

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Knowledge deficits and analysis on comprehension of teachers on their common legal rights as teachers

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ABSTRACT

The basic principles that protect teachers' professional autonomy, welfare, and ability to contribute to education are included in their rights. These rights include the ability to teach without drawing conclusions, just remuneration commensurate with their level of experience, a welcoming workplace, and immunity from discrimination. Protecting teachers' rights is essential to creating an environment that supports effective teaching, increasing job satisfaction, and eventually raising the caliber of learning opportunities for students. This study investigates teachers' fundamental rights in the context of education. In this study, ten (10) educators from both public and private institutions took part. Interviews were done to find out how instructors analyze data and whether they are aware of their shared legal rights.

Keywords: legal rights of teachers; academic freedom; legal protections; professional development

1. Introduction

The rights of educators have a significant impact on how education is shaped, impacting both the caliber of learning opportunities for students as well as the professional lives of instructors. Teachers have rights that protect their health, their independence, and the reputation of their profession since they are knowledge builders and role models for the next generation. These rights include things like the freedom to pursue professional development, fair employment procedures, and academic freedom. Encouraging a fair and supportive environment for educators requires an understanding of and commitment to upholding these rights. Understanding these rights also involves being knowledgeable with the rights of their students; hence, they can defend themselves in times of conflict with law as well as their students^[1]. Aside from that, having a sufficient knowledge of their rights leads them to improve their professional development and be a role

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model to the school and community. This study explores the basic ideas that support teachers' roles in the educational ecosystem while looking into the numerous aspects of teachers' rights. This concept is in line with Chavez^[2], which examines companies' and organizations' awareness of and compliance to the magna carta of women in the workplace as seen through the eyes of teachers, health care providers, and minimum-wage workers. To create a supportive and just learning environment, it is important to carefully consider the complex web of rights pertaining to teachers, from employment status to autonomy in pedagogical methods.

In relation to their work, teachers in the United States (US) are granted several rights, such as the acknowledgement of specific freedoms, the outlawing of some forms of discrimination, and strong protection against termination. This concept is in line with Chavez^[2] findings, which indicated that teachers should incorporate skill development into their skill evaluation procedures because it was necessary for distant learning. These rights are derived from state and federal statutes, federal regulations, and state and federal constitutional provisions. The Constitution's First Amendment of the Bill of Rights guarantees freedom of expression and association. Other rights that are constitutional in nature include academic freedom, equal protection, privacy rights, and special education rights. Substantial and procedural due process rights also include the rights of teachers to receive notice of termination and a right to a hearing in certain circumstances.

2. Research objectives

The rights of teachers in the Philippines provides a comprehensive understanding of the legal, cultural and institutional dimensions that shape and influence teachers' rights. Analyzing the existing laws and regulations in the Philippines pertaining to the rights of teachers, with a focus on employment conditions, academic freedom, and professional development is important to teachers. It was essential to teachers to know and understand their common legal rights.

1. Determine the comprehension of teachers on their common legal rights as teachers.

3. Literature review

This study focuses on how teachers' daily job is affected by education law and students' rights. It looks at Israeli teachers' knowledge and proficiency with the law and emphasizes their weak professional standing regarding students' rights. The investigation highlights the need for teachers to be better informed about their legal rights and obligations and demonstrates a knowledge gap among them. Equipping educators with legal knowledge can improve their capacity to defend the rights of their students^[3].

The study on students' perceptions of their rights in school is examined in this systematic review. A theoretical and legal study of studies pertaining to children's rights in schooling is included. The review emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend students' rights and how instructors must be aware of these rights. It highlights how basic legal understanding concerning student rights is frequently lacking among educators and students, which can impede the achievement of these rights in learning environments^[1]. (Perry-Hazzan, 2021).

The legal literacy of general education instructors in navigating special education systems is the main emphasis of this study. This theory is consistent with Chavez^[2] research, which shows that the most notable aspect of humanized instruction is cognitive presence. It draws attention to general education teachers' ignorance of special education and legal issues, which can obstruct successful inclusion and put school districts in danger of legal trouble. The research highlights the significance of legal literacy in programs designed to prepare teachers to help students with special needs by ensuring that they possess the requisite information and abilities^[4].

This study looks at educators' legal literacy and their understanding of both teacher and student rights. According to the findings, many instructors lack legal knowledge and have not attended any courses in the subject. This is consistent with Chavez^[2] conclusions that gender-based humor poses a threat to communities because it emphasizes social roles that enhance hierarchy. In social media, gender-based humor emerged as a mainstreamed means of social distinction. Teachers need to become more aware of their legal rights and responsibilities, as this lack of legal literacy among them indicates a knowledge gap. The study advocates for the inclusion of legal issues in teacher preparation programs to ensure that teachers are equipped with the necessary legal knowledge^[5].

