadequacy of resources, materials, and equipment to do the job	2.65	HS	2.44	S
7. Personal insults from colleagues	2.75	HS	1.76	S
8. Lack of participation in policy-making decisions	2.65	HS	1.68	S
9. Inadequate salary/incentives	2.85	HS	2.60	HS
10. Poor/inadequate supervision	2.90	HS	2.04	S
11. Frequent interruptions	2.93	HS	2.44	S
12. Excessive paperwork	2.75	HS	2.60	HS
13. Meeting deadlines.	2.75	HS	2.32	S
14. Insufficient personal time.	2.95	HS	2.60	H S
Mean	2.69	HS	2.09	S

It was found out that male teachers have a higher level of stress compare to female teachers. Male teachers are highly stressed, with a weighted mean of 2.69. The majority of the respondent did not have sufficient time for

needs which led them to be highly stressed. The female teachers stressed with weighted mean equals to 2.09. They worked overtime, inadequate salary, excessive paperwork, and insufficient personal time, which obtained the same highest mean of 2.60. The finding is parallel to the case study on multi-grade teachers in Samoa (2010). It stated that ages 22 to 27 stressed. However, Roxas's (2010) findings were the opposite. He emphasized that the age of 21 to 30 be very stressful. The young adult group was the most stressed when dealing with time.

Table 2. Level of Stress of the Multi-grade Teachers according to Age

Indicator	\bar{X} 23- 27 yo	Descript ion	\bar{X} 28- 32 yo	Descript ion	\bar{X} 32- 37 yo	Descript ion	\bar{X} 38- up	Descri ption
1.I am working overtime.	2.76	HS	2.84	HS	2.63	HS	2.75	HS
2. Assignment of unfamiliar duties	2.18	S	2.34	S	2.50	HS	2.44	S
3. Colleagues were not doing their job.	2.47	S	2.17	S	2.50	HS	2.75	HS
4.The principal maintains definite standards of Performance	2.41	S	2.17	S	2.50	HS	2.75	HS
5.Performing tasks not in job description	2.18	S	2.42	S	2.50	HS	2.25	S
6. Inadequacy of resources, materials, and equipment to do the job	2.77	HS	2.50	HS	2.50	HS	2.44	S
7. Personal insults from colleagues	1.75	S	2.00	S	2.25	S	2.38	S
8. Lack of participation in policy-making decisions	1.94	S	2.08	S	2.13	S	2.25	S
9. Inadequate salary/incentives	2.82	HS	2.58	HS	2.88	HS	2.75	HS
10. Poor/inadequate supervision	2.18	S	2.33	S	2.63	HS	2.63	HS
11. Frequent interruptions	2.25	S	2.58	HS	2.88	HS	2.75	HS
12. Excessive paperwork	2.53	HS	2.67	HS	2.88	HS	2.75	HS
13. Meeting deadlines.	2.29	S	2.71	HS	2.63	HS	2.75	HS
14. Insufficient personal time.	2.97	HS	2.21	S	2.88	HS	2.88	HS
Weighted Mean	2.21	S	2.29	S	2.44	S	2.50	HS

The level of stress of the multigrade teachers ages 23-27 can be gleaned that the respondents were stressed, as manifested by its weighted mean of 2.21. The teachers on age bracket 28-32 stressed with a weighted mean of 2.29. The indicators that stated "Working overtime" and "excessive papers work" had the highest mean of 2.84. This

means that the respondents were highly stressed because of excessive paperwork or overtime in work. the respondents aged 33-37 are also highly stressed. The factors which affect their stress level are inadequate salary, excessive papers work, and covering works for others.

The multigrade teachers aged 38 and above are highly stressed. Their colleagues who are not doing their work well basically affect their stress level. This result was similar to the study of Thomas (2010). He stressed that multi-grade teachers age 38 and above were highly stressed due to the responsibilities that were placed in their hands, and some of their colleagues or co-teachers not trained and having difficulty in handling multi-grade class. Also, Pagayan (2016) emphasized that multi-grade teachers under 45 and older perceive the work-related stress significantly high or very high level of work-related stress.

