

Promoting Teachers' Efficiency in Meeting Deadlines: Challenge to Education Leaders

CYNTHIA P. GALANG
Researcher

Master of Arts in Education
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Jocelyn Y. Arrozal, M.A.Ed.
Adviser

Abstract

This is a qualitative study that aims to present possible ways of enhancing teachers' efficiency in meeting deadlines. Specifically, it seeks to present the: (1) work-related reasons why participant-teachers experience late submission of requirements; (2) compliant participant-teachers' suggestions to improve one's efficiency in submitting requirements on time; and (3) participant-educational leaders' perspectives on the teachers' experiences in meeting deadlines.

Participants consisted of one hundred (100) teachers and six (6) educational leaders of a public secondary school. A researcher-made survey instrument was used to elicit from the participant-teachers their experiences as regards meeting deadlines. The educational leaders, on the other hand, were interviewed on their opinions and perspectives with respect to the impact of teachers' practices in meeting deadlines. Data, being qualitative in nature, were content analyzed.

Findings show that more than 60% of the participant-teachers have experienced failing to meet deadlines. This failure is attributed to a number of work-related reasons. Topping the list of these reasons is their having to spend much time coping with new trends in teaching and adjusting to these trends. Other significant reasons include simultaneous deadlines for the submission of all student records and other requirements, sudden shift of report format from one form to another within the school year, and frequent classroom observations. Teachers who have been consistent in meeting deadlines and the educational leaders are one in suggesting that proper time management can be a key to meet deadlines, where proper time management could mean proper prioritization of work, planning and organizing activities, having right attitude, and focus.

Key Words: deadline, education leader, efficiency

INTRODUCTION

“Teachers who inspire know that teaching is like cultivating a garden and those who would have nothing to do with thorns must never attempt to gather flowers.”

- Author Unknown

As the adage above suggests, the teaching profession is profoundly unique because of the several roles and responsibilities attached to it; that apart from teaching, a classroom teacher takes other required functions from lesson planning to checking test papers, and recording student performances. Regardless of the curriculum level where a teacher is assigned, non-teaching functions go side by side with the teaching. In the basic education, the lower the level that a teacher handles, the greater are the extra tasks demanded from opening a tumbler of water to assist a kid, to wiping the messy floor, and taking a child to the comfort room. Meanwhile, in the higher education, teachers are also expected to do home visits, academic counseling, and research, to mention a few. One may think: how do teachers take all of these roles?

According to Walles (n.d), teachers embrace the field of education as a calling not as a job. Teaching is a very complex and demanding career that requires teachers to be managers of people, analyzers of data and researchers of best practices and instructional methodologies. Their skills are utilized each day. The administrative responsibilities of the teachers have definitely increased, but the resources necessary to make the management of these duties efficient are minimal. They are also required to be learning and behavioral specialists who are able to apply differentiated instruction. The latter is a relatively new philosophy and a mandate for all teachers that require them to find effective teaching strategies that meet the needs of students with different learning styles, all in the same classroom at the same time.

Walles (n.d) added that on top of these varied responsibilities, the society ultimately expects teachers to promote and achieve the goals of the entire education system. In the United States, for example, the federal government has mandated absolute perfection on this as reflected in the policy: “No Child Left Behind Act”, requiring that all children, that is, 100% of them, reach proficiency on state level assessments.

Essentially, other countries all over the globe take similar legislation in their respective educational system and governance, holding all teachers highly responsible and accountable in providing effective and holistic instruction to all learners. Holistic instruction means that students should be developed totally in all aspects of life: physically, mentally/ psychologically, emotionally, socially, morally, and spiritually. Students' acquisition of the right attitude and useful knowledge and skills is of prime importance for the society as said capabilities, when developed fully, would ensure the high quality of citizenship in any country. As teachers carry out their enormous teaching jobs following society's requirement, there are other non-teaching but analogous tasks that automatically demand teachers' time, attention, and effort. These include keeping student records of classroom performance and making reports, to name a few.

Literature abounds with teachers taking on multifarious and voluminous tasks other than their actual classroom teaching. For instance, Bowman (2008) stated that whether one

teaches in elementary, middle, or high school, finding time to complete all of the responsibilities of an effective teacher can be overwhelming. He stressed that as accountability increases, and the amount of data collected and analyzed about students and teaching practices increases, teachers' amount of free time dwindles inversely.

In the same way, O'Neil (1995) stressed that the teacher commands and conjures the image of one who dispenses knowledge and improves the physical conditions of the classroom through orderliness, discipline and control. Teachers make diagnosis of students' feelings and attitudes inferred by their behavior as a response in the classroom environment. Kelly (2008), on the other hand, stated that "one of the most important parts of teaching take place long before the teachers begin any lesson, planning, developing and organizing instruction. All of these are major part of any teacher's job". Aside from that, teachers have to spend time taking attendance, recording grades and following through all necessary housekeeping and record-keeping tasks. Similarly, managing student conduct is another task of the teachers.