An overview of frequent legal difficulties faced by teachers is given in this chapter, along with an emphasis on the significance of addressing legal issues in teacher preparation. It highlights the necessity for teachers to be aware of their legal rights and responsibilities as well as any potential legal hazards in their line of work by discussing important legal themes that should be included in preservice teacher preparation. The chapter places a strong emphasis on the value of providing educators with the legal information and abilities they need to handle legal matters in the classroom.

These assessments of the literature draw attention to the lack of understanding and analysis of teachers shared legal rights. They stress the significance of knowing students' rights and legal responsibilities as well as the necessity for instructors to be legal literate. According to the studies, equipping educators with legal knowledge can improve their capacity to defend students' rights and handle legal matters in the classroom. To close the knowledge gap and help educators comprehend their legal rights and obligations, more study in this field is necessary.

4. Methods

This research explores the intricate and dynamic realm of educators' rights, concentrating on the legal structures influencing their field of expertise. This study, which is based on education law, looks at the rights and safeguards that teachers have while highlighting the subtle differences between their responsibilities in larger social and educational contexts. It includes a thorough examination of the legislative frameworks protecting teachers' rights, the lobbying initiatives spearheaded by teachers' organizations, and the effects of current educational changes on their autonomy as professionals. Utilizing a theoretical framework that reveals the complex interactions between teachers' rights and the opportunities and problems found inside the educational system by fusing legal and cultural ideas.

4.1. Research design

An exploratory research design was used in this study to investigate the legal rights that teachers share. Using an exploratory design, this study was able to analyze teachers' comprehension of their shared legal rights and gain a thorough understanding of their knowledge deficiencies. This layout made it easier to examine the advantages and disadvantages of teachers shared legal rights. They based their interview responses on their personal experiences as well as their understanding of their shared legal rights.

Exploratory design is used to investigate new topics gaining a deeper understanding when existing information is limited.

4.2. Participants

The study collected the viewpoints and experiences of teachers from different educational institutions from public and private schools and universities in Zamboanga Peninsula, with ten (10) years in service and up. The instructors' responses throughout the interview were drawn from their personal experiences. The purpose of this interview was to find out how much they knew about their shared legal rights.

The data was used to determine the sample, indicating that enough information had been obtained. It is decided to include people from a variety of backgrounds in order to capture the range of their perspectives and experiences. Teachers from both private and public elementary schools were questioned for this study.

4.3. Instrument

This study used a research instrument that caught the answers of the participants. Interview questions supplied relevant experiences about the common legal rights of teachers. The interview questions were used for participants to delve into their perspectives, experiences, and their narratives. **Table 1** presents the interview guide questions.

Table 1. Instrument of the study.

Objectives	Interview Questions	Participants	n
Determine the comprehension of teachers on their common legal rights as teachers.	1. What common legal rights of a teacher need to be oriented about the legal rights as mandated in the Magna Carta for Teachers?	Different educational institutions from public and private schools and universities 10 years in service and up.	20
	2. What supported activities of the school provide about the rights as mandated by the Magna Carta for Teachers?		
	3. What should your school provide to orient the teachers about their rights as mandated by the Magna Carta for Teachers?		

4.4. Research procedure

The experiences, feelings, and opinions of the participants regarding their rights were captured using qualitative data gathering techniques. One-on-one open-ended questions that cover a range of teacher rights topics were the main method used to collect data. The interviews offered a chance to explore the viewpoints and experiences of the participants.

This study used suitable techniques for data collecting and first got permission from school administrators to conduct research on the premises before conducting an interview. To ensure correct transcription and analysis, the interviews were audio recorded. To improve the rigor and dependability of the research, taking notes is also utilized to record, arrange, and analyze the insightful information that participants give.

4.5. Data analysis

The participant narratives served as the study's primary source of data, while linked Google studies provided the study's secondary source of data. The narratives gleaned from the interview were examined using thematic analysis. The process of finding, evaluating, classifying, summarizing, and reporting themes within a data collection is known as thematic analysis. The process of analysis involves meticulous writing and audio recordings to ensure the reliability of the stories. After that, the transcripts were processed to identify recurrent themes pertaining to the individuals' experiences.

5. Results

Objective 1. Determine the comprehension of teachers on their common legal rights as teachers.

Question 1. What common legal rights of a teacher need to be oriented about the legal rights as mandated in the Magna Carta for Teachers?

