SERVICE MOTIVATION OF SCHOOL HEADS AND SENSE OF BELONGINGNESS OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN PANABO CITY DIVISION

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ABSTRACT
This study explored the relationship of service motivation and sense of belongingness in schools. This claim needs to be validated. However, this had never been explored specifically in the local setting. With this, the study determined the extent of service motivation of school heads and the sense of belongingness in schools of public secondary teachers in Panabo City Division. Also, it investigated the association of the involved variables and the domains of service motivation of school heads that significantly influenced sense of belongingness in schools. With the use of probability sampling, 150 secondary teachers in the public schools were selected as the respondents. Utilizing the descriptive-correlational survey method, the data collated were analyzed through the use of Mean, Product-Moment correlation and Regression Analysis. Results revealed that there was an extensive service motivation of school heads and an extensive sense of belongingness in schools. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between the two variables. Moreover, all domains of service motivation of school heads were found to have significantly influenced the sense of belongingness in schools. Based on the findings, it was further suggested that higher officials in the Department of Education and school heads may identify means on how to help the school heads to be dedicated in public service to ensure sense of belongingness in the school.

KEYWORDS: Service motivation, sense of belongingness in schools, Panabo City Division, Philippines

INTRODUCTION
In schools, the cultivation of a robust sense of belongingness, evidenced by shared expectations and supportive relationships among staff members, can serve as a catalyst for advancing teachers' instructional endeavors and promoting their personal well-being. In such instances, educators may actively engage in initiatives aimed at enhancing the overall culture of the school, building stronger connections between teachers and students, and nurturing sentiments of inclusion, care, shared purpose, and collective commitment. Regrettably, challenges may arise in establishing a sense of belongingness within the educational context, wherein issues such as conflict and ineffective communication are potential obstacles.

In Indonesia, efforts have been undertaken to promote inclusive education as a response to the challenges encountered by children with disabilities. The number of inclusive schools in the country has witnessed a significant surge, escalating from 3,610 to 28,778 between 2015 and 2020. Despite this growth, it is noteworthy that only a meager percentage—less than 13 percent—of these inclusive schools have educators equipped with proper training in inclusive education, ready to offer adequate learning support to children with disabilities. Conversely, the United States faces distinct challenges related to a sense of belongingness in its educational landscape. Teachers encounter difficulties in addressing student needs, grappling with a lack of parental support, and navigating public criticism, often stemming from a populace that may not fully comprehend the intricacies of their day-to-day responsibilities. Teachers in the U.S. commonly grapple with a range of classroom challenges, including a deficiency in teamwork, limited personal time, the pursuit of long-term educational objectives, and the management of conflicts and student excuses (Meador, 2019).
In the Philippines, as reported by Bautista (2022) in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, majority of Filipino students who did not fare well on the reading proficiency test came from low-income households. More so, socioeconomic status was associated with important factors such as the lack of access to ICT resources, the students’ learning motivation, and their expected occupational status. When they go to the classroom, they bring a low motivational set. They do not like reading and they do not feel like they value schooling and succeeding. They also have teachers who lack enthusiasm and make them feel bad for not being able to read. It is added that the larger school environment causes the students to have a low sense of belongingness These factors, then, contribute to threatening the poor readers’ sense of competence and belongingness.

Within the Division of Panabo City, the researcher noted a constrained sense of belongingness within the school, primarily attributed to issues such as inadequate communication, conflicts, and individual differences. Despite these evident observations, there had been no formal initiative to delve into and comprehend these circumstances. Notably, there had been a lack of studies investigating the sense of belongingness within the public secondary schools in the Division of Panabo City considering the service motivation of school heads.

In light of these circumstances, the researcher endeavored to delve deeper into the assessment of public service motivation among school heads and the sense of belongingness within public secondary schools, specifically within the Panabo City Division. Moreover, the study investigated the correlation between these two variables. Through this scholarly pursuit, the researcher illuminated the landscape of service motivation among school heads and the prevailing sense of belongingness. This is essential for improving educational leadership and fostering a positive school climate. By understanding the intrinsic motivations that drive school heads and their sense of connection to their institutions, the school administration can enhance their effectiveness in guiding both staff and students. This research can ultimately contribute to creating nurturing learning environments where students thrive academically and socially.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Research Design**

In this research, a quantitative approach is utilized, precisely employing a descriptive correlational technique. Quantitative research involves gathering numerical data and then applying mathematical analysis, frequently integrating statistical tools. This methodology is employed to clarify and offer insights into particular problems or phenomena (Apuke, 2017). In the realm of descriptive correlational studies, the emphasis is on delineating variables and the inherent relationships that emerge among them (Davis, 2021).

