

Teachers' Religious Commitment and Work Performance in Public Schools

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ABSTRACT

A systematic examination of the relationship between teachers' religious commitment and work performance in public schools offers valuable insights to the fields of education, psychology, and sociology, while also informing efforts to support the professional development and well-being of educators. In this context, this study aimed to determine the level of teachers' religious commitment and work performance in all public elementary and secondary schools in a District in a second-class Municipality in Southern Negros Occidental during the School Year 2022-23. Data for this descriptive study was collected from 125 respondents using a self-made survey questionnaire that has passed the rigorist tests of validity and reliability. The ensuing analysis showed a high level of teachers' religious commitment and a very satisfactory level of teachers' work performance during the School Year 2022-2023. Further analysis showed a significant relationship between teachers' religious commitment and work performance. The findings of this study call for immediate attention to the need to strengthen the religious aspects of teachers regardless of their religious affiliation.

KEYWORDS

Teachers' religious commitment, Teachers' work performance, Public schools

INTRODUCTION

To continuously improve the educational system, healthy and religious teachers are needed to maintain a happy environment in the classroom (Hare, 2016). In the case of the teachers, in the district where the researcher is currently stationed, the researcher observed in his workplace as a teacher himself, bombarded by a lot of work, such as paper works, ancillary functions, daily classroom interactions with students, and any related works contributed to trigger stress that affects work performance, what factors that helps teachers to cope up the demand of works? How the religious commitment of teachers helps them to combat challenges in the workplace convinced the researcher to conduct a study regarding this matter. As the researcher observed, Teachers work longer than many other positions, often leading to burnout and stress.

Literature Review

According to Modes of Religiosity, a theory of religious transmission, religions are configurations of cultural information reproduced across space and time. Beginning with this seemingly obvious fact of religious transmission, the author is very obvious in saying that whatever a person's religiosity, it affects his life on a daily basis. (Harvey 2017). In addition, having a belief in something greater than your immediate experience can be a powerful force in helping you create inner peace and cope with the stress in your life. Whatever form of spiritual beliefs take, growing evidence shows that religious commitment can be a powerful stress buffer, enhancing your ability to cope with life's more serious stresses. Faith can help you cope with illness and may even help you live longer (Lapiz, 2014). Meanwhile, According to modeling performance theory by Campbell (2014), this refers to a set of principles that guide the way managers motivate employees. They typically do this by using research to create and maintain a productive work environment wherein employees feel like their managers value, appreciate, and empower them. Individual performance is a core concept within work and organizational psychology. During the past 10 or 15 years, researchers have made progress in clarifying and extending the performance concept (Campbell et al., 2014). Moreover, advances have been made in specifying major predictors and processes associated with individual performance at work, may it be managerial or in the field of education. How and why work performance becomes poor excellence depends on what fact motivates the performer (Ilgen & Pulakos, 2014). Modeling performance theory by Campbell (2014) correlates to the teacher's work performance. If they are reinforced properly, taken care of, assisted in their needs, motivated positively, and skillfully equipped to handle difficulties at work on a daily basis, they could surpass stressful challenges. Eventually, they could perform well in their designated works (McGrawth, 2017).

Teachers' Religious Commitment

According to Modes of Religiosity, a theory of religious transmission, Religions, whatever else they may be, is a configuration of cultural information reproduced across space and time. Beginning with this seemingly obvious fact of religious transmission, the author is very obvious in saying that whatever a person's religiosity, it affects his life on a daily basis. (Harvey 2017). Religious-committed teachers do not mind briefly sharing their faith or talking about religious practices when probed by students and their co-workers, particularly if it is connected to coping with the pressure of their work. Nonetheless, the author concurred that the classroom and workplace are not platforms for advancing personal religious agendas (Wadsworth, 2015). Another study revealed religious belief provides endurance and resistance to people while they are coping with stressed and stressful situations. Study shows, a religious person thinks life is full of trials, and he/she needs to be patient with them (Bergan 2017). Religiosity significantly predicted resilience, well-being, and optimism but did not predict contentment. The significant effect of religiosity on resilience is in tune with the results reported by various studies (De Vera 2018). In addition, when facing adversities in life, many people use Religion or religiosity as a positive coping strategy to hurdle challenges and stress relievers. Religiosity has various dimensions, encompassing different aspects of the person's behavior, beliefs, and practices (Baring, & Cacho. 2015).

