Organizational Culture Measures as Correlates of Attitudes towards Research of Public Elementary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study explored to ascertain the organizational culture domains that best influence each of the attitudes towards research among public elementary school teachers. Utilizing a non-experimental quantitative research design, a survey was conducted involving 105 public elementary school teachers representing the four elementary school districts in Malita, Davao Occidental. Analysis of the data involved mean and standard deviation, Pearson correlation *r* coefficient, and regression analysis. Five regression models were tested to determine which of the domains of organizational culture would likely influence each of the attitudes of teachers towards research. Results revealed that organizational culture was manifested to be very high. On the other hand, teachers seemed to have very high level of research usefulness, high positive attitude towards research, moderately appreciative of research's relevance to life, felt moderate difficulty in doing research and low anxiety in terms of doing research. Organizational culture related significantly with research usefulness, research anxiety and research difficulty. Open communication is found to be the most frequent factor that best influence most of the attitudes towards research.

Keywords*: organizational culture, attitude towards research, descriptive-correlational design, Philippines.*

INTRODUCTION

Research has been part of the biggest contributors on the existence of body of knowledge and the development of different organizations (Vanderlinde & Braak, 2010). The apparent lack of appreciation of research led to a growing interest among scholars on promoting the idea that research attitudes and doing the teaching workload are ideally done by teachers (Sheikh & Mohamed, 2015; Musiige & Maassen, 2015). When an institution develops a culture of research (Cuizon & Cayogyog, 2011), this is attributed to the kind of leadership, facility and direction of the organization, its members would be keen in writing one – a system we usually call "publish or perish", where research must be done to maintain tenure.

To attain progress and success in the knowledge-based societies is by practicing positive attitude towards research. Therefore, a favorable attitude influences how they mentally approach research including all the work related to that research (van der Linden, Bakx, Ros, Beijaard & Vermeulen, 2012). However, many teachers perceive research is an activity undertaken by academicians only (Wang & Guo, 2011). Due to the increasing demands in research, higher learning institutions include research in the curriculum serve to be the training ground and a requirement for degree programs (Tatto & Furlong, 2015; Balacy, 2014; Saracaloğlu, 2008). Moreover, the principal mandate of educational institutions is also to extend commercial or industrial application of their research outputs (Perkmann, Tartari, McKelvey, Autio, Broström, D'Este & Krabel, 2013) while advancing the frontiers of knowledge and generating quality human resources called graduates. This created a lot of manpower-related dilemma on educational organizations on what to give highest priority (Singh, Hansen & Podolny, 2010).

Employee's culture in a certain organization is likely to influence the employee's job satisfaction, the transactional and the transformational one. The transactional kind of leaders are the ones who tend to act within the frame of the prevailing culture, while the transformational kind of leaders often work towards change and adaptation of the research culture to their own vision. A good leader must have the ability to change those elements of organizational culture that impede appreciation of a research culture (Belias & Koustelios, 2014). It is undeniable that the kind of environment where academics work is indirectly linked to their attitude and performance in research, in addition to several other factors and functions they perform.

Empirical studies were cited, seeking to establish the relationship between the organizational culture and attitude towards research by public school teachers. The importance of the organizational culture has been increasingly recognized to have vital influence towards public school teachers' attitude in research. As a concrete evidence of such relationship, organizational culture was found to directly associate with teachers' attitude towards research (Erwin & Garman, 2010). At a closer look, cultures in organization were one of biggest factors affecting the attitude of public school teachers towards research as proven by past studies (van der Linden et al., 2012). This implies that there is an important role that organizational culture is playing towards the attitude of public school teachers in research. Similarly, research approach differs mainly depending on the culture that a person is used to (Hartnell, Ou & Kinicki, 2011). Attitude is positive or negative affect towards a particular subject. Bi-dimensional definition of attitude includes beliefs as well regarding subject. Comprehensive definition of attitude includes emotions, beliefs, behaviors, and their interaction (Avey, Reichard, Luthans & Mhatre, 2011; Zan & Martino, 2007). In other words, organizational culture generally shows a positive correlation with teachers' research attitude.

