

Young Educators on Millennial Students: A Grounded Theory

Stephanie B. Disimulacion¹, Mark N. Abadiano²

Email: ¹beloniasstephanie@gmail.com, ²abadianom@cnu.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

Our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal had always been a believer of the youth and its contribution to nation building. This makes more sense when the new generation of students takes on the daunting task of educating the minds of students from their very own generation. Using grounded theory, this research aims to come up with another theory that will aid teachers to have deeper understanding of the behavior and learning styles of millennial students so as to integrate the right approach and effective teaching strategies. Collection of data will be made thru a semi-structured interview, focus group discussion and memoing. Data were transcribed verbatim and were analyzed using content analysis and themes. The outcome of this research will serve as future reference in providing interventions and strategies in teaching millennial students in different educational institutions thereby hoping to be of great help to young educators.

Keywords

young educators, millennial students, grounded theory

Article Received: 10 August 2020, Revised: 25 October 2020, Accepted: 18 November 2020

Introduction

Rationale

Young teachers are the core driving force for the future development of educational institutions. For individual young teachers, the degree of career satisfaction directly influences their working enthusiasm (Liu, Long, & Guo, 2018). Young teachers are generally enthusiastic and dynamic making them more satisfied in the things that they do. Their passion and dedication in their teaching journey is a common picture (Rogayan, 2018).

As anticipated in the study of Carrol and Foster (2010) that as many as 1.5 million public school teachers will leave the classroom by 2018 as a result of retirement, career changes or family issues. This anticipation was proven true as the new generation of teachers boomed in the educational system later this year as shared by the Department of Education. In fact as of today, there are still lot of vacancies for Teacher I positions.

Magnuson & Alexander (2008) reasoned out that teachers of the Baby Boom era are approaching retirement thus forcing educational institutions to replace them with the new generations of young teachers.

Simultaneously, a new generation of learners has immersed themselves in the classroom who are referred as "Millennial Students". They are

determined, driven achievers who depend on technology and their support system. The method of teaching ten years ago is not the method to achieve learning with this generation. Their characteristics mimic the characteristics of the Silent Generation – those who were born between the years of 1925, 1942, and are now grandparents to the Millennial. The Millennial are quite opposite of their predecessors, Generation X (Monaco & Martin, 2007).

Recently, the result of 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a student assessment of 15-year-old learners across 79 countries done by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The Philippines ranked 79th in reading, with an average of 340 against the OECD average of 487. Reading was the focus of this year's PISA, the results of which were released on Tuesday, December 3. This data alarmed the educational system as the quality of education was probed.

With the abovementioned facts, researchers in the Philippines mainly focus on preservice & beginning teachers' conception of teaching competence. A dearth of local literature in describing young teachers' teaching practices prompted the conduct of the study.

Literature Review

Teaching profession is highly regarded, as teachers are viewed to be the catalyst of change and nation builders. Great efforts have been done

to ensure the quality of teachers who will mold and inspire the young generations of learners especially our millennials (Rogayan, 2018). In fact, teachers are identified as the single most important factor affecting students' achievement (Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering, 2003). The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal mandate of 2001 increased accountability on school districts by focusing on student achievement but also made apparent importance of the teacher by setting an expectation for all public educational systems to have highly qualified teachers by June 2006, a deadline that no state met (Johnson, Birkeland, Donaldson, Kardos, Kauffman, Liu and Peske (2004).

Recently, majority occupying the first career stage in the Philippine Standards for Teachers (PPST) are young Filipino teachers who are considered the beginning teachers. The PPST which is built on Developmental-National Competency-Based Teacher Standards (D-NCNTS), complements the reform initiatives on teacher quality from pre-service education to in-service training. It articulates what constitutes teacher quality in the K to 12 Reform through well-defined standards that provide measures of professional learning, competent practice and effective engagement (DepEd Teacher Education Council, 2017).

It is said that experience and age has a positive effect on teaching (Sha and Udgaonkar, 2018). However, they elaborated that a dedicated, intelligent, hardworking and knowledgeable teacher gains respect of students irrespective of age, sex and designation.

Collating these ideas, there has been a gap on the quality of the delivery of instruction to millennial students which motivated the researcher to contribute expanding the knowledge based on this study--- young educators on millennial students.

Statement of Objectives

The aim of this study is to generate a theory on how young educators handle the needs of the millennial studies which can shed light on the following:

1. How do young educators deal with millennial students?
2. What made them chose teaching as a profession?

3. How do their millennial students respond on their teaching

Research Design and Framework

The paper made use of the grounded theory approach with phenomenological accent. Theoretical sampling was identified by the researcher as the appropriate type of sampling since the paper is a grounded theory study. Since the study is grounded on to young teachers' attitude towards millennial students, then the researcher chose young teachers to be the participants in the study to meet the theory. To satisfy the inductive approach of inquiry, I utilized open-ended questions for five participants who are public school teachers, one male and four female to answer. All of them are less than a year in the field. Such question is "Tell me about your lived experience of handling millennial students considering that you are new to the field." The participants voluntarily shared their lived experience handling millennial students. From there, data collection, transcription, coding, memoing, sorting and writing were done. The researcher went through constant comparison of hypothetical concepts transpiring in the data until a theoretical product emerged, "Attitude of Young Educators on Millennial Students: A Grounded Theory".