Studies showed that religiosity affects a person's overall well-being. One study indicated that religiosity increased prosocial behavior (Batara 2020). In addition, Republic Act 11163, known as National Bible Day, authored by former Senator Manny Pacquiao and Signed by Former President Rodrigo R. Duterte, Aims to support the government in its undertakings on nation-building, strengthen awareness of the importance of God's Word in one's personal, family, work performance, and communal undertakings in life, encourage others to read the Holy Scriptures and take inspiration from them, deepen one's faith in God by communicating to manage life challenging indevoured (Mendoza (2019). The positive effects of religiosity in both the social and educational realms are attracting the attention of many researchers. The application of a variety of dimensions of religiosity to specific situations in everyday life is the subject of much research (Bergan and McConatha's 2017). Religious commitments were found to be a significant predictor of general life satisfaction and a sense of belonging and purpose in life, as is indicated in a number of studies, including recent studies regarding the benefits of religiosity in daily indevoured life (Soenens & Hutsebaut, 2016). A study by Roccas (2015) concluded that there is a high correlation between religiosity, values, and coping with life challenges at work. Teachers casually converse about race, culture, and social class yet are reluctant to discuss Religion (Williams, 2015). Since religious belief is integral to many educators' character in the workplace, it is imperative to recognize its potential impact on teaching and work performance (White, 2019). This study on public education and religiosity may reveal additional insight into the extent to which personal religious beliefs may influence teaching and work performance somewhere and somehow. The effect of religiosity on various dimensions of well-being, including hope and optimism, has been well documented (Sanchez, 2014). According to Lapiz (2014), once a person decides to commit suicide, one of the major reasons is that he/she lacks spiritual and religious strength. Here, Lapiz says that commitment to religious faith can be a big help in balancing life and work pressure, regardless of any form.

Teachers' Work Performance

Kotera (2019) emphasized that teachers' performance is based on daily tasks and responsibilities assigned and one's performance is based on one's overall work result or success rate over a period of time in performing tasks compared to various possibilities, such as work standards, targets, or criteria that have been predetermined and agreed upon. They went on to say that teachers should have pedagogical, personality, social, and professional competency because performance appraisal has several advantages, including implementing a reward and punishment system, providing feedback for teachers to improve their competencies, identifying training needs, and diagnosing problems. Meanwhile, existing literature concerning teachers' job performance and its relationship between job satisfaction and performance is one of the most prominent in the literature, and a number of studies have indicated that the focal attitude about one's job satisfaction is closely associated with job performance, job satisfaction focuses on the role of job satisfaction. Job performance is described as a series of behaviors that an individual engages in in order to help an organization achieve its objectives, and it is the primary result in the workplace (Schwarz 2018). That is, employee performance is the work or achievement of employees that is executed in daily work based on a standard or sequence of assessments that has been established. Standards and measuring instruments are an indication to identify whether an employee has a high or low performance (Ranco, 2019). Additionally, teaching performance is primarily defined as the capacity to execute or enact the description, tasks, and obligations anticipated of the job or function, with internal and external factors such as the setting playing a part (Walker, 2020). Moreover, teachers get loyalty prizes, performance rewards, and promotions when appropriate, as well as assistance for ongoing education and personal growth (Marek, 2018).

