

Teachers' Socioeconomic Status and Its Relationship with Teachers Work Morale and Teachers' Job Performance at State Senior High Schools in Merauke Regency – Indonesia

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Abstract: *Teachers' job performance is the way teachers perform their work in the classroom. This research aimed to examine the relationship between teachers' socioeconomic status (SES), teachers' work morale, and teachers' job performance. The nature of this research was a correlational research that was conducted using survey method as it sought to establish relationships among various variables of the research. The sample of this research comprised 118 teachers at State Senior High Schools in Merauke regency. Questionnaires were the main tool of the research to collect data. The data were given quantitative treatment using path analyses technique. In order that data were analyzed well, the researcher using the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 for windows. Based on the data analyses, the findings revealed that: (a) there was a significant relationship between teachers' SES and teachers' work morale at state senior high schools in Merauke regency, Papua, Indonesia; (b) there was a significant relationship between teachers' SES and teachers' job performance at state senior high schools in Merauke regency, Papua, Indonesia; and (c) there was a significant relationship between teachers' work morale and teachers' job performance at state senior high schools in Merauke regency, Papua, Indonesia.*

Keywords: teachers' socioeconomic status, teachers' work morale, teachers' job performance, state senior high schools, Merauke regency.

1. Introduction

So far, there is no common agreement on the concept of teacher's job performance. There are various definitions which reflect the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. Obilade (1999) defined teachers' job performance as the duties performed by a teacher at a particular period in the school system in achieving organizational goals. Okeniyi (1995) defined teacher's job performance as the ability of teachers to combine relevant inputs for the enhancement of teaching and learning process. Similarly, Selamat, et al. (2013) viewed teachers' job performance as the way in which a teacher behaves in the process of teaching and it is known to be related to teachers' effectiveness. However, Meindle (1995) argued that teachers' job performance is determined by teachers' level of participation in the day to day running of the school organization.

In this research, teachers' job performance "relates to what teachers do in the classroom and how that affects student learning" (Gaynor, 1998, p. 46). As the leader of a class, what teachers perform in the classroom can greatly affect to the whole process of students' learning and, in turn, affect the quality of graduates (Werang, et al., 2014). In a study conducted by Lewis (1982, as cited in https://www.google.co.id/?gws_rd=cr&ei=PhKGU9aPPMjwrQeHiIGADw#q=characteristics+of+effective+teachers+pdf) pointed out eight characteristics of effective teachers (instructors) as follows: [a] enthusiasm about the subject; [b] knowledge of the subject and the ability to communicate this knowledge; [c] cares about the progress and welfare of students; [d] dares to discipline (govern) to eliminate unnecessary talking, etc; [e] has a sense of humor; [f] uses a variety of instructional strategies; [g] interacts

with students during, as well as before and after class; and [h] has confidence in him/herself and what he/she is doing.

The maximum contribution of teachers will be seen clearly in students' learning outcomes. In order that teachers are able to contribute maximally for students' success, it is necessary that all of the facilities needed are adequate provided. Keeping on the view of the role of teachers, the researcher has tried to make a study of the prevalent factors related to conditions in which teachers performing their duties. **First factor is teachers socioeconomic status (SES).** According to Burden & Byrd (1999), socio-economic status (SES) as a measure of a family's relative position in a community, determined by a combination of parents' income, occupation, and level of education (p.165). Similarly, American Psychological Association (APA) stated, "Socioeconomic status (SES) is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation. It is commonly conceptualized as the social standing or class of an individual or group" (<http://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/factsheet-education.aspx>).

Teachers' SES could directly affect teachers' work morale. Nichols (2006) stated that "Teachers suffer from low morale due in part to the low-pay-high-cost-of-living gap" (as cited in Thompson, 2009, p. 23). Low pay, mixed with increasing costs of living and the fear of losing their jobs, has been a significant factor in the overall decrease in teacher morale. The low pay has also affected people that are considering becoming teachers in the future, by convincing them to train for higher-paying professions (Shaner in http://www.ehow.com/info_80306_14_reasons-teachers-morale-low.html).

Besides, teachers' SES could also affect teachers' job performance. Eggen and Kauchak (2004) even viewed SES as the most powerful factor related to school performance. Eggen and Kauchak (2004) said,

One of the most powerful factors related to school performance is socioeconomic status (SES), the combination of income, occupation, and level of education that describes a family or individual. A family's SES provides a sense of their standing in a community; how much flexibility they have in where they live or what they buy, how much influence they have on political decision making, and the educational opportunities their children have. SES consistently predicts intelligence and achievement test scores, grades, truancy, and dropout and suspension rates.

