

Alternative Working Arrangements And Teachers' Competence in the New Normal

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Abstract:- The objective of this study was to ascertain the significance of the correlation between alternative working arrangements and the competence of elementary school teachers in the context of the "new normal." The research was conducted using a descriptive-correlational method and involved 40 teachers serving as respondents from seven public elementary schools in the Matina District, Davao City Division. Data was collected using a researcher-developed instrument. The findings indicated a high degree of implementation of alternative working arrangements and extensive competence among teachers. Additionally, a notable correlation was established between alternative working arrangements and teachers' competence within the new normal framework. All aspects of alternative working arrangements were found to significantly influence teachers' competence. The study recommends the implementation of pertinent policies, mechanisms, and strategies to support teachers, particularly through coaching and the application of effective strategies and techniques to mitigate potential emotional hindrances. School administrators can utilize these findings to enhance teacher competence and optimize the teaching-learning process, ultimately improving lesson delivery. Furthermore, the study findings can serve as a foundation for evaluating and instituting school improvements aimed at enhancing existing alternative working arrangements and teachers' competence..

Keywords:- *Alternative Working Arrangements, Teachers' Competence, New Normal.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Work arrangements classified as alternative include flexible work schedules. It strives to offer workers adequate freedom to work how they wish and to take care of their needs when they arise. Alternative work arrangements are defined by Katz and Kreuger (2018) as independent freelancers, on-call workers, and temporary help office workers. Work can be completed outside of the conventional bounds of a formal school of work in terms of several dimensions, such as quantity, distribution of working hours, type of work, and location of work, with the help of flexible, non-standard, or alternative work arrangements.

Alternative work schedules are temporary in nature and should only be implemented while the public health emergency is ongoing. Rather than terminating employees or closing schools, the Department of Health and the Department of Labor and Employment strongly advise school administrators to design work arrangements that will reduce the number of teachers in the workplace and the need for travel as part of their educational continuity plans.

As policy, for teachers whose work can be done from home, work-from-home arrangements are available. Additionally, for teachers who pose a high risk, such as those who are older than 60, have co-occurring conditions or pre-existing diseases like cancer, diabetes, or hypertension, are immunocompromised, or are pregnant at high risk, there are work-from-home arrangements available (Platon Martinez Law, 2020).

The Philippine government doubt on how to proceed with education during the pandemic. However, the Department of Education (DepEd) has emphasized the benefits of continuing education. DepEd's plan for continuing basic education includes arrangements for teachers to work outside of their normal responsibilities, such as alternative work arrangements. In the Philippines, alternative work arrangement, as defined by the Civil Service Commission, allows government agencies like DepEd to adapt to the challenges posed by the pandemic (DepEd Order 11, 2020).

The Civil Service Commission established alternate work arrangements that government departments, like the Department of Education, might implement alone or in concert during the pandemic-related national emergency. The Department of Education personnel is responsible for carrying out the plan with strict adherence to all applicable health precautions, maintaining DepEd priority programs and important services, and adhering to the necessary health standards (Department of Education, 2020).

Meanwhile, Teachers thought they could still be productive even with alternate work arrangements (Development Academy of the Philippines, 2020). The rising harmony between work and family life is attributed, according to teachers, in part to alternative work arrangements (Tacadao, 2020). Mohamed (2018) listed the benefits of alternative work arrangements (AWAs) as being similar to those of other

nations where such arrangements are used: higher worker satisfaction, lower absenteeism, and more output and efficiency at work. Security of employment was another benefit of working from home (Alipour, Fadinger, and Schymik, 2021), decreased hours worked (Schall, Brooke, Rounds, and Lynch, 2020) and decreased job loss (Casele and Posel, 2021).

Furthermore, since the majority of an employee's time was spent in online meetings and work-related activities, working from home also reduced the likelihood of a sedentary lifestyle (McDowell, 2020). It allowed employees to reconcile their personal and professional lives (Syazwani, Mohamad, Ismail, and Yusof, 2020).

Additionally, the arrangement of work from home allowed teachers greater flexibility in their work (Nur Afiah, Fatin, and Muhammad, 2020). As per Hallman, Januario, Mathiassen, Heiden, Svensson, and Bergstone (2020), it made it possible for teachers to get more sleep.

However, an internet connection is necessary for teachers to accomplish their work efficiently, as demonstrated by their work-from-home policy. More than 9 million children do not have access to the Internet at home, so these learning options are gone when schools close, even though many school systems provide blended or online learning programs. Online learning is therefore hampered by a lack of access to quick, inexpensive, and dependable internet connections (Adnan and Anwar, 2020).

Apparently, this requires teaching skills at another level to meet the challenge head on. This requires specialized content knowledge, teaching-learning methods, ICT-based skills, and welcome technological tools at home. During the pandemic, the country has witnessed many ICT-driven national, local, and individual initiatives. There has been a practical approach in the education sector to utilize the maximum potential of technology to reach every learner and accomplish tasks while working from home.