Several studies also claimed that some measures of organizational culture, to include power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism or collectivism and masculinity or femininity are determinants of the research culture of an educational institution itself (Ahmed & Shafiq, 2014; Ting, 2011). Furthermore, when an institution espouses policies that nurture a supportive learning condition for students to learn research, its staff will tend to behave positively and favorably on its use.

Moreover, there has been a shift in the role of teachers and now they are expected to explore the solution, by themselves (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2010; Scheirer, 2000), to their immediate classroom problems through action research (Sadruddin, 20212). They are also expected to involve in scientific investigations through rigorous research methods (Sato & Loewen, 2019; van Katwijk, Berry, Jansen & van Veen, 2019). Furthermore, reading research is imperative for learning to teach (Altrichter, Feldman, Posch & Somekh, 2008). It gives future teachers a vision about the practical implications of different approaches, their validity, rationale for decision making, targeting problems, and bringing improvements, among others (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010). That is why initial teacher training program has been added courses on research methods and trainee teachers are also expected to culminate their program with a research project (Geursen, Berry, Hagebeuk, Peters & Lunenberg, 2016).

In the context of Philippine basic educational system where research is one of the components for performance appraisal (though negligible), a favorable culture would be expected for teachers to do research. Hence, this becomes the motivation of the research to generate new knowledge and to address the current research gap.

METHOD

The study employed a quantitative non-experimental correlational research design since the study sought to establish the relationship between organizational culture and each of the attitudes towards research of public elementary school teachers. The study's research subjects are 101 public elementary school teachers of the Municipality of Malita, Province of Davao Occidental, Philippines. The numbers of respondents per school are as indicated: Malita Central Elementary school of Malita North District (51), Ticulon Central Elementary School of Malita South District (8), Mana Central Elementary School of Malita East District (25) and Julian Turado Central Elementary School of West District (21).

In the collection of data, the study utilized two different scales: for organizational culture, the scale was adopted from Sirikrai (2006), which contains four indicators, namely: family orientation/loyalty, open communication, team approach, and knowledge of managers, while the second scale is the Attitude towards Research (ATR) of Papanastasiou (2015) to measure the extent of the five attitudes towards research among public elementary school teachers, namely: research usefulness for profession, research anxiety, positive attitudes toward research, relevance to life, and research difficulty. Pilot testing was also done and reliability of the instrument by Cronbach's alpha coefficient revealed an excellent reliability (0.965) for organizational culture and acceptable to excellent values for each of the research attitudes (0.728 to 0.974).

In the analysis of the data, weighted mean, Pearson r correlation coefficient, and multiple linear regression analyses were used, all conducted in IBM-SPSS version 22 software.

RESULTS

Shown in Table 1 is the level of organizational culture in public elementary schools with an overall mean of 4.29 with a descriptive rating of *very high* indicating that all enumerated indicators were always manifested. The cited overall mean score was the result gathered from the computed means scores of its indicators from highest to lowest scores. As shown in the table, *team approach* obtained the highest mean of 4.39 among all the indicators which was verbally described as *very high*. This is indicative that the organizational culture of public elementary schools is an environment seen by teachers to have encouraged the teachers to work as a team, wherein school managers/principal had to meet his/ her teachers one- to-one at least twice a year to discuss performance and goals, and teachers are encouraged to work in group to exchange opinions and ideas.

Secondly, *family orientation,* which was obtained an overall mean score of 4.36 among all indicators which was verbally described as *very high*. This is indicative that the organizational culture of public elementary schools is an environment seen by teachers to have emphasized strong loyalty and dedication, emphasized open communication, treated each employee as a total person, created a unique family atmosphere and felt that a certain organization had a real interest in the welfare and overall satisfaction of those who worked. This indicates that the practices relating to organizational culture are always manifested.