In connection with the above opinions, teachers' performance as an integrative part of school performance should be also affected. Teachers in high economic status are not only able to provide their family's basic needs but also to provide an adequate of learning facilities at home to developing his or her capabilities and their children's capability as well (Albatch, et al., 1982; Woolfolk, 1993). Teachers in high economic status are even able to provide a more special time for learning, preparing materials and media needed in tomorrow's teaching-learning process, checking and evaluating students work. On the contrary, teachers in low economic status are not only able to provide their family's basic needs but also are not able to provide time and facilities at home to develop their knowledge and skills needed to deal with today's challenges. Quoted Kummerer (1990), Werang (2010) wrote:

Teachers have no time at home to design teaching learning process and to provide media needed to increase students' understanding. Teachers even have no enough time to evaluate students' work due to the fact that they are so busy to earn money for the need of family's life by teaching as a honorer in other schools, farming, and trading.

Teachers in low economic status sometimes even present in school as a very exhausted person. His or her mind is chaotic due to the simple fact that they are not able yet to provide all the basic needs of family. This fact is directly impact teachers' work morale and the classroom performance (Sahertian, 2000). Cited Prasetyo (2005), the life of teachers in Merauke regency is figured as "a weary-faced person, not only because of his small salary but also because of the torn of his proud. Teachers are as the feet who step over the hallways, and the mud around their feet is more likely to become a big swamp that sink them in".

Second prevalent factor that related to teachers' job performance is teachers work morale

Morale is defined as "the state of the spirit of a person or group as exhibit by confidence, cheerfulness, discipline, and willingness to perform assigned task" (Perumal, 2011). Bentley and Rempel (1970 as cited in Brockington, 2003) defined morale as the extent to which an individual's need are satisfied, and the extend to which individual

perceives satisfaction as stemming from the total job satisfaction. Meanwhile, Leighton (as cited in Francis, 2010) defined morale as the capacity of a group of people to pull together persistently and consistently in pursuit of a common purpose.

Teachers' work morale could be high or low. High morale leads to good discipline, high degree of interest in the job, loyalty to the organisation and high performance (Francis, 2010). Adams and Bailey (1989) stated that when teachers felt good themselves and what they were doing in the classroom they became more inspired to teach thus delivering instruction at a much higher level. When teachers morale is energized and productive, good thing tend to happen in the classroom (Houchard, 2005).

Teachers morale could directly affect teachers' job performance. Sheahan viewed morale as a way of describing how people feel about their jobs, employers and companies, and those feelings are tied to the behaviors and attitudes that employees exhibit in the workplace. When employees have good morale, they feel committed to their employers, loyal to their jobs and motivated to be productive. They work harder, produce more, meet deadlines and give it their all. On the contrary, low morale takes a toll on employee performance and productivity. Employees become less motivated to work, less committed to their employers, exhibit an attitude of indifference and are absent more often (in <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/morale-organizations-346.html>). According to Perumal (2011), in schools the morale of teachers is an important factor to ensure that teachers give of their best at all times that student could receive the best possible education. Similarly, Miller (1981) said, "when schools possess high teacher morale, they not only make teaching much more enjoyable for teachers, but learning becomes more pleasant for students". Ellenberg (1972) also found that "when a school's employees demonstrated high morale, it showed an increase in student achievement".

2. Method

The research aimed to describe the relationship between teachers' SES, teachers' work morale, and teachers' job performance at state senior high schools in Merauke regency, Papua, Indonesia. The nature of the research is a correlational research that was conducted using survey method as it sought to establish relationships among various variables of the research. The researcher used survey method due to its various advantages as follow: (a) high representativeness; (b) low cost; (c) convenient data gathering; (d) good statistical significance; (e) little or no observer subjectivity; and (f) precise result [Sincero, in <https://explorable.com/advantages-and-disadvantages-of-surveys> as cited in Werang, 2014].

Null hypothesis that were examined in this research as follow: (a) there was no significant relationship between teachers' SES and teachers' work morale at state senior high schools in Merauke regency, Papua, Indonesia; (b) there was no significant relationship between teachers' SES and teachers' job performance at state senior high schools in Merauke regency; (c) there was no significant relationship

between teachers' work morale and teachers' job performance at state senior high schools in Merauke regency. These hypotheses were tested using the confidence level of 0.05.