Another teachers' undertaking is assessing student learning. Teachers spend time creating and refining valid assessments for their students. Every teacher must also meet certain professional obligations. These obligations might range from something as mundane as hall duty during their planning period to something more time-consuming like participating in professional development opportunities required of a re-certification. All of these necessitate the teachers' time and form major part of their teaching career.

Raina (n.d) stated in her article that the role of teachers in society is both significant and valuable. It has far-reaching influence on the society they live in. No other personality can have an influence more profound than that of a teacher. Students are deeply affected by their teachers' love and affection, character, competence and moral commitment.

Teachers also need to meet the expectations of the parents as clientele, in terms of informing them of the activities and academic performance of their children. Teachers need to set a meeting to talk to parents regarding their children's performance. Furthermore, teachers need to deal with the expectation of the administrators and their mentors who impose deadlines on them when submitting reports and accomplishing records in due time.

Taking note of all the aforementioned tasks, one may conclude that teaching today has become a very demanding occupation with a lot of stresses for a teacher who has a lot of deadlines to meet and a lot of responsibilities to shoulder besides teaching a child the subject matter and the skills. How a teacher survives with all these demands and conditions present in his or her immediate work environment would depend on how motivated a teacher is in carrying out all those tasks.

Despite the obvious prominent role teachers play towards attaining educational objectives, research findings point out the lamentable fact that motivation of teachers had reached an intolerable low point (Ala-Adayemi & Afolabi, 1990; The International Labor Organization Report, 1990; and, Ndu, 1998). Further, Rosa Mafia Torres, the Senior Education Adviser in UNICEF, declared that the condition of teachers had, for too long, become the most critical "Achilles heels" of educational development today.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (Deped) requires teachers to carry-out their duties and responsibilities of facilitating learning in the elementary and secondary schools through functional lesson plans, daily log activities and appropriate, adequate and updated instructional materials (print or non-print). Teachers are also assigned to do this list of tasks: monitor, assess and evaluate pupils'/ students' progress; undertake activities to improve performance indicators; maintain updated pupil records; update parents on pupils' progress regularly; supervise curricular and co-curricular projects and activities; counsel and guide pupils; conduct action research; maintain cleanliness, orderliness, safety and upkeep of the classroom; participate in staff development activities and utilize knowledge, skills and attitudes(KSA) gained from seminars, trainings and scholarships; maintain harmonious relationship with fellow teachers and other school personnel as well as with parents and other stakeholders, and support activities of government and non-government organizations.

This assignment of extra tasks to teachers has been a subject of debate and resistance. Teachers are commonly heard expressing the adverse effect of such additional assignments on their preparation time for their teaching. School heads are also noting the difficulty of encouraging teachers to comply promptly in submitting outputs. Worse cases happen when teachers eventually fail to submit requirements. While reasons of their difficulty in submitting requirements on time or for failing to submit vary, it is observed that their delayed or non-submission creates domino effect. For example, if a test paper is not submitted on time, it will cause delay in checking. Checking of a test requires ample time, and delayed submission may diminish the time allotment for checking; thus, could affect the overall quality of assessing the worth of a test paper. If checking is rushed, validation of its content may not be as comprehensive as it should be. Another example that may be cited is the instance when teachers do not submit reports on time. Consequently, the head of the school, who is supposed to consolidate reports, will have difficulty meeting deadlines set by higher authorities. Hence, whatever delays in compliance at the level of the teachers will have an unfavorable consequence on the overall efficiency of the school.

The above-cited factors are the main concerns of this study. This research attempts to identify the causes for the teachers' delay in the submission of school requirements, and to find ways on how to curb the problem and improve teachers' efficiency.

The present study is premised on the factors identified in Thompson (2009) which discussed the main factors that could affect teachers' efficiency. It is believed that working load, motivational environment, and other personal problems affect the poor compliance of teachers in the submission of requirements. Also serving as foundation of this paper is the definition of **efficiency** as stated below:

Efficiency. This means performing tasks with reasonable effort (doing things the right way) Erlendsson (2002). According to Wojtczak, (2002), efficiency is the ability to perform well or achieve result without wasted energy, resources, effort, time or money. In education, efficiency means comparing expenditures with education outcomes. In this study, efficiency refers to the maximization of the teachers' capacity to teach and deliver quality services to the students, as well as accomplishing and submitting related requirements such as, but not limited to, test questions, student records and reports.