Open communication obtained a mean score of 4.25 which was verbally determined as *very high*. This is indicative that the organizational culture of public elementary schools is an environment where teachers see their school managers/ principals to be open to all questions, value ideas and inputs of teachers, give freedom to expresses ideas, and encourage people to speak up when they disagree in a decision

Lastly, *knowledge manager* attained a mean rating of 4.16, which is interpreted as *high.* This is indicative that the organizational culture of public elementary schools is affirming to knowledge managers often communicates the overall organizational goals, school managers/principals had knowledge and trainings to be a good leader and provides help but not train or guide that can improved performance. It showed that the practice relating to organizational culture is often manifested.

Table 1. *Level of organizational culture of public elementary schools as perceived by teachers (N=101)*

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
family orientation	4.36	0.53	very high
open communication	4.25	0.55	very high
team approach	4.39	0.64	very high
knowledge manager	4.16	0.61	high
Overall	**4.29**	**0.50**	**very high**

Shown in Table 2 is the level attitude towards research of public elementary school teachers. As shown, every indicator for the attitude towards research of public elementary school teachers shows different descriptive level. The overall mean was not shown in the table since the indicators are distinct and different from each other are which will not be added together.

Research usefulness has obtained a mean score of 4.31 and had a descriptive level of very high. This is indicative that attitude towards research of public elementary school teachers affirming to research usefulness for profession was very useful to their profession, very valuable, useful for their career, indispensable to their professional training, employed research approaches in their profession, connected to their field study, knowledge was useful as writing, skills acquired is helpful to the future and research taught to all students. This indicates that the condition relating to attitude towards research is very much evident.

Secondly, positive attitudes obtained a mean score of 3.75 among all indicators which was verbally described as high showing that attitudes towards research of public elementary school teachers that most teachers benefited from research, acquired knowledge as useful as arithmetic, they liked research, they enjoyed doing it, it is interesting and inclined to study the details of research. This indicates that the condition relating to attitude towards research is evident.

Consequently, relevance to life obtained a mean score of 3.33 with a verbal description of moderate. Such result indicates that at some point, public elementary school teachers affirmed that research seemed to have moderate application to their lives, especially when they feel that research plays significant role in everyday life at certain times, feeling the applicability of research in personal life, and sometimes feeling that it is irrelevant to life.

On the other hand, research difficulty obtained a mean score of 2.80 with a verbal descriptive of moderate. This may indicate that teachers encounter difficulty in terms of arithmetic, finding difficult to understand the concepts of research, and finding many mistakes in terms of research. This indicates that the condition relating to this dimension is sometimes evident.

Lastly, among the enumerated indicators, research anxiety obtained the lowest mean score of 2.15, described as low, showing that research is seen to be stressful and complex, making them nervous, and making them feel insecure concerning the analysis of research data. This means that the condition relating to research anxiety is not so much manifested.

Table 2. *Extent of attitudes towards research of public elementary school teachers (N=101)*

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
research usefulness	4.31	0.55	very high
research anxiety	2.15	0.80	low
positive attitudes	3.75	0.62	high
relevance to life	3.33	0.55	moderate
research difficulty	2.80	0.59	moderate

Correlation analyses were done where each of the indicators and the overall variable was tested for significance to each of the attitudes towards research. Each of the attitudes were distinct with one another and cannot be lumped up into a single dependent variable. Pairwise correlation analysis revealed that family orientation is only significantly and positively related to research usefulness (r=0.353, $p<0.01$), while posted non-significant p-values for the rest of the attitudes. Open communication is found to be positively and significantly correlated with research usefulness (r=0.518, $p<0.01$), positive attitudes towards research (r=0.238, $p<0.05$) and relevance to life (r=0.199, $p<0.05$) while negatively correlated with research anxiety (r=-0.246, $p<0.05$) and research difficulty (r=-0.341, $p<0.01$). Team approach, on the other hand, was significantly and positively correlated with research usefulness (r=0.345, $p<0.01$) and negatively correlate with research anxiety (r=-0.233, $p<0.05$) and research difficulty (r=-0.308, $p<0.01$). Knowledge manager is positively and significantly related to research usefulness (r=0.337, $p<0.01$) and relevance to life (r=0.225, $p<0.05$) yet negatively correlate with research anxiety (r=-0.234, $p<0.05$) and research difficulty (r=-0.384, $p<0.01$). Finally, the last correlation analysis revealed that overall organizational culture of public elementary schools significantly and positive relate with research usefulness (r=0.450, $p<0.01$) yet negatively correlate with research anxiety (r=-0.225, $p<0.05$) and research difficulty (r=-0.357, $p<0.01$).