5.1. Freedom

Sixteen (16) respondents state that the important regulations that protect educators inside the educational system are encompassed by the rights of teachers. Every teacher should be aware of their legal protections, academic freedom, and equal rights. Teachers hold great importance in these acts because they safeguard their rights to academic freedom, tenure, tax breaks, and other advantages. This permits educators to freely share their thoughts within the parameters of their subject matter. This right guarantees that teachers can present students with a range of objective viewpoints, encouraging critical thinking and intellectual development. The information gathered demonstrated the teachers' awareness of their shared legal rights.

“It is the right to grow professionally, it means that teachers should enjoy their academic freedom. Teachers should be given equal protection of the law, such as specific assignments. If you are assigned in a hazardous area, you should be given hazard consideration. You should enjoy the right of residing in a safe and comfortable place. Teachers should also be given fair allowance, such as special hardships and travel allowance.”

“I believe that teachers should know the academic freedom and right to transfer. I consider my health as a factor to create a good future of my students. In addition, there is an another issue which is the leave credits. Just like in other offices/agencies, they were given leave credits that they can use for vacations that last for 10-15 days. If you would be absent, your service credit will be deducted.”

5.2. Government protection

Four (4) respondents state that the government protection of the rights and welfare of private school teachers is vital. Rewards for being absent, which stop salary deductions when they are not present and guarantee that teachers are handled properly in the event of disciplinary measures or termination, are among the additional perks that instructors enjoy. It establishes equal protection under the law for all teachers, regardless of race, gender, religion, or other protected characteristics. This includes the right to know about any charges against them, the chance to present evidence and witnesses in their defense, and a fair hearing before an impartial body. This guarantees that no instructor will experience prejudice or unjust treatment because of these characteristics.

“I believe that the government has the obligation to protect the rights and welfare of private school teachers. Other fringe benefits that teachers receive for example; we have absence incentives so that our salary will not be deducted.”

Question 2. What supported activities of the school provide about the rights as mandated by the Magna Carta for Teachers?

5.3. Holidays

Twelve (12) respondents state that celebrations of designated monthly holidays, such as National Heroes Day, are commemorated by various official entities. At the very least, relevant events or programs should be held to properly observe it. The school should commemorate World Teachers' Day to show educators that

they value and respect this day as well as the priceless contributions made by educators everywhere. To recognize, value, and promote the vital role that educators play in forming communities and promoting a culture of learning and growth, it is imperative that we observe the said day. Supported activities in schools provide an avenue for teachers to exercise these rights. Extracurricular activities such as clubs or sports teams give teachers an opportunity to mentor students beyond traditional classroom settings. These activities foster an environment where teachers can freely express themselves while guiding students towards personal growth and development.

“Observances of national holidays such as the National Heroes Day, recognized monthly observation that are being observed by other office agencies. It should be properly observed by at least holding related activities or programs.”

“I feel that the school should observe the World Teachers’ Day, giving the feeling to teachers that they honor the day and to recognize and appreciate the invaluable contributions of teachers worldwide. It is essential for acknowledging, appreciating, and advocating for the critical role teachers play in shaping societies and fostering a culture of learning and development.”

5.4. Session

Eight (8) respondents state that the schools can support teachers’ rights through professional development programs, offering workshops and training sessions to educate teachers about their rights, including legal aspects, contract terms, and professional standards. Transparent communication establishing regular forums for teachers to express concerns and questions, and discuss issues related to their rights to promote transparency and collaboration. Fair evaluation processes fostering a positive work environment. By implementing these activities, schools can create a supportive and empowering environment that upholds the rights of teachers.

“INSET and LAC Sessions. These are training activities of the school for teachers to enhance their teaching strategies that could help the students in their learning experience. Another is the Quarterly Classroom Observation. It helps us to continuously learn and not to be stack up in one strategy.”

Question 3. What should your school provide to orient the teachers about their rights as mandated by the Magna Carta for Teachers?

5.5. Seminar

Eight (8) respondents said that they need to effectively orient teachers about their rights. The school should conduct legal workshops led by legal experts to educate teachers about their legal rights. Orienting the teachers about their rights is a proactive measure that not only safeguards the well-being of the educators, but also contributes to a positive school culture, legal compliance, and the overall success of the educational institution.

“Through seminars. Teachers should know their rights to be invited in trainings and symposiums, seminars, workshops, orientations or other related activities that are essential to the personality development of the teachers. The school should conduct related activities to enhance the personal abilities of the teacher that could strengthen their dedication and commitment.”