Banking on the abovementioned premises, this study seeks to specifically explain the following: work-related reasons that participant-teachers identify for not being able to submit requirements on time; compliant teachers' suggestions to improve one's efficiency in submitting requirements; and participant-educational leaders/ managers' perspectives on the teachers' late submission of requirements in terms of opportunity cost and possible ways to address the problem.

Results and findings of this study are hoped to serve as sources of significant inputs for the Department of Education and for school heads in their respective attempts to help improve teachers' overall efficiency particularly in submitting requirements/ outputs on time, which, as highlighted earlier, is also a critical area that must be taken seriously by educational managers. For future researchers, may this study be a springboard to guide them in exploring other critical areas related to assisting teachers achieve excellence in all their undertakings.

METHOD

Considering the nature of the data needed to achieve the objectives of the present study, qualitative method was used. As Denzin and Lincoln (2000) stated, "Qualitative research involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. In the study, the qualitative approach was undertaken in order to solicit realistic, actual and meaningful response among the participant-teachers'. Using the qualitative methods can help the study identify possible reasons why teachers are having difficulty in meeting deadlines in submitting requirements. The study needed to use open-ended questions in order to elicit teachers' experiences regarding meeting deadlines.

The participants were composed of 100 experienced teachers and six (6) educational managers. The participant-teachers covered were all from one national high school with almost 10,000 students. Teachers were identified randomly from among those who have been teaching for a minimum of three years. The most senior participant included in the study has accumulated over 30 years of teaching. On the other hand, the six participant-educational leaders consisted of: three (3) head teachers from the same national high school with a minimum of two (2) to 30 years in service; one (1) principal coming from an integrated school in the division; and two (2) education supervisors in the division who had served as principals in their previous schools for 10 to 15 years. These six educational managers were deemed rich informants since, as experienced school heads, they had been directly involved in receiving records and other documents that teachers were required to submit.

Two survey instruments were distributed in gathering the necessary data: one for the participant-teachers and one for the educational leaders.

The instrument used for the teacher-participants consisted of two parts. The first question on the first part aims to determine whether the participant-teacher had experienced late submission of requirements. If so, the teacher was asked to continue answering the rest of the first part. However, if the participant did not experience late submission, he/she was directed to proceed to the second part. Other questions in the first part of the instrument pertained to inquiries on the frequency of being late in the submission of requirements, as well as, the reasons behind it. The second part consisted of two questions on how teachers

manage to submit requirements on time, and the suggestions they can offer to those who are having difficulty meeting deadlines.

Data were gathered upon the approval of the concerned authorities. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the target participant-teachers and thus questionnaires were readily collected as soon as participants were done answering. Data gathered were organized and subjected to descriptive statistical and content analyses.

Meanwhile, the interview guide for educational leaders was developed based on data gathered from the participant-teachers. The researcher personally conducted the interview. Being qualitative in nature, interview data were content analyzed: responses were coded; key terms were identified, and then were categorized for an organized presentation.

FINDINGS

Findings are presented according to the sequence of the statement of the objectives: participant-teachers' experiencing late submission of requirements, and the work-related reasons why they experience late submission of requirements; how compliant participant-teachers manage to submit requirements on time and their suggestions on how to overcome difficulty in meeting deadlines; and the participant-administrators'/educational leaders' perspectives as regards teachers' performance in terms of submitting requirements on time.

Participant-Teachers' Frequency of Experiencing Late Submission of Requirements

Table 1 illustrates that out of 100 participant teachers, 64 of them have experienced being late in the submission of school requirements while 36 managed to submit on time. Teachers are not only asked to submit requirements once but a number of times within the school year.

During the opening of classes, teachers get ready for their annual tasks such as preparation for their Students' Individual Permanent Record or Form 137, a document submitted annually, which contains their grades from first year high school; Form 1 or School Register which serves as the students' daily attendance record; and Form 138(Report Card) which contains the list of individual students' grades submitted every grading period. Class advisers collect students' records and grades from the subject teachers. These are then encoded in their Form 18 or Report on Promotion which is a list of students promoted in the curriculum year with their final rating in every subject. Said report is accomplished in three copies, all copies are in their original form.

Participant-teachers need to submit the stated requirements to their respective leaders for checking on or before the deadline set. Aside from this, they are also required to construct test papers with tables of specification every month for the monthly test and the periodical test given every grading period. After administering the exam, participant-teachers check and validate the results. They are also given deadlines for the submission of results.

Table 1 shows the regularity (promptness) of participant-teachers who encounter late submission of these requirements. It shows that over 69% experienced being late once a year, and 15.4% of the participants experienced being late *once every grading period*. On the other hand, 1.5% admitted being late every time there are records or documents required to be submitted.

