Factors that Influence the Motivation of Filipino Teachers in Taiwan

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ABSTRACT

Taiwan has recently opened up to foreign English teachers in order to achieve its goal of having English as a second language by 2030. Many Filipino teachers are now considering working in Taiwan and at present, there are officially 193 of them working there. This study aimed to identify the factors that motivate the Filipino teachers in Taiwan. The Employee Motivational Factor Importance Questionnaire (EMFI), a researcher-made instrument with 8 items and using a 7-point Likert scale was crafted to measure the importance of 8 employee motivation factors. An adaptation of the Situational Motivation Scale (SIMS) questionnaire was made to measure the levels of the teachers' motivation in four domains, namely Intrinsic motivation, Identified regulation, External regulation and Amotivation. 25 Filipino teachers in Taiwan were identified using snowball sampling and invited to participate in this study. Opportunities for professional growth and development was found to be the most important motivation factor according to the results of the EMFI. However, using Pearson r computations between the 8 EMFI motivation factors and the 4 SIMS domains, it was found that their level of motivation is mostly positively affected by leadership and relationship with the leader, the job's social environment and financial benefits of the job.

Keywords: Motivation, Situational Motivation Scale, Filipino English Teacher, Taiwan

INTRODUCTION

What was formerly known as Formosa is now Taiwan. It is mostly a mountainous island located 180 kilometers southeast of China. It has a land area of 36,188 square kilometers and possesses a population of around 23 million. Its capital is Taipei. When the Communists won victory over China in 1949, 2 million nationalists fled to Taiwan and formed its own government. The People's Republic of China considers Taiwan as part of its territory, although the latter continues to defy efforts at reunification.[1]

The educational system in Taiwan allows its students six years of primary education, three years of junior high school, three years of senior secondary school, four years of higher education, up to four years for a master's degree and up to seven years for a doctoral degree.[2]

According to the 2018 global English Proficiency Index (EPI), Taiwan has dropped to 48th place in the world out of 88 countries. Taiwan ranks 11th out of 21 Asian countries. The highest place went to Singapore, followed next by the Philippines.[3]

The Taiwan Ministry of Education launched the Taiwan Foreign English Teacher Program (TFETP), which is intended to expand recruitment of foreign English teachers in primary and secondary schools in order to achieve its goal of having English as a second language by 2030. Because of this, Taiwan is now among the job destinations of Filipino teachers. As of 2021, there are officially 193 Filipino teachers in Taiwan.[4]

There are six reasons to teach abroad: (1) the excitement of traveling, (2) to experience a different culture, (3) the often better compensation, (4) specific job benefits offered, (5) a sense of philanthropy and (6) to broaden one's horizons and grow as a person.[5]

Filipino teachers who choose to work abroad demonstrate the intelligence of the Filipino, their ability to interact with different nationalities and be unofficial ambassadors of the Philippines wherever they may be in the world. Filipino teachers often teach the English language in their host country thereby creating a means of eliminating communication barriers.[6]

Each country where the Filipino teacher works is different and unique. And Taiwan is no exception. Among the challenges faced by those who work in Taiwan are (1) a foreigner will always be regarded as a foreigner, (2) getting a job can be difficult unless it is teaching English, (3) Taiwan is one of the most crowded places in the world, and the high rate of (4) noise pollution, air pollution and traffic.[7]

In the face of these challenges, the question of what motivates Filipino teachers in Taiwan comes to the fore. According to the Porter and Lawler Model of Motivation,8 there are four assumptions about human behavior (1) it is determined by a combination of factors within the individual and in the environment, (2) people are rational human beings who make conscious decisions about their behavior, (3) individuals possess varying needs, desires and goals and (4) individuals choose between alternate courses of action and which action will lead to a desired outcome.

Some factors are believed to be direct motivators such as intrinsic and extrinsic, and indirect factors like institutional support, self-realization, working relationships and autonomy.[9]However, there are said to be five types of demotivating factors such as content repetitiveness and limited potential for intellectual growth, inadequate career structures, insufficient self-efficacy, inhibition of teacher autonomy and stress.[10]

When the Self-Determination Theory is considered (SDT), a study found that four types of motivation (1) intrinsic, (2) identified, (3) introjected and (4) external, fell within the motivation continuum of SDT.[11] In another study, teachers of English as a Foreign Language had higher levels of stress and burnout than other professional groups but these same teachers claimed that they would not give it up as they enjoyed teaching.[12]