According to Smith (2019) presented that the basic education teachers' assessment levels of competence and performance are competent and satisfactory. However, there is still an opportunity

for continual progress in order to proceed to a higher level of competence and performance. They went on to say that great teaching via quality instructors can only be accomplished if teachers are given enough training, professional help, and frequent and ongoing performance evaluations. Finly (2016) reported that, in terms of age, it is worth mentioning that persons over 47 years old reported the highest levels of anxiety and stress at work, even though young people have demonstrated greater symptoms in earlier research. This finding was consistent with the study results conducted by Marshall (2016, which revealed that ethics guidance, power sharing, honesty, fairness, role definition, and people orientation were all shown to have a good and substantial link with teacher job performance. In addition, a study by Ocampo (2016), results reveal that marital status affects the self-efficacy of teachers and that married male and female teachers have high self-efficacy, which leads to high job performance. The overall teaching performance of Pandan Bay Institutes' basic education instructors was good. However, it still suggests that there is room for improvement in order to proceed to excellent teaching performance, according to the research by (Mingoa 2017). Finally, teachers' development is hampered by the Department of Education's (DepEd) slow promotion processes, the application of several prerequisites, and specific limits such as the paucity of plantilla goods for higher posts, and the constitution clearly states that "The 1987 Constitution mandates the government to enhance the right of teachers to professional advancement," which is the existing policies and procedures on promotion of public school teachers, and the constitution clearly states that "The 1987 Constitution mandates the government to enhance the right of teachers to professional advancement" (Imbong 2014).

Objectives

The purpose of the study is to investigate the connection between religious commitment and work performance of public-school teachers in all public Elementary and secondary schools in a District, in a second-class Municipality, in southern Negros Occidental during the School Year 2022-23. This research study also aims to capture the contested and evolving connections of the teachers' religious commitment to stress management and work performance in public schools. However, it is important to respect the diversity of beliefs among teachers and create an inclusive learning environment that accommodates everyone's perspectives. Thus, the researcher focused only on gaining a convincing outcome from the established objectives. Specifically, this study sought to determine:

1. Teacher's religious commitment level when analyzed in terms of worship service, tithes and offerings, prayer meetings, and outreach programs.
2. Teachers' work performance levels.

METHODS

This paper used the descriptive research design, which is the most appropriate and fits best with the study's objectives (Bueno 2016). To justify the point, the researcher strongly chose descriptive research to carefully quantify all the data gathered and statistically analyzed from the population sample. These numbers show patterns, connections, and relations over time and can be discovered using surveys, polls, etc. In this regard, descriptive research collects numerical data that can be consistently compared and analyzed. It can collect and analyze data to answer various research questions. Thus, the quantitative descriptive type of research is best suited for this study.

Respondents

Since the number of respondents is quite large, stratified sampling and random sampling techniques were used, and the Cochran formula was applied to find the sample size, which impacts two statistical properties. First is the accuracy of our calculations, and second is the study's ability to draw inferences (Berkowitz, 2016). Moreover, random sampling is applied in this study. A total number of 125 teachers from 183 respondents (male and female) were gathered from the total population during the school year 2023-24. The researcher selected several slips stratified randomly. This is referred to

as a lottery drawing sample. The researcher also put all the slips of paper in a bowl and drew random samples from it, known as the Fishbowl draw method (Berkowitz et al., 2016).

Research Instrument

The instrument used in gathering the data to determine the level of teachers' religious commitments and stress management about work performance was the self-made survey questionnaire. The survey form was filled out and divided into three parts. Part I of the questionnaire is to determine the personal demographic profile of the respondents in terms of different variables: age, sex, civil status, plantilla position, and the average family monthly income. Part II is the questionnaire proper, focusing on measured areas of religious commitment such as worship service, prayer meetings, tithes, offerings, and outreach programs consisting of five (5) items each. Each item is rated and measured using the rating scale of five (5) as the highest and one (1) as the lowest, with its corresponding description as (5) *Always*, (4) *Sometimes*, (3) *Often*, (2) *Rarely* and (1) *Rarely*. Part III is the respondents' respective Individual Performance Commitment Rating (IPCRF) during the school year 2022-23.