Table 1
Participant-Teachers' Frequency of Experiencing
Late Submission of Requirements

Frequency of Occurrences	No. of Participants	Percentage (%)
Once a year	45	69.2
Once every grading period	10	15.4
Every time there are records/documents required to be submitted	1	1.5
Other descriptions of frequency	8	13.8
TOTAL	64	100.0

Work-Related Reasons Why Participant-Teachers Experience Late Submission of Requirements

Illustrated in Table 2 are the work-related reasons behind the participant-teachers' late submission of requirements and the frequency of occurrence/experience of the same. Data show that aside from their actual teaching loads, the participants also attend to other urgent clerical duties as attested by 63.5% of them. Likewise, it is shown that 60% of the participants are assigned non-teaching tasks such as coordinatorship, a designation that may also affect their efficiency in submitting requirements.

A total of 61.6% of the participants disclosed that they need more time to attend to students' records due to big class size and admitted that their efficiency is affected; 38% claimed that they are not affected by class size.

Frequent or sudden shift of formats used within the school year requires the participants more time to re-organize data as expressed by 70.7% of them. Moreover, almost 80% of the participants feel that simultaneous submission of all student records and other requirements needs more time to collect but they are allowed only limited time. Lastly, more than 81.6% expressed that their time is spent coping with the new trends in teaching and adjusting lessons based on these trends causing them delay in submitting requirements.

Table 2
Reasons Why Requirements are Not Submitted on Time

Reasons why requirements are not submitted on time:	Not true of me (0)	Slightly True of Me (1)	True of Me (2)	Highly True of Me (3)
Attend to other urgent clerical duties	24 36.9%	17 26.2%	21 32.3%	3 4.5%
Assigned too many non-teaching tasks (e.g. coordinator ship etc.)	26 40.0%	18 27.7%	20 30.8%	1 1.5%
Varied teaching loads requiring multiple preparations (lesson planning)	29 44.4%	16 24.6%	15 23.1%	5 7.7%
Big advisory class size spends more time attending to their records	25 38.8%	23 35.4%	16 23.1%	2 3.1%
Students have behavioral problems which need to personally attend	13 20%	24 36%	21 32%	7 10.8%
Frequent classroom observations by the head teacher/master teacher that necessities more time to prepare to meet expectations	18 27.7%	31 47.7%	14 21.5%	2 3.1%
Lack of mastery of the new assignment given, hence need extra time to study further and accomplish expected outputs	29 44.4%	21 32.3%	15 23.1%	0 0
Lack of skills in using required technology (such as using computers)	22 33.3%	24 36.9%	8 12.3%	11 16.9%
Lack of equipment/devices needed to complete the tasks	26 40%	16 24.6%	17 26.2%	6 9.2%
Sudden shift from one format to another within the school year that requires extra time to reorganize data	19 29.3%	31 47.7%	14 21.5%	1 1.5%
Simultaneous deadlines for the submission of all student records and other Requirements	13 20.0%	31 47.7%	20 30.8%	1 1.5%
Much time is spent coping with new trends and adjusting lessons with these trends	12 18.8%	34 52.3%	17 26.2%	2 3.1

Compliant Participant-Teachers' Suggestions on How to Submit Requirements on Time

The 36 participant-teachers who responded that they were never late in submitting requirements were asked to give suggestions and helpful tips that could guide their fellow teachers to be able to submit requirements on time. Time management, working systematically, proper prioritization and right attitude toward work are among their common suggestions.

Twenty (20) out of 36 participant-teachers unanimously suggested that time management is a key as reflected in the following quotes:

- "Make the requirements ahead of time."*
T-3
- "Proper time management"*
T-4
- "I will try to finish the said requirements before the deadline."*
T-8
- "I prepare the report as soon as all data are available to avoid rush and late submission."*
T-10
- "I keep a record on the scheduled time of submission of the needed requirement."*
T-19
- "They must practice time management so that they will be able to finish all the necessary requirements ahead of time."*
T-35
- "Avoid doing work tomorrow what you can do today."*
T-36

With good time management skills, teachers are practically in control of their time, life, stress and energy levels. They make progress at work. They are also able to maintain balance between their work, personal and family lives. They have enough flexibility to respond to surprises or new opportunities.

Some participant-teachers suggested that prioritization of work can help increase the efficiency in submitting requirements on time. They believe that if teachers will prioritize their work, definitely they can submit requirements on time. The following are quotations from them:

- "I always prioritize the submission of any requirements on time."*
T-1
- "By prioritizing obligation and managing time as well"*
T-7
- "As a responsible teacher, you always make a schedule of all your activities so that you will know which is your priority to submit."*
T-9
- "Prioritize your work and add more gains [sic] devotion and dedication."*
T-34

One of the participant-teachers believes that right attitude toward work can curb inefficiency in submitting requirements on time.