Table 3. *Correlation matrix showing the tests to establish significant relationships between organizational culture measures and attitudes of public elementary school teachers towards research*

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables				
	research usefulness	research anxiety	positive attitudes	relevance to life	research difficulty
family orientation	.353**	-.044	.064	.074	-.177
	(.000)	(.655)	(.518)	(.452)	(.071)
open communication	.518**	-.246*	.238*	.199*	-.341**
	(.000)	(.011)	(.015)	(.042)	(.000)
team approach	.345**	-.233*	-.144	.105	-.308**
	(.000)	(.017)	(.142)	(.286)	(.001)
knowledge manager	.337**	-.234*	-.040	.225*	-.384**
	(.000)	(.016)	(.683)	(.021)	(.000)
Overall Organizational Culture	**.450****	**-.225***	**.024**	**.177**	**-.357****
	(.000)	**(.021)**	**(.805)**	**(.071)**	**(.000)**

Finally, table 4 displays the result of the five regression analyses conducted, having the indicators of organizational culture as predictors of each of the attitudes towards

research of public elementary school teachers. The first regression analysis was found to be significant at F=9.292, *p*<0.01 and was able to account 24.2 to 27.1 percent of the variation of the research usefulness.

Table 4. *Significance on the influence of organizational culture indicators on the attitudes of public school teachers towards research*

	research usefulness		research anxiety		positive attitudes		relevance to life		research difficulty	
	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	t
family orientation	-.057	-.435	*.470*	*2.242**	-.252	-1.676	-.206	-1.430	.231	1.558
open communication	*.541*	*3.831**	*-.522*	*-2.292**	*.799*	*4.899**	*.311*	*1.988**	*-.361*	*-2.249**
team approach	-.030	-.210	-.036	-.158	*.632*	*3.870**	*.320*	*2.043**	.140	.868
knowledge manager	.055	.387	-.203	-.882	.179	1.086	*.405*	*2.552**	*-.402*	*-2.469**
R²	.271		.117		.241		.109		.190	
Adjusted R²	.242		.081		.210		.073		.157	
F	9.292		3.303		7.930		3.051		5.854	
p-value	<0.01		<0.05		<0.01		<0.05		<0.01	

* p<0.05

Among the indicators of organizational culture, open communication (β=0.541, p<0.01) is found to be the only significant predictor of research usefulness (Model 1). An increase of open communication rating by 1 point increases the perception of teachers on research usefulness by about 0.541 points, holding other variables constant.

The second regression analysis (Model 2) revealed that family orientation (*β*=0.470, p<0.01) and open communication (*β*=-0.522, p<0.01) are the significant predictors of research anxiety. An increase of family orientation rating by 1 point increases the perception of teachers on research anxiety by about 0.470 points. On the other hand, an increase of family orientation rating by 1 point decreases the perception of teachers on research anxiety by about 0.522 points, holding other variables constant. This regression was found to be significant at F=3.303, *p*<0.05 and was able to account 8.1 to 11.7 percent of the variance of research anxiety.