Validity

Using the nine criteria developed for evaluating survey questionnaires set forth by Good and Scates, an instrument is considered valid if it measures what it is supposed to measure and produces data or information that is true and accurate (Berkowitz et al., 2016). Five experts assessed the content validity of the instrument. The validators were the five experts in different fields of education. The first validator is a designated guidance counselor and PhD holder in the field of Management Education and Guidance and Counseling, working as Master Teacher 2 in one of the public secondary schools in Negros Occidental division. Second is a PhD in theology working as a professor of theology in one of the Colleges in Negros Occidental and recently assigned as research director in the Central Philippine Union Conference of the Adventist Church. The third is also a PhD in Theology and is currently working as a professor and Dean of the School of Theology at Central Philippine Adventist College. Fourth is a PhD in Psychology, working as a representative of the Multi-Sectoral Governance Council (MSGC) of Negros Occidental and a part-time instructor school and Graduate Studies at STI - West Negros University. The last validator is a Ph.D. in Educational Management and currently working as a PSDS Public School Division Supervisor of one of the districts of Negros Occidental Division. The overall mean by the five experts was 4.82, interpreted as excellent, which showed a very high degree of validity, therefore making the instrument valid.

Reliability

The reliability was statistically determined using the formula for Cronbach Alpha. The researcher administered the test once. The survey questionnaires will be subject to a reliability test. For an instrument to be reliable, Cronbach's Alpha should be within the range of 0.70 to 1.00, and a reliability instrument with Cronbach's Alpha was used (Berkowitz et al., 2016). The number of dry-run respondents was 30; the computed alpha for the questionnaire on the areas of religious commitment was 0.859, interpreted as "Good," and stress management was 0.759, interpreted as "Acceptable." The computed alpha for the questionnaire on teachers' religious commitment and stress management level was interpreted as excellent; therefore, it is "very high reliability."

Data Collection

The researcher has sent a letter including the title, locale, research respondents, objectives, purpose, survey questioners, and mechanics of the study to the office of the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) and then to the Public School District Supervisor (PSDS) of the district asking permission to

conduct the study. After this, the letter was sent to the principal of each School in the District for final approval. Before the survey questionnaire was handed to the respondents, the researcher briefly explained the study's purpose and its aims. Furthermore, they were reminded about the time they were going to spend filling out the questionnaire. They were also informed that they could request extra time and ask for help from the researcher if necessary. Finally, to give the respondents enough time to answer the survey questionnaires, the respondents were given 5 days, after which all the survey questionnaires were gathered, tallied, and then tabulated using the appropriate statistical tools. Utilizing computer processing, statistical derivations, and tabular presentation, the researcher made sure that all the data was kept intact. The actual survey was conducted on October 21-24, 2023, and was gathered on the following week.

Data Analysis

Objectives 1 and 2 used the descriptive analytical scheme and mean as statistical tools to determine the level of teacher's religious commitment when analyzed in terms of worship service, tithes and offerings, prayer meetings, and outreach programs, as well as teachers' work performance during the same school term. Finally, objective 3 used the relational analytical scheme and Spearman's Rho as statistical tools to determine the relationship between the levels of teachers' religious commitment and work performance.

Ethical Consideration

Respondents were adequately informed about the research, comprehend the information, and have the power of freedom of choice to decide whether to participate or decline. Participant's agreement to participate in this study was obtained only after a thorough explanation of the research process (Arifin, 2018). To avoid emotionally exhausting the conduct of the survey to the participants, ample timing regarding the sensitivity of the questions needs to be taken into account. In essence, confidentiality in the relationship between the researcher and the research subject is to be regarded as an obligation for the researcher and a right for the research subject (Torp, 2015). Participants were guaranteed that the information they shared would not be disclosed to the public or to anyone for that matter. Anonymity would be assured in the study report. Almost all research guarantees the participant's confidentiality – they are assured that identifying information will not be made available to anyone who is not directly involved in the study (Trochim, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. *Level of teacher religious commitments*

Areas	Maen	Level
Worship Service	4.29	High level
Tithes and offering	4.33	High level
Prayer Meetings	4.32	High level
Outreach Program	4.28	High level
Total=	4.30	High level

Table 1 shows the level of teachers' religious commitment obtaining an overall mean of 4.30 interpreted to mean high. Simply put, this level of teachers' religious commitment suggests that a significant portion of the teachers within a particular context or community are deeply devoted to their religious beliefs and practices. Subsequently, a high level of teachers' religious commitment can significantly shape the educational environment and experiences within a school or educational institution (Imbung 2014).