5.6. Informative material

Twelve (12) respondents state that schools should distribute informative materials summarizing the key points of the Magna Carta for Teachers. It is a vital document that outlines the rights and privileges of educators. As such, it is crucial for schools to provide comprehensive orientation programs to ensure that teachers are well-informed about their rights as mandated by this important legislation. This could include pamphlets or handbooks that outline each right in a clear and concise manner. By having access to these resources, teachers can easily refer to them whenever they have questions or concerns regarding their rights.

“I believe that the school should follow the rights of the teachers under the DOLE that includes various labor standards and protection such as minimum wage, overtime pay, holiday pay, leave benefits, security of tenure, social security, Phil health benefits, and 13th month pay.”

“I think that the school should integrate these rights of the teachers during INSET or in any activities of the teachers because this has been a long over issue that until now, it has not given justice for the teachers.”

6. Discussion

Need to be oriented about the legal rights as mandated in the Magna Carta for Teachers

Teachers' rights, including employment, academic freedom, tax deductions, and other benefits, are safeguarded by important regulations. Teachers have a significant role in protecting students' rights by enabling them to openly express their opinions and promoting critical thinking. The government must defend the rights of private school instructors, providing incentives for absences such as pay reductions and appropriate handling of disciplinary actions or termination. All instructors are guaranteed equal protection under the law, irrespective of their gender, color, religion, or any other attribute that is protected. Teachers are entitled to a fair hearing before an unbiased body, the ability to present defense witnesses and evidence, and information about the charges against them. This concept is in line with Chavez^[2] findings, which suggest that the government should assist impacted women by offering training opportunities, supporting home-based businesses, promoting independent wage earners, providing financial management and tax benefits, and endorsing industry compatibility. This ensures that no teacher will face discrimination or unfair treatment because of these attributes.

Legal Protections and the Rights of Teachers in the Philippine Educational System: One of the teachers talked about how all teachers should be aware of their shared legal rights. The rights and welfare of private school instructors must be upheld by the government. Other perks that instructors receive include rewards for being absent, which prevents pay deductions when they are not there.

Supported activities of the school about the rights as mandated by the Magna Carta for Teachers

Official organizations celebrate National Heroes Day and World Teachers' Day to emphasize the role teachers play in building communities and fostering a culture of learning and development. This concept is consistent with Padillo^[6] findings, which state that developing reflective teaching skills is a lifetime process that is reinforced by active participation in a variety of professional development activities both inside and outside of the classroom. Extracurricular clubs and sports teams are two (2) examples of how schools can support teachers' rights by giving them the chance to assist students and foster personal development. Teachers can learn about their rights, legal ramifications, contract terms, and professional standards through professional development programs, workshops, and training sessions. Open communication and equitable

evaluation procedures can also help to create a healthy work environment for educators. By implementing these activities, schools can create a supportive and empowering environment that upholds the rights of teachers, fostering a culture of learning and growth.

School provides to orient the teachers their rights as mandated by the Magna Carta for Teachers

The success of educational institutions depends on the rights of teachers. To ensure legal compliance, teach students about their rights, and foster a pleasant school climate, schools should hold legal workshops led by specialists. This approach is consistent with Chavez^[7] research on the social view of gender, notably in the field of education. Teachers need to have access to the Magna Carta for Teachers, which is an important document that outlines the rights and benefits of educators. To make sure teachers are aware of their rights, schools should provide them with educational materials, such as handbooks or brochures, that summarize the main aspects of the Magna Carta. Teachers can review these resources at any time if they have questions or concerns, thanks to this thorough orientation session.

7. Conclusion

The common legal rights in the Philippines have the aim to improve the social and economic standing of teachers, including their living and working environments, employment opportunities, and professional growth. These rights protect things like hiring, qualifying, permission to transfer, a code of conduct, protections during disciplinary actions, nondiscrimination, married educators, academic freedom, extra pay, pay scale, cost of living allowance, special hardship allowance, prohibitions on deductions, free medical examination, study leave, indefinite leave, retirement pay increase, and the ability to form and join organizations of their choosing. By encouraging critical thinking and allowing students to freely voice their viewpoints, teachers play a vital role in upholding students' rights. Private school teachers have rights that the government must uphold, including the freedom to present defense witnesses and evidence, fair hearings, rewards for absences, and notification about charges against them. By providing extracurricular activities, professional development opportunities, training sessions, workshops, open communication, and fair evaluation practices, schools may uphold the rights of teachers. Teachers' rights are essential to the success of educational institutions. To guarantee legal compliance and promote a positive school environment, schools should host legal workshops conducted by experts.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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