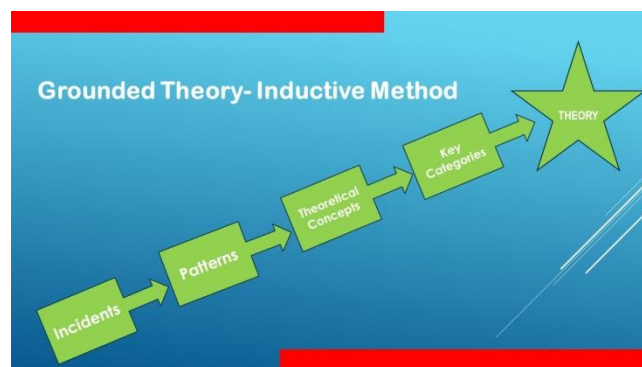


Figure 1. Steps of the Grounded Theory- Inductive Method

The researcher mined data through online interviews from five teachers in the public schools in Quezon City Division, NCR, Philippines.

I began to collect data without consulting any research panel's approval due to this pandemic. In its absence, I consulted my professor in Grounded Theory to still ensure that the material that I will be using will gather the information needed in the accomplishment of the study. I asked the

participants via messenger and zoom. All the participants agreed to be interviewed in their scheduled time since they are also attending series of webinars. Online interviews were done using an open-ended questions “Tell me about your lived experience in handling millennial students. Each interview lasted within the time frame of 40 to 50 minutes where I used cellphone recorder to record our conversation. In two weeks time, I was able to conduct 5 interviews. Saturation came in when I interviewed the 4th and fifth participant. After each interview, the participant’s responses were transcribed and coded. Open coding particularly the line-by-line coding was used in all incidents in the interview (Glaser, 1978, 2011). Constant comparative analysis was done in order to compare incidents to new incidents. As I went through the process, four concepts emerged. From open coding, I opted to shift into selective coding to process concepts in order to meet the emergent key category. Until such time theoretical saturation came after my fourth and fifth interview. Very few information and no new incidents were noted in the fourth interview. In the fifth interview, again there were no new incidents that were noted. I concluded that saturation occurred after the fourth and fifth interview.

Finally, after I went through the whole process in conducting a grounded theory study, a theoretical product surfaced,” The attitude of young educators on millennial students depends on the teachers’ family and religious background, motivation and academic preparation”.

Results And Discussions

The theoretical product of this grounded theory study is “The Attitude of Young Educators on Millennial Students Theory: A Grounded Theory” or “Belonias’ Attitude of Young Educators on Millennial Students Theory”. It states that the attitude of young educators on millennial students depends on the teachers’ family background, motivation, academic preparation and religious faith. The Belonias’ Attitude of Young Educators on Millennial Students Theory shows a distinct relativity to the family background of teachers. Family background involves the influence of the family in suggesting the course that the teacher will pursue in college. This influence was revealed by the following participants:

Participant 1 (Female)

“Days prior to my enrolment, I cannot decide yet what course to take up. That’s why I ask my parents. They told me to take up Education course since it’s the top performing course in the university near to our place. Aside from that, during those times, it was the only course that my parents can afford.”

Participant 3 (Female)

“My aunts are mostly teachers, so since I am living with them I also aspire to become teacher when I grow up. Back then, I thought teaching means having a lot of money.”

Participant 4 (Female)

“I really want to become a teacher since I was a child. Whenever I see my cousins in their teaching uniform, my desire increases. That’s why when I graduated in high school, I ask my cousins how it to be a teacher is. Upon hearing feedbacks from them, I decided to enroll in BEd. Despite of how they warn me on its difficulty, my love to children prevailed.

Participant 5 (Female)

“My lola was a retired teacher. So growing up with her made it easier for me to decide to be a teacher, too.

The current theory is also link to the intrinsic motivation of the teacher to do good in his/ her profession. Some participants showed a pattern of this behavior.

Participant 1 (Female)

“Knowing that there are people who wished to be in my situation now, I learned how to love my profession despite the fact that it was because of my parents why I took up the course. Seeing my students’ progress made me realized my worth as a person.”

Participant 2 (Male)

“Thinking how lucky I am to be hired in the public school, well-compensated and all, I realized the value of this vocation. Truly, things happen for a reason.”

Participant 3 (Female)

“Our inner drive to teach is what makes us best on the things that we do. I don’t know. It’s just one day, I love the job despite of its demands especially in doing paper works.”