The third regression analysis (Model 3) with positive attitude towards research as dependent variable revealed that open communication (*β*=0.799, p<0.01) and team approach (*β*=-0.632, *p*<0.01) are the significant predictors of positive attitudes towards research. An increase of open communication rating by one point increases the positive attitude of teachers on research by about 0.799 point. On the other hand, an increase of team approach rating by one point decreases the positive attitudes towards research by about 0.632 points, holding other variables constant. The regression was able to account 21 to 24.1 percent of the variance of the positive attitude towards research and is significant at F=7.93, *p*<0.01.

Regression analysis revealed that open communication (*β*=0.311, *p*<0.05), team approach (*β*=-0.320, *p*<0.05) and knowledge manager (*β*=0.405, *p*<0.01) are the significant predictors of research's relevance to life (Model 4). Respective increases

of open communication and knowledge manager ratings by one point each increase the perception on the relevance to life research by about 0.311 point and 0.405 points, respectively. On the other hand, an increase of team approach rating by one point decreases the perception on the relevance to life research by about 0.320 point, holding other variables constant. There is a linear association of the variables as indicated in the F-value of 3.051, $p<0.05$ and was able to account 15.7 to 19 percent of the variance of the attitude on research relevance to life.

The last regression analysis (Model 5) revealed that open communication (β=-0.361, t=-2.249, p<0.01) and knowledge manager (β=-0.402, t=-2.469, p<0.01) are the significant predictors of perception on research difficulty. Respective increases of open communication and knowledge manager ratings by one point decrease teachers' perception on research difficulty by about 0.361 point and 0.402 point, respectively. The regression was able to account 7.3 to 10.9 percent of the variance of the data and was significant at F=5.854, $p<0.01$.

DISCUSSION

The very high level of organizational culture among public elementary schools as perceived by public school teachers can be attributed specially from very high level in the areas of family orientation, open communication, and team approach. This can be better exemplified when public elementary schools through its school administrators ensures that their respective teachers feel that they are working as a team, they are being treated as a member of a family, and that there is open line of communication between the school heads and the teachers, and between teachers and their fellow teachers as well. The very high level of rating of teachers on their public elementary schools' organizational culture, especially in family orientation is akin to the pronouncements of Wang, Cheney, and Roper (2016), who verbalized that ethical, authentic leaders can turn their [company] cultures around by treating the company as an extended family. In addition, the study revealed very high level of open communication, which corroborates the statement of Men and Stacks (2014), wherein they emphasized that clear, open communication can create a sense of transparency in organizations, which builds trust between levels of employees. Finally, the very high level of team approach found in the previous chapter substantiated Brown and Harvey's (2011) pronouncements, which indicated that not only do employees want to be heard, but more importantly, they want to know that their contributions are being noticed and not taken for granted, which, in this case, is what most public elementary teachers in the four districts of Malita feel when it comes to their organizational culture.

Public elementary teachers exhibited different levels of attitudes towards research. Much that these attitudes are distinct with one another, it is inconclusive whether such levels are dependent with one another in a certain degree. The study revealed very high level of attitude towards research usefulness. Such degree of this attitude is indicative that public elementary school teachers consider research to be very helpful in the performance of their duties and is a valuable deliverable towards favorable performance assessments. This very high level of research usefulness is consistent

with the pronouncements of Seider and Lemma (2004) and Wulandari, Narmaditya, Utomo and Prayi (2019), of which studies both claiming that research is an attractive option for teacher researchers, school administrative staff and other stakeholders in the teaching and learning environment to consider. In addition, the high level of positive attitude towards research seemed to corroborate the fact that teachers appreciate research in its usefulness. The high level of positive attitude towards this academic activity is indicative that at most instance, teachers find research as a rewarding activity and that they enjoy doing research especially when it addresses problems within their classrooms. This insight is akin to Syed and Mattoo (2016), who made mention that students or researchers who have positive attitude treated research course as a less difficult subject.