Table 2. Level of teachers' work performance when grouped according to variable groupings such as worship service, prayer meetings, tithes and offerings and outreach program

Variables	Mean	Interpretation
Worship Service	4.239	Very Satisfactory
Tithes and Offering	4.315	Very Satisfactory
Prayer Meetings	4.297	Very Satisfactory
Outreach Program	4.272	Very Satisfactory
Overall mean	4.312	Very Satisfactory

Table 2 shows the overall level of teachers' work performance during the School Year 2022 - 2023 when grouped according to worship service, tithes and offerings, prayer meetings, and outreach program, obtaining a mean of 4.312, interpreted as very satisfactory. This simply shows the proximate accuracy with only slight difference when it comes to aforementioned variables.

Table 3. Relationship between the level of teachers' religious commitment and level of work performance

Correlate	N	rho	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Teachers' Religious Commitment	125	0.582	0.000	0.01	Significant
Work Performance	125				

Table 3 reveals a significant relationship between the levels of teachers' religious commitment and work performance. Religious commitment often involves a set of values and ethical principles. When these align with the values promoted in the educational setting, teachers may experience a sense of congruence, positively impacting their motivation, engagement, and dedication to their work. Additionally, religious commitment can provide individuals with a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives. Teachers who align their religious values with the educational mission may be more motivated and committed to their roles, resulting in enhanced work performance. In addition to this, Sanchez's (2014) study suggested many conceptual reasons why religiosity would promote well-being. Using a multilevel perspective, they proposed psychological (or individual) and social (or national) mechanisms for this process. At the psychological Level, there exist inherent universal human needs (such as the need to belong) that, when fulfilled through religiosity, enhance well-being. In other words, religiosity fulfills universal human needs. For the educators, Baring (2014) reaffirmed the religious reinforcement for teachers to have positive spirituality while performing their duty. In addition to this, religious teachers do better than secular teachers who have no positive religious commitment. This is very interesting, but seeing this reason so slightly eventually affects teachers' performances. This is something that can be implemented in any school. A religious teacher does a sense of belonging to their learners that is fostered in her/his positive attitude towards them. The classroom becomes more conducive, and students feel nurtured

and cared for. (Baring et al. 2014). Thus, this statement about the religiosity of teachers leads to apologetics, which in turn leads to critical thinking from another secular point of view. Lastly, religious commitment can provide a source of support and resilience during challenging times. Teachers facing stress or adversity may draw on their religious beliefs for coping mechanisms, potentially improving their ability to navigate difficulties and maintain high performance (Mendoza, 2019).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The level of teachers' religious commitment has been found high, while their work performance has been found satisfactory. These findings lead us to several generalizations. First, teachers' strong religious convictions can affect many facets of their professional careers, including their teaching style, community involvement, ethics, and values. Second, satisfactory teacher performance indicates that the teacher meets the basic expectations of their role, demonstrates effectiveness in teaching practices, and maintains positive relationships within the school community. However, there is still room for ongoing growth and improvement to further enhance teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. Finally, the significant relationship between teachers' religious commitment and their work performance suggests the possible alignment of their professional practices with their religious values. This alignment could result in behaviors such as demonstrating compassion, integrity, and a strong sense of ethics in their interactions with students and colleagues.

The results of this study suggest that teachers, regardless of their religious affiliation, should not be pressured by giving them school-related tasks during their weekly church worship time; this is one way of allowing teachers to reinforce their religious connection and maintain spiritual equilibrium. The school must provide spiritual seminars to strengthen teachers' religiosity. Teachers must inculcate to fellow teachers the importance of having strong religious life. It is more than just testifying the facts, the problem is, there is no one size fits all solution; the context of the school inevitably shapes the response. Yet, no matter how spiritual development is understood for all educators, it clearly embraces an important area of education, because who would want a religious-less education in modern schools? Certainly nobody. The high level of teachers' religious commitments which have a significant relationship to their work performance should be raised from high level to very high level. For further research, the researcher would recommend exploring more related studies to strengthen teachers' religious commitment in the most effective way.

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