Participant 4 (Female)

“Even before landing a permanent job, I knew it would be tough. So, I prepared myself already in all the hardship that I might. Sometimes, I convince myself that this is what the government is paying. But you know what, while I was in the field I was able to prove that it is more difficult than how I expect it to be. But what I am thankful is, day by day I am able to adjust myself and that it became a routine making it less difficult for me to the my task as a teacher.”

Another key category that afforded the attitude of young educators on millennial students is their academic preparation. Their university where they studied prepared them on what to expect in the field. Some participants claimed that:

Participant 1 (Female)

The teaching strategies taught during our college days help us a lot in handling these millennial students. Since they’ are attention span is short, I am challenged every day to prepare differentiated activities.”

Participant 2 (Male)

“I am more on the emotional side of my students. Especially to my male students, I treat them as my younger brothers. Through this, they help me maintain the discipline in class.”

Participant 3 (Female)

“We were trained by our professors to be realistic on our expectations. Good thing we have field study exposing us to the real scenario of the teaching field. Seeing how the students behave in the real school setting made us realize earlier that the job is something that needs patience, dedication and commitment. Most of the millennial students nowadays are unruly. You need to keep eyes on them otherwise, somebody will be hurt in an instant”.

Participant 4 (Female)

“Every child is a potential genius. With this I see to it that there MIs will be given attention. Sometimes, it’s exhausting. But I cannot do otherwise but to do it. It is my job.”

Participant 5 (Female)

“It is in my oath that I will teach my students by any means. So, despite of this pandemic, I adjust

myself. Tried my best to adapt the new normal. I send instructional video clips and I chat their parents to have follow ups on our past lessons. I feel sad knowing I can still do more to educate them. But what can I do, I should not risk my life. My students are waiting for me after this pandemic. And I believe, this too shall pass.

The last key category that is linked to the current theory is their religious faith. All participants responded that because of their belief to God Almighty, they are strengthen. They all believed that wherever they are now, may it be their choice or not, it is God who made it possible for them to be there. More than anyone else, it is God who is the author of everything. And through their service to their students, they are also serving God.

Theory

The attitude of young educators on millennial students depends on their family background, motivation, academic preparation and religious faith. The researcher recommends further refining of the body of literature of this grounded theory and for education stakeholders for continued school improved program.

ATTITUDE OF YOUNG EDUCATORS ON MILLENIAL STUDENTS THEORY

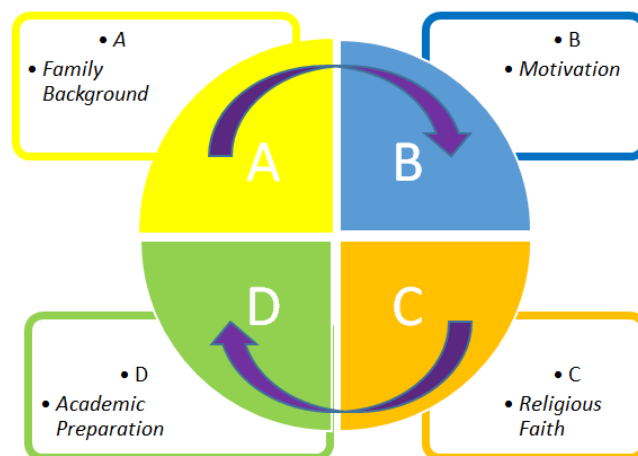


Figure 2. Schematic Diagram of Belonias' Attitude of Young Educators on Millennial Students Theory

References

- [1] Carroll, T. G., & Foster, E. (2010). **Who Will Teach? Experience Matters.** National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. Retrieved from <http://nctaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/NCTAF-Who->

- Will-Teach-Experience-Matters-2010-report.pdf
- [2] Johnson, S. M., Birkeland, S. E., Donaldson, M. L., Kardos, S. M., Kauffman, D., Liu, E., & Peske, H. G. (2004). **Finders And Keepers: Helping New Teachers Survive And Thrive In Our Schools**. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- [3] Liu,R., Long, Y., & Guo, M. (2018) **Impact of Mentoring Relationship on Career Satisfaction of Young College Teachers---the**
- [4] **Moderating Effect of the Type of Mentoring Relationship and the Gender of Mentee**. International Journal of Services Technology and Management, 24 (1-3)
- [5] Magnuson, D. S., & Alexander, L. S. (2008). **Work With Me: A New Lens On Leading The Multigenerational Workforce**. Minneapolis, MN: Personnel Decisions International.
- [6] Marzano, R. J., Marzano, J. S., & Pickering, D. J. (2003). **Classroom Management That Works: Research-Based Strategies For Every Teacher**. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- [7] Monaco, M. & Martin, M. (2007) **The Millennial Student: A New Generation of Learners**. Athletic Training Education Journal
- [8] Rogayan, D. (2018) **Why Young Filipino Teachers Teach?** Asia Pacific Higher Educational Research Journal
- [9] Shah, S. & Udgaonkar, U. (2018) **Influence of Gender and Age of Teachers on Teaching: Students Perspective**. International Journal of Current Microbiology and Applied Sciences