The sample of this study comprised 118 teachers at State Senior High Schools in Merauke regency. Questionnaires were the main tool of the research to collect data. The data were given quantitative treatment using path analyses technique. In order that data were analyzed well, the researcher using the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 for windows.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The researcher conducted data analysis using path analysis, quantitative research design to describe the relationship between, teachers' SES, school organizational climate and teachers job performance as reflected in the following model.

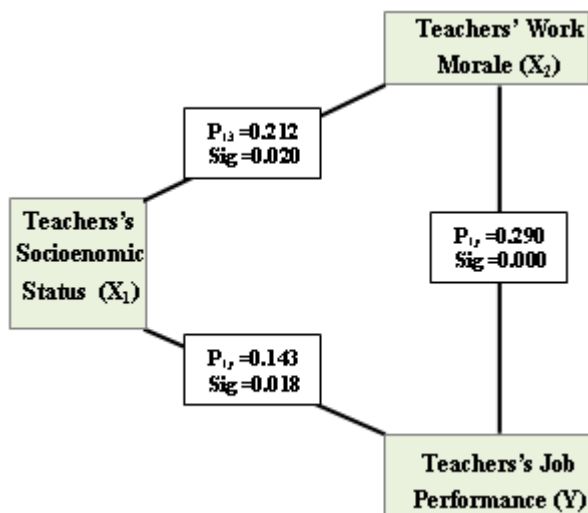


Figure 1: Empiric Model of Relationship Among Research Variables

Result of data analysis as shown on the above model revealed that:

- There was a significant relationship between teachers SES (X_1) and teachers' work morale (X_2). It's indicated by betha coefficient (β) of 0.212 with the significance level of 0.020. It means that at the level of alpha (α) = 0.05, the null hypotheses that there was no significant relationship between teachers' SES and teachers' work morale was rejected.
- There was a significant relationship between teachers' SES (X_1) and teachers' job performance (Y). It's indicated by betha coefficient (β) of 0.143 with the significance level of 0.018. It means that at the level of alpha (α) = 0.05, the null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship between teachers' socioeconomic status and teachers' job performance at state senior high schools in Merauke regency was rejected.
- There was a significant relationship between teachers' work morale (X_2) and teachers' job performance (Y). It's indicated by betha coefficient (β) of 0.290 with the

significance level of 0.000. It means that at the level of alpha (α) = 0.05, the null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship between teachers' work morale and teachers' job performance at state senior high schools in Merauke regency was rejected.

3.2. Discussion

The results of this present research indicate a significant relationship between teachers' SES and teachers' work morale. This inferred that high SES of teachers could enhance teachers' work morale. This result was consistent with Nichols (2006) findings that "teachers suffer from low morale due in part to the low-pay-high-cost-of-living gap". This result was also consistent with Sahertian (2000) findings that "teachers in low economic status sometimes even present in school as a very exhausted person. His or her mind is chaotic due to the simpel fact that they are not able yet to provide all the basic needs of family. This fact is directly impact teachers' work morale and the classroom performance".

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4. Conclusion

The objective of this empirical research was to describe the relationship between teachers' socioeconomic status, school organizational climate, teachers' work morale, and teachers' job performance at state senior high schools in Merauke regency, Papua, Indonesia. The following are the conclusions drawn from the result of the research:

- There was a significant relationship between teachers' SES and teachers' work morale at state senior high schools in Merauke regency, Papua, Indonesia.
- There was a significant relationship between teachers' SES and teachers' job performance at state senior high schools in Merauke regency, Papua, Indonesia.
- There was a significant relationship between teachers' work morale and teachers' job performance at state senior high schools in Merauke regency, Papua, Indonesia.

5. Recommendation

The results revealed a significant relationship between teachers', teachers' work morale, and teachers' job performance. It was recommended for regional education administrators to take some strategies steps to improving teachers' SES in order to enhance teachers' work morale and, in turn, to enhancing teachers' job performance. Since the teachers' SES is low, there will be less of hope to improving teachers' job performance due to the simple fact that teachers are so busy to earn money for the life of their family by teaching as a honorer in other schools, farming, or trading

In order to have a more complete understanding, a deep study of the similar topics related to school culture, teachers' individual characteristics, teachers' job satisfaction, teachers' emotional exhaustion, and teachers' workload should be taken seriously into mind.

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