Nonetheless, An alternate work arrangement is a unique setup that requires a new approach. To be productive in the teaching profession, one must receive continuous training. The teacher serves as the conduit via which the Department of Education's goals and strategies are carried out (Medina, 2016; Khan, Farooqi, Khalil, and Faisal, 2016; Gepila, Rural; Lavadia, Nero, Palillo, and Besmonte, 2018; Bautista, S., 2020).

Further, the competency of teachers in the context of work-from-home arrangements is another factor to take into account. According to Naik (1998), teachers are subjective insiders tasked with providing instruction to students, assessing performances, recording attendance, grading papers, and overseeing the curriculum. As such, assessing teachers' competence is critical to educational personnel reform.

On the contrary, one of the most difficult issues that school principals may encounter is problematic teachers. In addition to failing to produce the desired outcomes, underperforming teachers damage staff credibility and redirect attention from other tasks (Banfield, Richmond, and McCroskey, 2006). They displace other employees who could be more helpful to the school and take up a large portion of the principal's time.

According to Mary (2010), different people have different opinions about how well teachers perform in South Asia and Africa. She continues by stating that due to a combination of deteriorating morals, anxiety and issues, job satisfaction, a lack of regulations, and insufficient incentives, the majority of teachers in underdeveloped countries, especially in African cities, are not appropriately motivated and excellent, and as a result, performance has declined.

Meanwhile, poor socioeconomic status has been shown to have an impact on teachers' performance (Nadeem, Rana, Lone, Maqbool, Naz, and Ali, 2011). Stress is caused by a barrier that instructors have encountered throughout their lives. The problems teachers deal with at work because of student and administrative failures would negatively impact their professional qualities and skills. Although they are capable of doing their work well, they are frustrated by it. Occupational stress, also referred to as occupational stress, is defined as experiencing undesirable emotional states as hopelessness, worry, irritation, and anxiety (Kyriacou, 2001).

In the local context, The Philippine administration is unsure about how education should proceed in the local context of the pandemic. Nonetheless, the Department of Education has confirmed the more important benefits of learning continuity. In accordance with the prevailing community quarantine and the type of work or job performed by the employee, the DepEd basic education learning continuity plan specified how teachers would work outside of their regular teaching routines and responsibilities. Examples of these flexible schedules included work-from-home, skeleton workforce, four-day workweeks, staggered working hours, and other suitable arrangements (DepEd Order 1 1, 2020).

Due to the various alternative working arrangements that teachers had to make owing to the pandemic and the work that they had to complete in the classroom with other teachers, the competency of teachers in the Davao City Division, especially in the Matina District, has decreased. In-person instruction allows teachers to interact with students more effectively than remote learning, which has an impact on teachers' effectiveness.

To sum up, there are benefits and drawbacks to alternate labor arrangements. Teachers' competency was therefore impacted by its implementation. When investigating the matter, the researcher was unable to locate any

descriptive correlational studies that particularly examined the effects of different work arrangements on teachers' performance in the classroom in both national and local contexts under the new normal. This implies that there was a gap in information and novelty, which inspired the researcher and gave her the drive to carry out the investigation.

II. METHOD

The researcher utilized quantitative non-experimental research design. Descriptive correlation studies describe the variables and the relationship that occur naturally between and among them. The method was used to determine the significant relationship between alternative work arrangements and the teachers' competence.

In this study, forty teachers from the seven elementary schools in the Matina District that teach third grade were the respondents. To determine who the responder was, universal sampling was used. The researcher utilized a researcher-made instrument. For high reliability and internal consistency, the survey instrument was pilot tested in a nearby school. Using Kuder-Richardson Formula 20, the result's dependability was assessed. Upon adjustment of the created research tool, the reliability testing result of 0.79 was taken into account. To assist the respondents in selecting the best evaluation, the questionnaire employed a 5-Likert scale with a descriptive rating that matched each item.

In this study, the mean, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Multiple Regression Analysis were among the statistical tools used for data analysis. The adoption of alternative work arrangements and teachers' academic achievement were assessed using the mean. The study employed Pearson Product Moment Correlation to ascertain the statistical significance of the association between teachers' school performance and their alternative working arrangement. While the markers of alternate working arrangements that significantly impacted teachers' ability were determined by Multiple Regression Analysis.

In summary, the research method used in this study is quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. The instrument is a researcher-made. There were 40-teacher respondents who answered the survey questionnaire that measures alternative working arrangement and school performance. The data analysis involved the use of mean and Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section the findings based on the survey questionnaire gathered from the respondents on the alternative work arrangements and teachers' competence of elementary schools in the new normal are presented and discussed.