- "I consider it as a part of my job."*
T-23

For some participant-teachers, working systematically can be helpful to their fellow teachers to become efficient in submitting requirements on time. Found below are their direct comments.

<i>"Proper scheduling "</i>	T-5
<i>"Proper planning and organizing"</i>	T-17
<i>"Try to use and prepare a planner to keep them updated on their schedule."</i>	T-30
<i>"Focus on their work."</i>	T-33

Participant-Administrators'/ Educational Leaders' Perspectives As Regards Teachers' Performance in Terms of Submitting Requirements on Time

Educational leaders opined that teachers' delayed submission of requirements creates an impact on the overall operation of the school. They stressed on the losses that are incurred whenever late submission of requirements occurs. The teacher, too, will be at the losing end if he/ she does not comply with the deadline on submission.

The participant-administrators /educational leaders are also affected when teachers are not meeting the deadlines in submitting requirements. As heads, they also have requirements to submit on time which are usually consolidated weekly, monthly, quarterly, such as student records, annual reports and work plans. Data are usually gathered from teachers' reports, hence if teachers' reports are submitted late, so is their submission to the higher office. Such suggests a domino effect. These were their quotes

"Delayed submission of report is not cost effective in terms of time and resources like funds. Nothing is done when one member of the team is late in the submission of reports."

Admin 1

"Delayed submission of requirements affects the department management system in vying for the schools' best department."

Admin 2

"Late submission of requirements affect in teachers performance evaluation in terms of punctuality."

Admin 3

"School records are required from teachers and have set dates for submission."

Admin 4

Another impact of the late submission of requirements according to the participant-administrators/educational leaders is its being reflective of one's' sense of responsibility and commitments. Quoted below are some of their statements.

"Since these are part of teacher's duties and responsibilities, it is but proper that they perform, submit and fill them regularly so they won't be upset when dates for submission are given."

Admin 4

"Delayed submission shows irresponsibility and lack of self-discipline on the part of the teacher. Teachers do not have the dedication, right attitude and commitment toward work."

Admin 5

"Pre-occupied with teaching preparations makes the teachers delayed in submission."

Admin 6

Educational leaders believe that as educators it is proper to fulfill their duties and responsibilities, including the non-teaching jobs.

Participant-Administrators'/ Educational Leaders' Suggested Possible Ways to Address the Problem

The participant-administrators' were asked about the possible ways to address the problem in order to curb or prevent late submission of requirements. Among their suggestions are time management, working systematically, and having the right attitude toward work, and commitment.

Three (3) out of six (6) participant-administrators/ educational leaders opined that late submission of requirements can be prevented if teachers acquire time management skills or habit. Here are some of their suggestions.

"Improvement of time management skills"

Admin 1

"Head teachers should discuss to teachers the consequences of late submission of reports likewise, discuss the benefits of proper time management."

"List down/ make a checklist in the portfolio of the due dates of different forms and reports to submit."

Admin 6

Right attitude toward work is the suggestion of two of the participant-administrators. These are some of their suggestions.

"Committed, potential leaders or master teachers to take charge for the submission of requirements."

Admin 2

"If the teacher is committed to their job, they know how to manage their time and work."

Admin 4

One of the participant-administrators also suggested that working systematically can help prevent inefficiency in submitting requirements on time.

"Practice systematic way of filling time on task and finish necessary report, do not wait for the deadline."

Admin 3

DISCUSSION

More than half of the total number of participant-teachers experienced delay in submitting requirements. This means that difficulty arises among teachers with respect to compliance with other requirements apart from fulfilling their regular obligation as classroom teachers. This fact is also implied in Bowman's (2008) statement when he said that whether one teaches in the elementary, middle or high school, to find time to complete all of the responsibilities of an effective teacher can be overwhelming. This could mean that no matter how much an organization tries to be successful, there would still be individuals who could not be able to fully adhere to or comply with all organizational rules.

Findings reveal the reasons why participant-teachers fail to comply with deadlines. One top reason is that they are required to attend to other urgent clerical duties. This means that the time that is supposedly devoted to teaching tasks is being divided and used for other assignments or duties. In a Filipino school culture, it seems typical that teachers are always faced with multiple responsibilities. Again, this finding matches Bowman's (2008) idea as he also pointed out that as the amount of data collected and analyzed about students and teaching practices increases, teachers' amount of free time dwindles inversely. This is one reason why teachers' time to complete their official school tasks dwindles because of the enormous responsibilities assigned to them.