One study found that Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) teachers were extrinsically dissatisfied with marginalization, pay, job security, and opportunity for promotion.[13] English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers was found to gain satisfaction from internal rewards than from external benefits such as the nature of teaching which itself emotionally sustains the ESL teachers.[14]

Four factors of quality of work were found to significantly correlate with use and development of capacities, social integration in the organization, chance for growth and security, work conditions and career motivation.[15] In addition, although teachers experienced higher levels of professional stress and lower levels of motivation, the enhancement of student motivation, advancement of educational reform served to strengthen in-service teacher motivation.[16]

In view of the foregoing, to identify the most significant sources of motivation for Filipino teachers in Taiwan, the Employee Motivational Factor Importance Questionnaire (EMFI), a researcher-made instrument was crafted based on "Factors Affecting Employee Motivation,"[17] which include (1) Recognition and Reward, (2) Opportunities of Growth and Development, (3) Financial Benefits, (4) Non-monetary Benefits , (5) Work-life Balance, (6) Work Environment, (7) Relation with Colleagues and (8) Leadership and relation with leaders.

To measure the levels of motivation of Filipino teachers in Taiwan, the Situational Motivation Scale (SIMS)[18] was adapted and modified and thereafter administered on the respondents.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of importance of the following 8 motivating factors for the respondents
   a) Job recognition and reward;
   b) Opportunities for professional growth and development;
   c) Financial benefits of the job;
   d) Non-monetary benefits of the job;
   e) The job promotes work-life balance;
   f) The job's social environment;
   g) Relationship with colleagues in the job and
   h) Leadership and relationship with the leader?
2. What is the level of the respondents' motivation in terms of
   a) Intrinsic Motivation;
   b) Identified regulation;
   c) External regulation and
   d) Amotivation?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the level of importance of Job recognition and reward and
   a) Level of Intrinsic Motivation;
   b) Level of Identified regulation;
   c) Level of External regulation and
   d) Level of Amotivation?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the level of importance of Opportunities for professional growth and development and
   a) Level of Intrinsic Motivation;
   b) Level of Identified regulation;
   c) Level of External regulation and
   d) Level of Amotivation?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the level of importance of Financial benefits of the job and
   a) Level of Intrinsic Motivation;
   b) Level of Identified regulation;
   c) Level of External regulation and
   d) Level of Amotivation?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the level of importance of Non-monetary benefits of the job and
   a) Level of Intrinsic Motivation;
   b) Level of Identified regulation;
   c) Level of External regulation and
   d) Level of Amotivation?
7. Is there a significant relationship between the level of importance of the job promotes Work-life balance and
   a) Level of Intrinsic Motivation;
   b) Level of Identified regulation;

      c)   Level of External regulation and

      d)   Level of Amotivation?

8.   Is there a significant relationship between the level of importance of the job's Social Environment and

      a)   Level of Intrinsic Motivation;

      b)   Level of Identified regulation;

      c)   Level of External regulation and

      d)   Level of Amotivation?

9.   Is there a significant relationship between the level of importance of Relationship with Colleagues in the job and

      a)   Level of Intrinsic Motivation;

      b)   Level of Identified regulation;

      c)   Level of External regulation and

      d)   Level of Amotivation?

10.   Is there a significant relationship between the level of importance of Leadership and Relationship with the Leader and

      a)   Level of Intrinsic Motivation;

      b)   Level of Identified regulation;

      c)   Level of External regulation and

      d)   Level of Amotivation?

METHODOLOGY

To obtain research participants, snowball sampling was used. A total of 25 Filipino teachers in Taiwan volunteered to take part in this study. Since this research entailed the use of Pearson r computation, 25 is established as the minimum number of respondents for this statistical tool.[19] The respondents' informed consent was obtained but their identities were not acquired.

To determine the level of importance of 8 widely accepted factors that affect employee motivation, the Employee Motivational Factor Importance Questionnaire (EMFI), a researcher-made instrument was created. It has 8 items that were based on the "Factors Affecting Employee Motivation."[17] Each item was rated by the respondents using a 7-point Likert scale.

With the express permission of the instrument's authors, the Situational Motivation Scale (SIMS)[18] was adapted and modified and thereafter administered on the respondents to measure their levels of motivation. This instrument has 16 items that measure Intrinsic motivation, Identified regulation, External regulation and Amotivation, with 4 items for each. It also uses a 7-point Likert scale. Five studies were conducted to develop this instrument, which established the internal consistency of the 4 domains as well as their construct validity.

RESULTS

The following tables summarize the data gathered and the statistical tools used to address the research questions.