Descriptive research involves a non-interventionist approach by the researcher, observing variables without any manipulation. Its principal aim is to offer a comprehensive comprehension of the fundamental attributes of these variables, as highlighted by Korrapati (2016). Conversely, a correlational study aims to ascertain if a relationship exists between two variables. According to Kabir (2016), this entails assessing whether a change, either an increase or decrease, in one variable is connected to a corresponding increase or decrease in the other.

This study fell under the quantitative category as it depended on numerical data for analysis and interpretation. It was descriptive in nature as it sought to assess both the service motivation of school heads and the sense of belongingness in schools. Furthermore, this academic undertaking was considered correlational because it examined the association between the service motivation of school heads and the sense of belongingness in schools of Panabo City Division.

**Respondents and Sampling**

A total of 150 public secondary teachers were invited to participate in this study. According to Hair et al. (2018), it was suggested that a minimum of 50 samples is required for simple regression analysis, and typically around 100 samples sufficed for most research scenarios. Therefore, having 150 respondents was more than sufficient to fulfill the objectives of this study.

In selecting the study’s sample, a two-staged cluster sampling, a form of probability sampling, was utilized. This sampling method allows for determining the probability or likelihood of inclusion for each item. Essentially, every member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being part of the sample (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). In research, cluster sampling is a widely adopted technique that involves dividing the population into clusters. A
cluster comprises unique units, forming exhaustive and mutually exclusive subsets (Thomas, 2020). The two-stage cluster sampling is employed due to the random selection of a sample from each specified cluster or division. In the context of this study, all secondary teachers from the public secondary schools in Panabo City Division were taken into account.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria for this study specified the selection of secondary teachers with a minimum of 2 years of teaching experience. This criterion was essential as it allowed teachers with at least a 2-year tenure in public schools to effectively evaluate the public service motivation of their school heads and its impact on the sense of community in schools. Additionally, participants who felt uneasy or uncomfortable answering the survey questionnaire had the option to voluntarily withdraw from participating in the study. They did not face any pressure to continue their involvement, and their decision to withdraw was fully respected, emphasizing the paramount importance of the respondents' welfare in the study's conduct.

**Research Instruments**

Regarding data collection, this study utilized a customized survey questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this project had two distinct sets. The initial set centered on evaluating the service motivation of school heads, while the subsequent set focused on assessing the sense of belongingness in schools.

**Service Motivation.** The instrument for the service motivation was adopted from the study of Gan, Li, and Wang (2013). The tool had a total of 16 items. It had three domains namely: self-sacrifice (1-4), compassion (1-4), commitment of public interest (1-4), and attraction to policy making (1-4). The Cronbach alpha for this instrument was .72 with this, the internal consistency was described as high. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency reliability, indicating how closely related a set of items are as a group. A value of .72 is considered high because it suggests that the items in the scale are consistently measuring the same underlying construct.

**Sense of Belongingness.** The sense of belongingness questionnaire was a modified form of survey adapted from the study of Chavis et al. (2008). The tool had a total of 24 items. It had three variables, namely: reinforcement of needs (1-6), membership (7-12), influence (13-18), and shared emotional connection (19-24). It was subjected to pilot testing which revealed a result of .73, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency. The result suggests that the items in the scale are consistently measuring the same underlying construct.

The instruments employed in this study were tailored to align with the study's objectives. The researcher incorporated and consolidated all feedback, comments, and suggestions provided by the adviser, panel members, and expert validators to enhance and refine the research tools, thereby ensuring the achievement of construct validity.

**Data Analysis**

For more comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data, the following statistical tools were utilized.

**Average Weighted Mean.** This was used to measure the extent of service motivation of school heads and the sense of belongingness in schools.

**Pearson r.** This was utilized to determine the relationships between service motivation of school heads and the sense of belongingness in schools.

**Regression Analysis.** This was utilized to determine the significant influence of service motivation of school heads on the sense of belongingness in schools.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Presented in this chapter are the findings based on the results of data gathered, the conclusions drawn from the findings and the recommendations for consideration.

**Findings**

The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between service motivation of school heads and sense of belongingness in public secondary schools. The study was conducted in the selected secondary
schools in Panabo City Division. There were one hundred fifty (150) secondary teachers who participated in this study. Descriptive correlational method of research was used in this study utilizing adopted research instruments. The said instruments were validated by the panel of experts and subjected to pilot testing before it was made ready for administration. Mean, Pearson Product Correlation of Coefficient, and Regression Analysis were the statistical tools used in analyzing the data. The hypotheses raised in this study were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

The extent of service motivation of school heads is extensive which means that service motivation is oftentimes evident among school heads. Descriptively categorized as "extensive," this suggests that public service motivation is frequently observed and ingrained within the attitudes and behaviors of school leaders.