Furthermore, behavioral problems of students and class observations are also causing delays in meeting deadlines. Attending to students with behavioral problems is taxing for teachers. When confronted with such a situation, a teacher usually feels higher level of pressure or stress. Teaching has been identified as one of the most stressful professions today. The reasons for that are quite similar to other stressful occupations in the world. In the survey that assessed the stress levels of various jobs by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), teaching came out on top. A student with behavioral problems is one of the causes of the teachers' stress. Health and Safety Executive (HSE) identified the adverse reaction among working people who are exposed to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them. One can only imagine how an ordinary teacher hurdles the everyday scenario of having to attend to the individual and collective needs of a class whose members may range from 30 to 60 or more in a public school. Complicating this condition could be the need for a teacher to call for parents and hold parent-teacher conference just to address a serious case of a single pupil or student. Such is usually held during the free time of teachers or after teaching hours.

Apart from academic needs, teachers are also tasked to attend to other aspects of students' development, such as social, spiritual, economic, and psychological. One dimension that commonly demands extra time from teachers is the analysis and evaluation of individual student's behavior and attitude, especially when such behavior analysis is critical in maintaining or establishing a harmonious classroom environment. In O'Neil (1995), such teacher activity was emphasized when it was stated that teachers make diagnosis of their students' feelings and attitudes inferred by their behavior as a response in the classroom environment. The analysis of behavior alone may already be overwhelming and time-consuming as teachers are likewise required to do clerical tasks simultaneously—such as making anecdotal reports of students' behavior.

Frequent classroom observation by the head or master teacher necessitates more time for teachers to prepare in order to meet their superiors' expectations. It is expected that a teacher should always be ready with a well-prepared lesson plan and ensure quality teaching at all times with or without an observer in the classroom. Almost half of the participants considered this as their reason for delayed submission of requirements. This problem is mentioned in a study conducted in West Sussex by the Department for Employment and Education (DFES, 2000). This is included as one of the educational problems identified by their participants. Other educational problems cited in the mentioned study are new or change of legislation, demands of local education authorities, curriculum changes, maintaining staff standards, maintaining pupil performance, handling day to day crises, interpersonal relationships with management team, inadequate management training, office standards in inspections, and others.

The Department for Employment and Education (DFES) (2002) supports the above mentioned findings as it pointed out that many of the studies discussing teachers' efficiency were based on the general estimates of administrative officials. Apparently, this method of evaluating teacher's efficiency has been criticized adversely on the ground that it yields a very subjective and unreliable evaluation of the teacher's ability. Probably, teachers spend more time to prepare for the evaluation to avoid or overcome fear of criticisms and to be able to get a high teaching performance rating.

Lack of mastery of the subject matter does not affect teachers' efficiency in meeting deadlines. Participants claim that they possess the skill in presenting the appropriate and needed lessons for the students. However, lack of technical skills in terms of using computers is an apparent problem among teachers. Some would still need to seek the assistance of their colleagues with knowledge of computers. Support from the school, such as technical support, is a part of the motivational environment discussed in Robbins (1998) where such environment is described to be comprising of the workplace, colleagues, superiors, and availability of needed materials, equipment or school supplies. It is contended in the same work that motivational environment affects teacher's efficiency. When the teacher fails to find support in the workplace, efficiency diminishes. Related to such contention, the Teacher Support Network (TSN, 2002) considers that many schools are suffering from institutional stress. There are a number of issues inherent in work organizations that are stressful like poor workplace environment, excessive working time, workload and lack of personal commitment, and poor career prospects.

Frequent or sudden shift in formats used within the school year requires the participants more time to re-organize data. As such, majority of the participants feel that simultaneous

submission of all student records and other requirements is a problem that compounds the stress that goes with the volume of the work itself. In addition, more than half of the participants said that much of their time is also eaten up when coping with the new trends in teaching and adjusting lessons according to these trends. Wagaman (2008) emphasized that teacher often complain about how much time they spend at school and how much work they have to bring home to complete each night. In many cases, this condition causes teachers to feel extra burdened leading them to the experience of "burning out". Wagaman further stressed that finding a way to balance their work load and take less work home will help prevent teacher burn-out.

At certain times, every teacher is required to be in school even on non-school days just to attend to school activities. When this happens, some works (clerical) are left undone leading to the delay in meeting deadlines. There are teachers who take the initiative of doing their school work at home particularly in the early morning or before reporting for work, however, not all teachers could do that especially if they have families to attend to.

Moreover, coping with new trends in education and adjusting lessons with these trends also cause delay in submission. The participants admitted that they experience this and find it stressful. This could be attributed to the previously stated response --that not all teachers find ease in adjusting to new trends in teaching. Realistically speaking, new trends would entail the adoption of modern technology in daily teaching or lesson presentation. Some participants would react with new trends because not all teachers are capable of adapting to these trends.