Table 1: Sex of the Respondents

Sex	N
Male	4
Female	21

Table 2: Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital Status	N
Single	22
Married	3

Table 3: Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Education	College degree	College degree with Master's units	Master's degree	Doctorate
N	13	7	3	2

Table 4: Employee Motivational Factor Importance Questionnaire (EMFI) Scale of Interpretation

Range	Verbal Interpretation
1.000 – 1.857	Extremely unimportant
1.858 – 2.715	Moderately unimportant
2.716 – 3.572	Slightly unimportant
3.573 – 4.429	Neither important nor unimportant
4.430 – 5.286	Slightly important
5.287 – 6.143	Moderately important
6.144 – 7.000	Extremely important

Table 5: Employee Motivational Factor Importance Questionnaire (EMFI) Responses

Item	Weighted Mean N=25	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Job recognition and reward is	6.12	Moderately important	5
2. Opportunities for professional growth and development is	6.76	Extremely important	1
3. Financial benefits of the job is	6.6	Extremely important	3
4. Non-monetary benefits of the job is	5.24	Slightly important	7
5. The job promotes work-life balance is	6.68	Extremely important	2
6. The job's social environment is	6.68	Extremely important	2
7. Relationship with colleagues in the job is	6.08	Moderately important	6
8. Leadership and relationship with the leader is	6.48	Extremely important	4

Table 6: SIMS Adapted and Modified QuestionnaireScale of Interpretation

Range	Verbal Interpretation
1.000 – 1.857	Not at all
1.858 – 2.715	A very little
2.716 – 3.572	A little
3.573 – 4.429	Moderately
4.430 – 5.286	Enough
5.287 – 6.143	A lot
6.144 – 7.000	Exactly

Table 7: Responses to the SIMS Adapted and Modified Questionnaire

Why are you currently engaged in this activity?	Weighted Mean N=25	Verbal Interpretation
1. Because I think that teaching is interesting	6.16	Exactly
2. Because I am doing it for my own good	4.88	Enough
3. Because I am supposed to do it	3.64	Moderately
4. There may be good reasons to teach, but personallyI don't see any	1.84	Not at all
5. Because I think that teaching is pleasant	5.76	A lot
6. Because I think that teaching is good for me	5.56	A lot
7. Because teaching is something that I have to do	3.8	Moderately
8. I teach but I am not sure if it is worth it	1.88	A very little
9. Because teaching is fun	5.92	A lot
10. By personal decision	6.08	A lot
11. Because I don't have any choice	2.48	A very little
12. I don't know; I don't see what teaching brings me	1.48	Not at all
13. Because I feel good when teaching	5.8	A lot
14. Because I believe that teaching is important for me	5.72	A lot
15. Because I feel that I have to do it	3.72	Moderately
16. I teach, but I am not sure it is a good thing to pursue it	1.92	A very little

Intrinsic motivation: Items 1, 5, 9, 13
Identified regulation: Items 2, 6, 10, 14
External regulation: Items 3,7, 11, 15;
Amotivation: Items 4, 8, 12, 16

Table 8: Intrinsic Motivation Responses

Intrinsic Motivation	Weighted Mean N=25	Verbal Interpretation
1. Because I think that teaching is interesting	6.16	Exactly
5. Because I think that teaching is pleasant	5.76	A lot
9. Because teaching is fun	5.92	A lot
13. Because I feel good when teaching	5.80	A lot
Overall weighted mean	**5.91**	A lot

Table 9: Identified Regulation Responses

Identified regulation	Weighted Mean N=25	Verbal Interpretation
2. Because I am doing it for my own good	4.88	Enough
6. Because I think that teaching is good for me	5.56	A lot
10. By personal decision	6.08	A lot
14. Because I believe that teaching is important for me	5.72	A lot
Overall weighted mean	**5.56**	A lot

Table 10: External Regulation Responses

External regulation	Weighted Mean N=25	Verbal Interpretation
3. Because I am supposed to do it	3.64	Moderately
7. Because teaching is something that I have to do	3.80	Moderately
11. Because I don't have any choice	2.48	A very little
15. Because I feel that I have to do it	3.72	Moderately
Overall weighted mean	**3.41**	A little

Table 11: Amotivation Responses

Amotivation	Weighted Mean N=25	Verbal Interpretation
4. There may be good reasons to teach, but personally I don't see any	1.84	Not at all
8. I teach but I am not sure if it is worth it	1.88	A very little
12. I don't know; I don't see what teaching brings me	1.48	Not at all
16. I teach, but I am not sure it is a good thing to pursue it	1.92	A very little
Overall weighted mean	**1.78**	Not at all