Multi-grade Teachers 'Level of Commitment (Sex & Age)

Table 3. Level of Commitment of Multi-grade Teachers According to Sex

No.	Items	Mean (Male)	Descriptio n	Mean (Female)	Descriptio n
1	I was having proper pride in my school.	2.90	HC	2.80	HC
2	I prefer working at this school even though I have choices for working at the other school.	2.80	HC	2.32	C
3	Disapproval of relations existing between the people in the school.	2.75	HC	1.76	C
4	I work hard for the school.	2.95	HC	2.72	HC
5	I deal with the future of the school.	3.00	HC	2.88	HC
6	The responsibility of taking the class on time.	2.80	HC	2.68	HC
7	To accomplish the job with enthusiasm.	2.55	HC	2.92	HC
8	To get information about the student's family life	2.90	HC	2.80	HC
9	To try to do the best for the unsuccessful students	2.70	HC	2.65	HC
10	I enjoy teaching.	3.00	HC	2.96	HC
11	To look for extra courses.	1.60	C	2.04	C
12	I perceive teaching occupation as the best for working life.	2.70	HC	2.48	C
13	To be proud of being a teacher.	2.95	HC	2.96	HC
14	I perceive the values of teaching occupation more important than those of other professional values.	2.85	HC	2.88	HC
15	To be proud of my colleagues.	2.80	HC	2.60	HC
	Mean	2.72	HC	2.56	HC

Male and female teachers despite the stressors are always committed to their work despite their gender and age. Generally, they agreed that they enjoy teaching" with the highest mean of 3.00. The finding is similar to Affum-Osei et al. (2015). They stated that male multi-grade teachers were highly committed to their work. Likewise, Butucha (2012) added that in Ethiopia, the majority of beginning teachers were males.

Table 4. Level of Commitment of Multi-grade Teachers According to Age

Indicator	\bar{X} 23- 27 yo	Description	\bar{X} 28- 32 yo	Description	\bar{X} 33- 37 yo	Description	\bar{X} 38yo- up	Description
1. Having a proper pride in school.	2.76	HC	2.62	HC	2.88	HC	2.63	HC
2. I prefer working at this school even though I have choices for working at the other school.	2.41	C	2.42	C	2.63	HC	2.40	C
3. Disapproval of relations existing between the people in the school.	2.00	C	2.00	C	2.25	C	2.75	HC
4. I work hard for the school.	2.82	HC	2.84	HC	3.00	HC	2.88	HC
5. I deal with the future of the school.	3.00	HC	2.92	HC	3.00	HC	2.69	HC
6. The responsibility of taking the class on time.	2.53	HC	2.75	HC	2.88	HC	2.88	HC
7. To accomplish the job with enthusiasm.	2.82	HC	2.83	HC	3.00	HC	3.00	HC
8. To get information about the student's family life	2.82	HC	2.67	HC	2.88	HC	2.75	HC
9. To try to do the best for the unsuccessful students	2.59	HC	2.83	HC	3.00	HC	2.94	HC
10. I enjoy teaching.	3.00	HC	2.92	HC	3.00	HC	3.00	HC
11. To look for extra courses.	1.88	C	2.17	C	1.75	C	1.63	C
12. I perceive teaching occupation as the best for working life.	2.91	HC	2.75	HC	3.00	HC	2.94	HC
13. To be proud of being a teacher.	2.98	HC	3.00	HC	3.00	HC	3.00	HC
14. I perceive the values of teaching occupation more important than those of other professional values.	2.97	HC	2.80	HC	2.88	HC	2.88	HC
15. To be proud of my colleagues.	2.59	HC	2.83	HC	2.88	HC	2.75	HC
Mean	2.55	HC	2.64	HC	2.76	HC	2.71	HC

The level of commitment of multi-grade teachers age 23-27 are highly committed, with a weighted mean of 2.55. They committed because they care about the future of the school and the pupils. One can glean that teachers (28-32) in this age bracket highly committed with a weighted mean of 2.64. They committed because they are proud of their jobs. The teachers who belonged to the age bracket 33-37 are highly committed with a weighted mean of

2.76. They showed their commitment by working hard for the school and trying to give their best, especially the unsuccessful students. Also, they perceived teaching as the best job, and they are proud to be one.