The participant-teachers' who manage to comply with the deadlines reiterate most of the responses on the previous question, "How do compliant participant-teachers manage to submit requirements on time?" Their comments and suggestions are summarized into four categories which include: prioritization of work, planning and organizing activities, right attitude / no procrastination, and focus. Based on their comments, such as "*As a responsible teacher, you always make a schedule of all your activities so that you'll know which should be your priority*", is implying the emphasis on the importance of being organized and having a set of priorities, that is identifying and doing what works need to be done first to meet deadlines.

Being organized means having *systematic work* or *brute force*. Brute force often works, but it is the last resort and it is not the smartest way of solving a problem. To be able to *work systematically* in any sort of productive way, one needs to know the work more than just to *work systematically*, which is basically a synonym to the word *repeat*. If one finds him/herself in the middle of a lake, in a rowing boat, *systematic work* is no doubt the best strategy. But even then they have to set a course first. This is a question some teachers do not have a ready answer to. Since everything can be solved through *systematic work*, they just need to help themselves.

Another loud suggestion is "*I prepare the reports as soon as all the data are available to avoid rush and late submission*". This implies the need to develop the good habit of avoiding procrastination, or the locally termed "*mañana habit*", that is, setting for tomorrow what can be done today. It may help teachers lessen the stress of having to rush to meet deadlines by starting to work in advance or at the earliest possible time that they are provided to do so; they do not wait to work until deadlines are set or until the final date of submission comes.

Findings of the study show that prompt submission of requirements has not been observed by most participant-teachers. It implies that there is a need to undertake an action in order to curb this problem. Prompt submission of requirements or punctuality spells efficiency. Recognition of one's duty and work is paramount in the realization of proper and successful management of the whole system of administration in the school

Based on the responses of school heads, the need to improve time management of teachers is reiterated in one of their responses, "...if we know how to manage time and work to be finished each day, I don't see any reason why we can't submit on time..." This suggestion implies that proper time management is achieved when teachers know how to prioritize work, able to plan and organize activities, possess the right attitude, i.e. no procrastination, and focus on work.

Eden (n.d) stated that when one is faced with a task, it is advised that the person ought to "take pride" in his accomplishing it. He/she has to do his/her best to yield the best possible results. The person has to like what he/she is doing to experience joy and satisfaction while doing the job. Eden further noted that everyone works at some job or another, be it the laborer, the office worker, the professional or even the housewife - and all for different reasons. Some say because they have to work; some simply for the pay packet; some because they feel the need for something to do. Wives and mothers feel it is their duty, but not everyone does work for the "love of it".

In all cases, the latter should be their primary motive, for it is the least arduous, less laborious and, after all, the most rewarding. There is nothing wrong with earning one's pay or "enjoying what one is doing".

Focus in work is needed as well. As both literature and actual experience attest, teaching is a 'multi-tasks' profession. As such, most of the time, teachers are given other duties aside from their classroom teaching assignment. Some teachers have coordinatorship or "advisorship", clerical duties, and other non-teaching assignments. It was also found that participant-teachers need to set their priorities. They may divide their time proportionately to accomplish other works aside from their teaching assignment. However, it was also suggested that they should not lose their focus on work. It might help that they maintain a list of things to do and the corresponding deadlines or dates when such works need to be submitted. The list may also guide them which to do first and how to balance or distribute effort and time.

Renee (n.d) stressed in his article, "If success depends on effective action, effective action depends on the ability to focus your attention where it is needed most, when it is needed most. This is the ability to separate the important from the unimportant, which is a much-needed skill in all walks of life, especially where there are ever-increasing opportunities and distractions".

Covey (1989) describes a high-level prioritization scheme in his book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. In this scheme, tasks are categorized by four quadrants: QI - Important and Urgent; QII - Important but Not Urgent; QIII - Not Important but Urgent; and QIV - Not Important and Not Urgent.

Dr. Covey notes that highly effective people make time for the QII activities, and that doing so can reduce the time spent in other quadrants. While QI - QIV prioritization doesn't

help you decide which QI activity to do first and which to do second, and so on, it can be very enlightening to find out in which quadrants your tasks are.

A lot of people find this prioritization method to be very helpful.

Also, while the message has been out for years that organizations should clearly communicate their goals and priorities, research continues to show that many organizations are not good at this. Hence, there is still a need to make an effort to identify the goals and priorities of an organization to ensure that priorities are consistent with this.

This suggests that actual experiences may however pose difficulty in setting priorities when one is facing a flood of seemingly urgent tasks. However, it is essential to learn how to prioritize tasks effectively if a person wishes to manage his/ her time better.