➤ *Alternative Work Arrangements in Terms of Employment Relationship.*

The mean rating of alternative working arrangements of teachers in terms of employment relationship is 3.30 or moderately extensive. This means that the alternative working arrangements of teachers in terms of employment relationship is often manifested and observed by the teacher. Hence, willing to go out of the way to help perform the job to the best of their ability is appreciated by most teachers.

This finding conforms to the statement of Hagos and Zewdie (2018) as cited by Arimie (2020) suggest that the progress of any organization is hinged on the input made by the employees. Basically, employees are instrumental in the utilization of other resources such as technology, finance, information and other managerial tools in the achievement of organizational goals and objectives. Employees do not carry out these functions in a vacuum they need to interact and synergize with others to get their jobs done, so there is a growing concern for managers in organizations to create a positive work environment.

➤ *Alternative Work Arrangements in Terms of Work Accomplishment.*

On the aspect of work accomplishment, the mean rating on the extent of alternative working arrangements of teachers in terms of work relationship is 3.82 or highly extensive. This means that alternative working arrangements of teachers in terms of work relationship is usually manifested and observed by the teachers.

This finding conforms to the statement of Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, and Sagger (1993) work accomplishment is a key focus of many employees given that goals are always there in the workplace, if only by default. Further, research has shown that goal attainment, or the lack thereof, relates to personal well-being.

To encapsulate, the Alternative Work Arrangements in terms of employment relationship and work accomplishment obtained the mean rating of 3.56 or highly extensive. The result means that the level of alternative working arrangements in both indicators are highly observed by the teachers.

➤ *Teachers' Competence in Terms of Professional Competence.*

The mean rating of teachers' competence in the new normal in terms of professional competence is 3.17 or moderately extensive. This means that teachers' competence in the new normal in terms of professional competence is often times manifested and observed by the teachers. The result conforms to the statement of Roth (1971) as cited in Klieme, et. al (2008) that professional competence as the ability to act and judge in a particular profession, and hold responsible.

➤ *Teachers' Competence in Terms of Pedagogical Competence.*

The mean rating of teachers' competence in the new normal in terms of pedagogical competence is often manifested. This conforms to the statement of Shulman (1986) articulating that it involves representations and illustrations used to make the topic understandable to the learners during instruction.

➤ *Teachers' Competence in Terms of Instructional Competence.*

The rating of teachers' competence in terms of instructional competence is 3.45 or highly extensive. This means teachers' competence in terms of instructional competence usually manifested and observed by the teachers. Muijs and Reynolds (2005) claims that how a teacher teaches becomes a vital key in promoting effective teaching and learning to the students. The instructional competence affects the learning of the students whom they are teaching.

➤ *Teachers' Competence in Terms of Personality Competence.*

In the aspect of personality competence, the mean rating is 3.53 or highly extensive. This indicated that teachers' competence in the new normal in terms of personality competence is usually manifested and observed by the teachers. This indicated that personality competence of teachers occurred when engaged in activities outside school that will contribute to the learners' development and on collegial collaboration.

In consolidation, teachers' competence in the new normal in terms of professional competence, pedagogical competence, instructional competence and personality competence is 3.50 means that they are usually manifested and observed by the teachers. This also indicated that the teachers explored the impact of culture, technology, and globalization.

➤ *Significance on the Relationship between Alternative Work Arrangements and Teachers' Competence.*

Using Pearson correlation coefficient (r) in establishing the relationship between Alternative work arrangements and Teachers' competence, the result showed an overall computed r- value of .067 with equivalent tabular value 0.0500 at a 0.05 of significance. Since the overall computed value is higher than the tabular value, this proved that there is a significant

relationship between alternative working arrangement and teachers' competence in the new normal. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is hereby rejected.

➤ *Significance of the Influence of Alternative Working Arrangements and Teachers' Competence in the New Normal.*

Using the regression analysis to determine the particular domains of Alternative Working Arrangements that significantly influenced Teachers' Competence, the result indicates that both indicators of Alternative Working Arrangements such as Employment Relationship and Work Accomplishment had significant influence to the indicators of Teachers' Competence particularly the professional, pedagogical, instructional and personality competences. Thus, the null hypothesis of no domain Alternative Working Arrangements significantly influences Teachers' Competence was rejected.

In summary, it was clear that the teacher respondents strongly demonstrated and observed both teachers' competence and alternative working arrangements. The conclusion unequivocally demonstrated that there was, in fact, a strong association between Alternative Working Arrangements and Teachers' Competence in the New Normal. Furthermore, there was a discernible influence relationship between the indicators of teachers' competence and the Alternative Working Arrangements. Based on the results, the researcher suggested using the study as a reference when assessing current alternative work arrangements, teacher development initiatives, and other worthwhile academic endeavors.

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