Table 12: Relationship between Importance of Job recognition and Reward and SIMS Domains

Importance of **Job recognition and Reward** and	Calculated Pearson r N=25	Verbal Interpretation
Intrinsic motivation	r = 0.1131	Low positive relationship
Identified regulation	r = -0.0065	Weak negative relationship
External regulation	r = -0.0725	Weak negative relationship
Amotivation	r = -0.1117	Low negative relationship

Table 13: Relationship between Importance of Opportunities for Professional Growth and Development and SIMS Domains

Importance of **Opportunities for Professional Growth and Development** and	Calculated Pearson r N=25	Verbal Interpretation
Intrinsic motivation	r = 0.062	Weak positive relationship
Identified regulation	r = 0.008	Weak positive relationship
External regulation	r = 0.032	Weak positive relationship
Amotivation	r = -0.1044	Low negative relationship

Table 14: Relationship between Importance of Financial Benefits of the Job and SIMS Domains

Importance of **Financial Benefits of the Job** and	Calculated Pearson r N=25	Verbal Interpretation
Intrinsic motivation	r = -0.1763	Low negative relationship
Identified regulation	r = -0.047	Weak negative relationship
External regulation	r = 0.2422	Low positive relationship
Amotivation	r = 0.0842	Weak positive relationship

Table 15: Relationship between Importance of Non-monetary Benefits of the Job and SIMS Domains

Importance of **Non-monetary Benefits of the Job** and	Calculated Pearson r N=25	Verbal Interpretation
Intrinsic motivation	r = -0.0422	Weak negative relationship
Identified regulation	r = -0.0794	Weak negative relationship
External regulation	r = -0.146	Low negative relationship
Amotivation	r = -0.2777	Low negative relationship

Table 16: Relationship between Importance that the Job Promotes Work-Life Balance and SIMS Domains

Importance that the **Job Promotes Work-Life Balance** and	Calculated Pearson r N=25	Verbal Interpretation
Intrinsic motivation	r = -0.0222	Weak negative relationship
Identified regulation	r = 0.1035	Low positive relationship
External regulation	r = -0.2421	Low negative relationship
Amotivation	r = -0.1422	Low negative relationship

Table 17: Relationship between Importance of the Job's Social Environment and SIMS Domains

Importance of the **Job's Social Environment** and	Calculated Pearson r N=25	Verbal Interpretation
Intrinsic motivation	r = 0.337	Moderate positive relationship
Identified regulation	r = 0.2343	Low positive relationship
External regulation	r = -0.1647	Low negative relationship
Amotivation	r = -0.2402	Low negative relationship

Table 18: Relationship between Importance of Relationship with Colleagues in the Job and SIMS Domains

Importance of **Relationship with Colleagues in the Job** and	Calculated Pearson r N=25	Verbal Interpretation
Intrinsic motivation	r = 0.1273	Low negative relationship
Identified regulation	r = 0.1703	Low negative relationship
External regulation	r = -0.0682	Weak negative relationship
Amotivation	r = -0.1191	Low negative relationship

Table 19: Relationship between Importance of Leadership and Relationship with the Leader and SIMS Domains

Importance of **Leadership and Relationship with the Leader** and	Calculated Pearson r *N=25*	Verbal Interpretation
Intrinsic motivation	r = 0.434	Moderate positive relationship
Identified regulation	r = 0.4146	Moderate positive relationship
External regulation	r = 0.0317	Weak positive relationship
Amotivation	r = -0.0442	Weak negative relationship

Table 20: Summary of Relationships between SIMS Domains and EMFI Responses

	Intrinsic Motivation	Identified regulation	External regulation	Amotivation
1. Job recognition and reward	Low positive relationship	Weak negative relationship	Weak negative relationship	Low negative relationship
2. Opportunities for professional growth and development	Weak positive relationship	Weak positive relationship	Weak positive relationship	Low negative relationship
3. Financial benefits of the job	Low negative relationship	Weak negative relationship	Low positive relationship	Weak positive relationship
4. Non-monetary benefits of the job	Weak negative relationship	Weak negative relationship	Low negative relationship	Low negative relationship
5. The job promotes work-life balance	Weak negative relationship	Low positive relationship	Low negative relationship	Low negative relationship
6. The job's social environment	Moderate positive relationship	Low positive relationship	Low negative relationship	Low negative relationship
7. Relationship with colleagues in the job	Low negative relationship	Low negative relationship	Weak negative relationship	Low negative relationship
8. Leadership and relationship with the leader	Moderate positive relationship	Moderate positive relationship	Weak positive relationship	Weak negative relationship

DISCUSSION

In Table 5, it can be observed that 5 factors are extremely important for the respondents. Among those six, the factor ranked first is opportunities for professional growth and development followed, the job promotes work-life balance and the job's social environment are tied at second, financial benefits of the job ranked third and leadership and relationship with the leader ranked fourth. Job recognition and reward were both moderately important while non-monetary benefits is only slightly important. The finding that opportunities for professional growth and development ranked first is consistent with a study that found that the chance for growth correlates with quality of work.