One consideration that may be undertaken in prioritizing is looking up into the so-called "opportunity cost". In economics, opportunity cost is defined as the value of forgone activity or alternative when another item or activity is chosen. In education, however, opportunity cost is equivalent to a decision to prioritize a work or job while some are neglected. Evidently, in school, teachers are more often left to decide which work must be prioritized or set aside for the meantime. The idea could be attributed to the fact that teachers, as well as some administrators, perform multiple tasks at a given time. As mentioned in the previous section, the participants are assigned other school tasks aside from their teaching responsibilities. Some of them include clerical tasks, coordinatorship, guidance and counseling tasks (attending to students which behavioral problems), and the like. For that reason, teachers' compliance to the above-stated tasks makes them temporarily leave other tasks which are directly part of their teaching assignments.

In addition to the responses or comments of the participants in this study, it may be helpful to consider providing seminars on time management among teachers. Teachers' commitment to work may be enhanced through activities that would boost their spiritual life such as provision of retreats and recollections. A system of mentoring may likewise be developed where less experienced teachers are assisted or coached by more experienced ones particularly in accomplishing other tasks and completing requirements.

As a form of summary and conclusion, this study developed a framework presented in Figure 1. It was previously stated in the introduction that non-submission of requirements on time creates a domino-effect (subsequent delays caused by one delay). This proves that teachers' failure is also a failure of the entire school operation. As emphasized in Garcia (1986), teaching involves various systems and personnel who are interlocked such that functions of one strengthen the other and so forth, until such time when the entire system in the school organization operates efficiently and effectively. It was stressed further that if only individuals, such as teachers and other personnel will perform their duties in the way they are expected to, there would be no problem.

The Emerging Framework

Based on the findings, the emerging framework to enhance teachers' efficiency is developed as shown below that may serve as a model to guide teachers in curbing late submission of requirements.

The “head” symbolizing Time Management shows that Time Management tops the solutions to improve teachers’ efficiency. Teachers must learn to manage their time well by accomplishing the necessary requirements before the deadline. Procrastination is avoided, meaning, what can be done at the moment should never be postponed.

The “heart” representing right attitude signifies that teachers need to strengthen and maintain their sense of commitment to their job, seeing it as not a mere occupation but a mission. Loving their work would help them find joy in everything they do regardless of the volume of work attached to it.

The “arms” signifies working systematically and proper prioritization of works to be done, a sure way of finishing urgent works on time.

Putting all these together and adopting such practice as “a way of life”, like a system embedded in the human body, result to enhanced teacher efficiency.

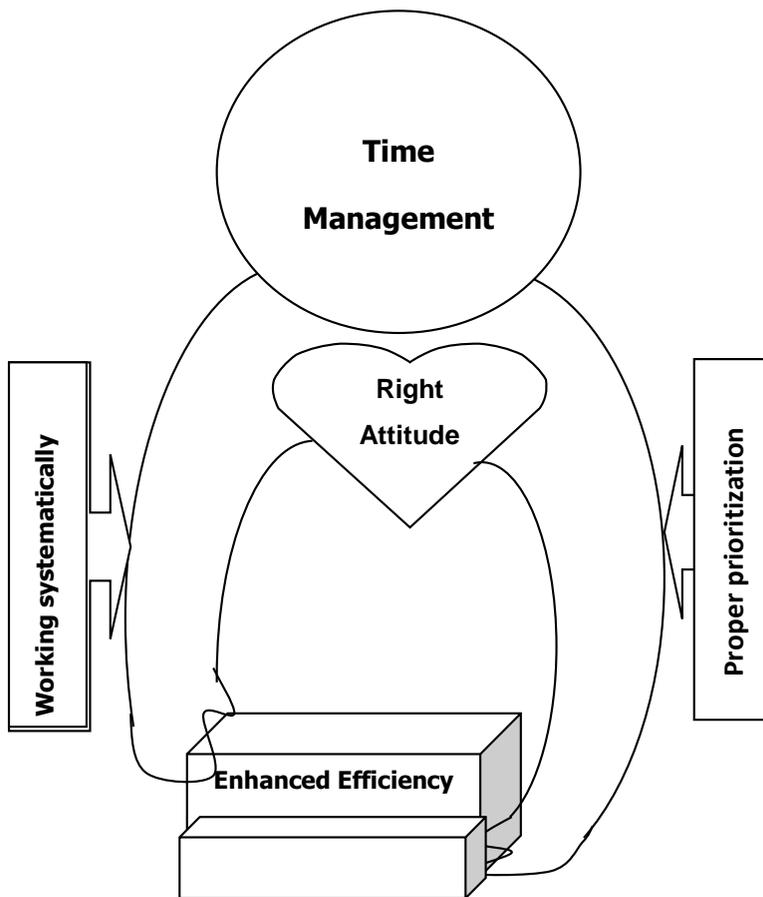


Figure 1. Emerging Framework: Galang's Proposed Model of Enhanced Teachers' Efficiency in Submitting Requirements

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