Meanwhile, the extent of sense of belongingness in school is extensive which means that it is oftentimes evident. This underscores the frequent occurrence and prominence of a strong sense of belongingness within the school environment.

It was found out that there is a significant relationship between service motivation of school heads and sense of belongingness in schools. The hypothesis of no significant relationship between service motivation of school heads and sense of belongingness was rejected. This emphasizes the influential role of school heads' service motivation in shaping the communal atmosphere within schools.

More so, it was revealed that all the domains of service motivation of school heads significantly influence the sense of belongingness in school. The findings highlight that each domain of public service motivation among school heads significantly contributes to fostering a sense of community within schools. This suggests that the collective influence of these motivational domains account for a substantial proportion of the variance in the sense of belongingness observed within the school environment.

**Conclusions**

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered:

The extent of service motivation of school heads implies that it is oftentimes evident. In fact, all dimensions are oftentimes evident from the school heads, namely, self-sacrifice, attraction to policy making, commitment to public interest, and compassion.

Meanwhile, the extent of sense of belongingness in schools is oftentimes evident. Apparently, all indicators are found to be oftentimes evident specifically on reinforcement of needs, membership, influence, and shared emotional connection.

Based on the findings, service motivation of school heads and sense of belongingness are related. All domains of service motivation are linked to the sense of belongingness in schools.

Also, service motivation of school heads significantly influences sense of belongingness. In fact, all domains of service motivation of school heads, namely, self-sacrifice, attraction to policy making, commitment to public interest, and compassion significantly influence sense of belongingness by registering a p-value of .000 which is less than .05 in the level of significance. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Further, the result indicates that for every unit increase in the four domains of service motivation of school heads, the sense of belongingness will increase.

The significant and positive relationship between service motivation and sense of belongingness affirmed Rainey's (1982) concept of Public Service Motivation. This theory elucidates why administrators in both private and public sectors aspire to contribute to "meaningful public service." School principals with elevated levels of PSM are inclined towards a sincere dedication to fostering educational excellence and fostering community advancement. Furthermore, those with a pronounced PSM are propelled by a genuine care for the welfare and growth of students and the wider community. PSM could steer school leaders towards decisions that prioritize students' educational requirements and the overall welfare of the school community.

**Recommendations**

The following suggestions were offered based on the conclusions of the study:
The higher officials in the Department of Education are encouraged to continue fostering a supportive and inclusive environment that values collaboration and community engagement. This can be achieved through initiatives that recognize and celebrate the dedication of school leaders to public service, while also promoting collaborative activities and communication channels within schools to enhance the sense of belonging among students, teachers, and staff. Furthermore, investing in training programs and resources that empower school leaders to further develop their public service mindset and strengthen community ties may help sustain and nurture a positive school climate conducive to academic success and holistic development.

Moreover, school heads may continue prioritizing collaborative efforts and community-building initiatives. School heads should actively foster an environment where public service values are celebrated and exemplified, inspiring staff and students alike to engage in acts of service and contribute to the betterment of the school community. Moreover, fostering open communication channels and promoting inclusivity may further strengthen the sense of community within the school, enhancing student engagement and overall well-being. By championing a culture of public service and prioritizing community-building initiatives, school heads can create a positive and supportive environment conducive to academic success and holistic development.

Furthermore, teachers may actively participate in community-building efforts and collaborative initiatives led by school leadership. By embracing the values of public service and fostering a sense of belonging among students, teachers can contribute to creating a positive and supportive learning environment. Teachers may seek opportunities to engage with colleagues, students, and parents in collaborative activities that promote inclusivity and support the well-being of all members of the school community. Additionally, teachers may play a vital role in reinforcing the values of public service and community involvement amongst students, empowering them to become active contributors to their school community and society at large.

Lastly, future researchers may conduct longitudinal studies to track changes in public service motivation and community dynamics over time that could provide valuable insights into the long-term impact of these factors on school climate and student outcomes. Additionally, qualitative research methods such as interviews and focus groups may offer a deeper understanding of the perceptions and experiences of school leaders, teachers, students, and parents regarding public service values and community engagement within the school setting. By exploring these aspects more comprehensively, future research may contribute to the development of targeted interventions and strategies aimed at fostering a positive and supportive school environment conducive to academic success and holistic development.

REFERENCES