

WORK GRATITUDE AND SPIRITUAL TRANSCENDENCE: BASIS FOR WORK ETHICS AND PRODUCTIVITY AMONG TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between work gratitude and spiritual transcendence as predictors of work ethics and productivity among teachers in the Schools Division of Cotabato. A sequential-explanatory mixed-methods design was employed, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data were gathered from 373 elementary teachers using standardized questionnaires, while qualitative data were obtained from 15 purposively selected participants through interviews. Findings revealed that teachers exhibited very high levels of work gratitude in terms of grateful appraisal, gratitude towards others, and intentional attitude of gratitude. Similarly, spiritual transcendence dimensions—prayer, universal connectedness, greater purpose, and wholeness of humanity—were also rated very high. Work ethics and productivity were consistently high among teachers. Correlation analysis showed that work gratitude significantly influenced work ethics and productivity, although effects varied by dimension. Grateful appraisal and gratitude towards others positively influenced work ethics, while intentional gratitude significantly enhanced productivity. Spiritual transcendence also demonstrated significant relationships, particularly prayer and universal connectedness with work ethics, and greater purpose and wholeness of humanity with productivity. Regression analysis confirmed that both work gratitude and spiritual transcendence significantly predict work outcomes. Qualitative findings revealed themes such as fulfillment through learners' success, gratitude expressed through effort and relationships, and personal growth through teaching. The study concludes that cultivating gratitude and spirituality enhances teachers' ethical behavior, productivity, and overall professional well-being.

Keyword: WORK GRATITUDE, SPIRITUAL TRANSCENDENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is both a profession and a vocation that requires not only knowledge and skills but also emotional and spiritual engagement. Work gratitude plays a vital role in helping teachers focus on the positive aspects of their profession, such as student growth, meaningful relationships, and opportunities to make a difference. This sense of gratitude contributes to teachers' well-being and job satisfaction, enabling them to remain motivated despite the demands of their work.

Spiritual transcendence, on the other hand, reflects a deeper sense of purpose, connectedness, and meaning in teaching. Teachers who experience spiritual transcendence often view their role as a calling, allowing them to remain resilient and fulfilled even in challenging situations. These two constructs—work gratitude and spiritual transcendence—are interconnected, as gratitude can enhance one's sense of meaning,

while spirituality can deepen appreciation for one's work.

Despite the growing importance of these variables, most studies have been conducted in Western contexts, leaving a gap in understanding their influence among Filipino teachers, particularly in the Schools Division of Cotabato. This study aims to address this gap by examining how work gratitude and spiritual transcendence influence teachers' work ethics and productivity, as well as exploring their lived experiences and identifying possible interventions.

2. METHODS

This study utilized a sequential-explanatory mixed-methods design, where quantitative data collection and analysis were followed by qualitative inquiry to provide deeper insights. The quantitative phase involved 373 elementary teachers selected through random sampling

across three congressional districts in the Schools Division of Cotabato. The qualitative phase included 15 teachers selected through purposive sampling based on specific criteria.

Data were collected using standardized instruments, including the Gratitude Questionnaire and the Spiritual Transcendence Scale, measured using a five-point Likert scale. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather qualitative data regarding teachers' experiences of gratitude, spirituality, and work commitment.

Quantitative data were analyzed using weighted mean, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression to determine levels, relationships, and predictive effects. Qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were strictly observed throughout the research process .

3. RESULTS

The findings revealed that teachers demonstrated very high levels of work gratitude across all dimensions, with grateful appraisal (4.72), gratitude towards others (4.69), and intentional attitude of gratitude (4.69). These results indicate that teachers consistently appreciate their work, relationships, and professional growth opportunities.

Similarly, spiritual transcendence was rated very high, with prayer (4.80) as the highest, followed by greater purpose (4.79), wholeness of humanity (4.71), and universal connectedness (4.69). These findings suggest that spirituality plays a significant role in shaping teachers' perspectives and experiences.

Work ethics (4.78) and work productivity (4.74) were also rated very high, indicating strong professional commitment, responsibility, and efficiency among teachers.

Correlation analysis revealed that work gratitude significantly influences work ethics and productivity. Grateful appraisal and gratitude towards others were positively correlated with work ethics, while intentional gratitude showed a strong positive relationship with work productivity. Regression analysis further showed

that work gratitude explains 23.5% of the variance in work ethics and 18.1% in productivity.

Spiritual transcendence also showed significant relationships. Prayer and universal connectedness significantly influenced work ethics, while greater purpose and wholeness of humanity significantly influenced productivity. Regression results indicated that spiritual transcendence explains 24.7% of work ethics and 14.2% of productivity.

Qualitative findings supported these results and revealed themes such as fulfillment through learners' success, gratitude expressed through effort and improvement, appreciation of relationships, and personal growth through teaching. Teachers emphasized that their sense of purpose, relationships, and continuous development strengthen their commitment and performance.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings highlight the significant role of work gratitude and spiritual transcendence in shaping teachers' professional behavior and performance. The strong influence of grateful appraisal and gratitude towards others on work ethics suggests that recognizing positive experiences and valuing relationships promote ethical conduct in the workplace.

Intentional gratitude, on the other hand, was found to be more strongly associated with productivity, indicating that deliberate efforts to practice gratitude can enhance motivation, focus, and efficiency. This suggests that gratitude is multidimensional, with different aspects influencing different work outcomes.

Spiritual transcendence also plays a crucial role, particularly in fostering ethical behavior and productivity. Prayer and universal connectedness provide moral grounding and promote empathy, while greater purpose and wholeness of humanity enhance motivation and engagement. These findings emphasize that spirituality contributes not only to personal well-being but also to professional effectiveness.

The qualitative results further reinforce the importance of meaning, relationships, and continuous improvement in teaching. Teachers who find fulfillment in student success, maintain strong relationships, and strive for personal

growth are more likely to exhibit strong work ethics and high productivity.

Overall, the study suggests that fostering both gratitude and spirituality can create a more motivated, ethical, and productive teaching workforce.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that work gratitude and spiritual transcendence significantly influence teachers' work ethics and productivity. While appreciative and relational forms of gratitude enhance ethical behavior, intentional gratitude strengthens productivity. Similarly, spiritual dimensions such as purpose and connectedness contribute to both ethical conduct and performance.

The findings suggest that educational institutions should promote programs that cultivate gratitude practices and spiritual development among teachers. Such initiatives can enhance teacher well-being, strengthen professional commitment, and improve overall school performance.

Future research may explore additional variables related to teacher well-being and examine long-term impacts of gratitude and spirituality on educational outcomes.