The respondents who belonged to the age bracket 38 years old and above were found to be highly committed with a weighted mean of 2.71. This age group tends to accomplish the job with enthusiasm and also enjoyed teaching as much they are proud of their jobs. Kaluba (2010) stressed that multi-grade teachers were committed from age 21 to 28. Likewise, Gerald (2011) added that teachers were more committed than the older ones. Emmanuel (2015) found that affective commitment among the 21-28 years old group was higher than those 29-39 years old and 40 years and upper.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the multi-grade male teachers were highly stressed than female teachers. Because majority of them did not have sufficient time for their needs while the female teachers are stressed because of worked overtime, inadequate salary, excessive paperwork, and insufficient personal time. Those 38 years old teachers were found to be highly stressed. Both male and female multi-grade teachers were highly committed. Respondents from age bracket 23-38 and above were found to be highly committed. This study concludes that age and sex are factors that significantly affect the level of stress and commitment of multi-grade teachers. This is because of the nature of work of multi-grade teachers where they need to attend to different academic and extra-curricular needs of the multi-grade students. The younger teachers still have the idealistic perspective in teaching so they manifest higher commitment to the job as they see it as an avenue to address their ideas and ideals. They also have much energy to cope with the demand of work unlike their older colleagues.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study. The Department of Education should provide ready-made lessons for the multi-grade teachers to lessen their paperwork. The school is encouraged to find ways for those aged 38 years old and above to be assigned in the lowland areas. The school administrators of the multi-grade teachers should adopt and conduct capacity building training and seminar to develop a well-rounded and balanced personal and professional life and environment for multi-grade teachers in a quarterly basis.

References

- [1] Affum-Osei E. (2015) Relationship between Organizational Commitment & Demographic Variables: Evidence from Ghana. Beijing, China
- [2] Allen, D. (2012) Getting Things done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity (Revised edition. New York; Pinguin Books
- [3] Butucha, M (2012) Managing the Effects on Multi-grade Teaching on Learners Performance in Namibia. University Johannesburg.
- [4] Celep, C. (2010). Teachers' Organizational Commitment in Educational Organizations. Trakya University. Edime, Turkey. National Forum of teacher Education Journal, 1 (10E), (3). ERIC NO: ED452179.
- [5] Coladarci, T. (2010) Teachers' Sense of Efficacy and Commitment to Teaching. University of Maine.
- [6] Kaluba, H. (2011). Handbook for Teachers on Multigrade Teaching: NCERT, India.
- [7] Khoza, Harriet R. (2010). A Comparison of teacher stress, commitment, and school climate in school with Success rate: Research study submitted to the Faculty of Humanities at University of Witterings, 35-40
- [8] Lindahl (2011) Issues in the Philippine Multigrade School. Washington, World Bank.
- [9] Lyon, B. L (2012). Stress, Coping, and Health: A Conceptual Overview(Update). In V. H. Rice (Ed.), Handbook of Stress, coping and health: Implication for nursing research, theory and practice (pp.2-20). Sage Publication, Inc.
- [10] Meador, J. L. (2010). Job satisfaction perceived organizational support, and organizational commitment: Implications for teacher turnover in small rural (CD-ROM) Abstract from-ProQuest file: Dissertation Abstracts International Item: 62/ 08.



- [11] Minister of Basic Education (2010) A Handbook Of Gambia Multi-grade teaching. Learning Initiatives for Rural Education.
- [12] Pagayanan 2016) Stress Profile of Public Elementary School Teachers in Tacloban City Division. Inputs for a Propose Classroom Intervention Program. Tacloban City.
- [13] Roxas, MA. (2010) Stress Among Public Elementary School Teacher. University of Cordillera, Re J1:86-108
- [14] Singh, et.al (2010).Professional support and its effect on teacher's commitment. Virginia Poletechnic Institute and State University.
- [15] Sturman, L.2012. Supportand organizational commitment: implications for teachers. Teacher Educational Journal,I (10E), (3).ERICNO:ED452179.
- [16] Zhang, L.2010.Occupational stress and teaching approaches among Chinese academics, work-related stress factors. South African Journal of Psychology.