On the other hand, public elementary teachers expressed moderate level of attitude in terms of research being relevant to life. This is indicative that while they value research for its scholarly or academic value, there seems to be a disconnect between research and how they can apply it towards day-to-day activities. This contradicts to the pronouncements of Zarah (2021), averring that research and doing research is supposed to encourage people to explore possibilities, to understand existing issues and to disclose truths and fabricated ones. Finally, the low level of research anxiety and the moderate level of felt difficulty in doing research seemed to agree with the findings of Vitasari, Wahab, Othman and Awang (2010), opining that research anxiety is one's fear and one's perception as discomforting which leads to the reduction of the research productivity. Such insight was even exemplified statistically by Konokman, Yelken and Yokus (2015), claiming in their study that anxiety could be inevitable since 60% of the workloads of faculty members shall involve research.

This study finds out that overall organizational culture of public elementary schools was found to correlate positively with research usefulness and negatively with research anxiety and research difficulty. This is indicative that at certain degree, how the culture of the school might cause or can be attributed to how teachers behave towards research. The positive relationship implies that despite the to-be-established dependence, the more favorable the organizational culture is, the more positive teachers view research. In the same way, higher level of organizational culture is related to decreased research anxiety and research difficulty felt by teachers.

The positive link of organizational culture with research usefulness established in this study is similar to the pronouncements of Dutton and Ragins (2017), who, in the context of getting funding and research grants, averred that the way how educational institutions gear its research culture could lead to teachers and academicians to be nurtured in terms of tapping potential opportunities. When teachers work in an institution with excellent organizational culture, one that is also working towards research excellence, they tend to realize that research can boost their career, credentials and means of income. They furthered that for those looking for a job or for greener pastures, research is necessary.

On the other hand, the negative link of organizational culture with research anxiety is consistent with the statement of Belias and Koustelios (2014), who stressed that good leadership and excellent working environment, both of which are essential elements of organizational culture, is indirectly linked to their attitude and performance in

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research, in addition to several other factors and functions they perform. This means that teachers could grow anxious in doing their task – research in this case – if their work environment is not favorable for them to work.

Also, the negative link of organizational culture with research difficulty coheres with the statement of Markos and Sridevi (2010), who mentioned the importance of leaders of institutions being able to ensure a good working environment for teachers towards their elimination of inefficacies and misunderstandings. Academics find it easier to do research and do research-related tasks of they are in a healthy and peaceful work environment. In relation to this pronouncement, Burris, Detert and Romney (2013) averred that an institution with favorable organizational culture has managers who encourage people to speak up when they disagree with a decision.

While the study failed to establish the relationship of overall organizational culture and positive attitude towards research, open communication and teachers' positive attitude towards research was found to have significant relationship. This is like the statement of Lo, Ramayah, Min and Songan (2010), who mentioned that communication is essential to building relationships between staff members and between levels of employees, both on a professional and social level. In the context of research activities, Dima and Vladutescu (2013) added that organizations will have the benefit of their staff's combined experience in coming up with innovative solutions. In addition, the specific link of open communication and knowledge manager with relevance to life is parallel with the postulations of Tedla (2016), who discussed that sustaining the culture of an organization will not become possible without the open line of communication and managers having sufficient knowledge of operations. They warned that a manager – in this context, in the academe – who does not possess knowledge and understanding of an organization cannot be effective in steering a given organization in a specific direction while ensuring optimal outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed very high level of organizational culture attributed from very high levels of its three areas: family orientation, open communication, and team approach. On the other hand, teachers seemed to have very high level of research usefulness, high positive attitude towards research, moderately appreciative of research's relevance to life, felt moderate difficulty in doing research and low anxiety in terms of doing research. Moreover, there exist significant link between organizational culture as perceived by teachers and their attitudes towards research. In addition, based on the five regression analyses conducted for each attitude, open communication and knowledge manager emerge to be the best predictors of the five attitudes of research. Open communication best influences research usefulness, research anxiety, and positive attitude towards research, while knowledge manager best influences research relevance to life and research difficulty, holding all other variables constant. However, there are other factors or variables that also explain it. While the relationship was different in each attitude, it is sufficing to say that the environment can also affect attitude – in this case, organizational culture has something to do with how teachers behave in research.

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