Table 8 presents the weighted means of the responses for Intrinsic Motivation. The overall weighted mean is 5.91 which has a verbal interpretation of a lot.Table 9 presents the weighted means of the responses for Identified Regulation. The overall weighted mean is 5.56 which has a verbal interpretation of a lot.Table 10 presents the weighted means of the responses for External Regulation. The overall weighted mean is 3.41 which has a verbal interpretation of a little.Table 11 presents the weighted means of the responses for Amotivation. The overall weighted mean is 1.78 which has a verbal interpretation of not at all.

In Table 12, the relationship between importance of job recognition and reward and SIMS domains are shown by computing the Pearson r value for each. For intrinsic motivation, a low positive relationship was found. For identified regulation, a weak negative relationship was found. For external regulation, a weak negative relationship was found. And for amotivation, a low negative relationship was found.

In Table 13, the relationship between importance of opportunities for professional growth and development and SIMS domains are shown by computing the Pearson r value for each. For intrinsic motivation, a weak positive relationship was found. For identified regulation, a weak positive relationship was found. For external regulation, a weak positive relationship was found and for amotivation a low negative relationship was found.

In Table 14, the relationship between importance of financial benefits of the job and SIMS domains are shown by computing the Pearson r value for each. For intrinsic motivation, a low negative relationship was found. For identified regulation, a weak negative relationship was found. For external regulation, a low positive relationship was found. And for amotivation, a weak positive relationship was found.

In Table 15, the relationship between importance of non-monetary benefits of the job and SIMS domains are shown by computing the Pearson r value for each. For intrinsic motivation, a weak negative relationship was found. For identified regulation, a weak negative relationship was found. For external regulation, a low negative relationship was found. And for amotivation, a low negative relationship was found.

In Table 16, the relationship between importance that the job promotes work-life balance and SIMS domains are shown by computing the Pearson r value for each. For intrinsic motivation, a weak negative relationship was found. For identified regulation, a low positive relationship was found. For external regulation, a low negative relationship was found. And for amotivation, a low negative relationship was found.

In Table 17, the relationship between importance of the job's social environment and SIMS domains are shown by computing the Pearson r value for each. For intrinsic motivation, a moderate positive relationship was found. For identified regulation, a low positive relationship was found. For external regulation, a low negative relationship was found. And for amotivation, a low negative relationship was found.

In Table 18, the relationship between importance of relationship with colleagues in the job and SIMS domains are shown by computing the Pearson r value for each. For intrinsic motivation, a low negative relationship was found. For identified regulation, a low negative relationship was found. For external regulation, a weak negative relationship was found. And for amotivation, a low negative relationship was found.

In Table 19, the relationship between importance of leadership and relationship with the leader and SIMS domains are shown by computing the Pearson r value for each. For intrinsic motivation, a moderate positive relationship was found. For identified regulation, a moderate positive relationship was found. For external regulation, a weak positive relationship was found. And for amotivation, a weak negative relationship was found.

Table 20 summarizes the results found in Tables 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19.For intrinsic motivation, the factor that has the highest positive relationship is *leadership and relationship with the leader.* For identified regulation, *leadership and relationship with the leader* once more has the highest positive relationship. For external regulation, the factor that has the highest positive relationship is *financial benefits of the job.* And as for amotivation, *non-monetary benefits of the job*has the highest negative relationship.

CONCLUSIONS

Although *leadership and relationship with the leader* did not rank as the highest factor in Table 5, it does have the highest positive relationship with intrinsic motivation and identified regulation. Furthermore, it would appear that the *job's social environment* has the second strongest positive relationships with intrinsic motivation and identified regulation.External regulation has the highest positive relationship with *financial benefits of the job.*It can be inferred from the data obtained from the respondents that their level of motivation is mostly positively affected by *leadership and relationship with the leader,* the *job's* social *environment* and *financial* benefits of the job.

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