Perspectives of Educational Technology Stakeholders towards the Publishing Industry: Insights on Alternative Career Opportunity

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Abstract: The demand for technology-based resources in facilitating learning inside the classroom has been gaining prominence in the academic environment. However, educational technology experts and graduates have also been pulled in opportunities offered by the publishing industry. As a result of this emerging trend, there has been a push and pull effect between the academe and the publications companies in the country. The study examined potential reasons why Educational Technology graduates and students are inclined to leave teaching profession and accept career opportunities offered in publishing. Guided by Social Cognitive Career and Herzberg Hygiene-Motivation theories, two focused group discussions were conducted to obtain perspectives from the participants' current interactions, environment and educational background resulting into career shifts. Results have shown that majority of the participants were aware of this career availability and most likely able to join the industry for improved salary and benefits, better work conditions and lighter work load.

Key Words: Publishing Industry, Educational Technology, Career Development, Teaching

1. INTRODUCTION

Digital technology has shaped the mode of learning today. It can be observed how technology in learning has evolved drastically to accommodate student behavior. Technology has created drastic effects on students communicate, collaborate and among others in the learning process.

Since the introduction of computer lessons in the early 1980s, the role of teachers in the classroom has shifted and defined "modernity" in a different fashion. It has also been assumed in several educational researches that technology can create a more active, fun and engaging learning process making schools more effective than they were before. (Cuban, et al., 2001)

The publishing industry, among other industries related to education, is confronted with the challenge of digitization. It is one large industry that teachers heavily rely for content, support and other related resources. Although many existing print publishers must agree that while digital technology is seen as a form of disruptive technology, it has also created massive opportunities and publishers themselves have developed several strategies to maximize its existence.

Because of these issues and trends in education, the main objective of this research is to understand the

perspective of educational technology majors to the publishing industry as an alternative career. It aims to understand how technology affected the publishing industry and the question for demand of technology-based skills in their functional-operations. The research also identifies key reasons why educational technology educators can leave the classroom for changes in career. Lastly, the research looks into several factors that shall more likely influence teachers to jump ship into the publishing industry.

This study is logically divided into three (3) sections. The first two sections will review various studies about the publishing industry and the theories to support this study. It will look at the current state of the publishing industry in countries such as US, Taiwan and South Africa and what changes happened to its organizational and operational structures due to digitization. It will also discuss various studies on career choices using the Social Cognitive Career theory using two models. Lastly, this study will present the results of the focus group discussions facilitated to graduate students of Educational Technology to understand their perspective on the career opportunities being offered by the publishing industry.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Design of Research

The chosen participants were grouped randomly regardless of gender and the type of institution, either public or private, currently engaged with. Using both the Social Cognitive Career and Herzberg Hygiene-Motivation Theories, a model was developed to understand factors that would help understand their perspective about leaving teaching and moving to the publishing industry.

The research also used the factors identified in Ortega-De La Cruz's study (2016). Each group were asked to identify which would influence them to leave teaching (hygiene) and which would motivate them to move to the publishing industry (motivation).

Lastly, this framework is integrated with Lent, et al., (1996) model of Social Cognitive Career theory which primarily focused on 3 important tenets: Sources Self – Efficacy, Goals and Interests and Performance Outcomes. This adapted model of SCCT will also explain that depending on the factors that influence's a teacher's goal or interests, teacher's will most likely decide what type of activity (career) they will most likely be engaged with.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Hygiene Factors

Since most of the teachers are new to the profession, the most recurrent theme is that they have been very idealistic of what is like working in the classroom. However, after several months and years, they all seem to agree that teaching is not as easy as it may seem. This lead the participants to discuss potential reasons that will make them leave the teaching profession (hygiene factors).

According to the participants, the most common issue is that salary and benefits have been inadequate. All participants felt that they are underpaid despite the heavy workload that they have to accomplish. Benefits are not as grandiose as well compared to other careers.

Participants perceived that the current administration and the policies implemented by the school do not help in achieving professional careers. According to students, there has been minimal support elucidated by the school administration particularly on professional development. In a similar note, the work environment is not as positive as for most participants because of some politics and lack of resources.

2. Perspective on the Publishing Industry

In terms of awareness, all participants became knowledgeable of the opportunities offered by the publishing industry through their classes in graduate school. Most sources of their knowledge would be their classmates and professors in the university. There are also some participants who were being offered directly by the publishers. However, majority of the participants are not exactly aware of what is it like working in publishing.

To help teachers become aware and identify potential activity that they want to engage in, a list of potential careers in the publishing industry was presented based on the study of Pinto (2007). The list includes careers in editorial, sales and marketing, technical and professional support as well as printing operations.

After giving the participants the list, it was apparent in their reactions that the most exciting for them is to give technical and professional support. Participants are interested to provide seminars, trainings as well as assistance to technology related resources. Participants least prefer being in the editorial and the key reason is because of the heavy workload they foresee in the development of the books such as copy reading and lay-outing.

The participants were also inquired on how they thought of their background in educational technology which refers to self efficacy would help in the industry. Majority of the participants agree to argue educational foundation is anchored on pedagogical and technological skills, it can probably provide a sense of confidence that can accomplish their tasks like performance outcomes in this new industry. Between the two, pedagogical skills would actually create more demand in the industry because the participants felt that books are manifestations of the existing pedagogies to be delivered carefully to teachers and students. The background with technology, on the other hand, can surely help both the publisher and the customers in trying to understand how technology resources work and how it can be beneficial in learning.

3. Motivation Factors

Having discussed the potential employment opportunities offered by the publishing industry, the participants were then asked what will certainly motivate them to move to this industry.

They were unanimous in their response that the salary and benefits that the publishing industry will offer will be a big considerable factor. Although there were no empirical source on the comparison of salaries between teachers and those working in the publishing industry, it was assumed by most participants that the latter offer a better compensation and benefits package. When asked why, participants all agreed that it was because of practical reasons such as supporting the family, personal needs and even paying tuition fee for graduate school. A study made by Stinebrickner (2004) however argues that teachers leave not only because of the salary that they receive. This led the discussion further to inquire other factors that will make them move to the publishing industry.

Another resounding feedback was that teachers were motivated to explore on a new work environment where they can still use their backgrounds in teaching and technology. Majority of the participants also feel that they have more freedom to open up themselves with less restricting policies and be just limited in being in the classroom.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The publishing industry is an evolving industry just like any other industry. This study showed that technology has greatly affected the way publishers work and operate to meet the customers' demands. Technology has also managed to influence publishers to reorganize and require people with technological skills set.

Because of these changes in the publishing industry, it was safe to assume that educational technology teachers, with their backgrounds in both teaching and technology will be very much in demand. As discussed by Lent (1996) and Herzberg (1959), considerable factors will influence the way teachers will choose their career choice and development but are still rooted with their self-efficacy.

The results of the focus group discussion shows that teacher in educational technology agree the amount of salary and benefits as well as their work environment as a determinant to both leaving the classroom and joining the publishing industry. Due to pragmatic reasons as well as expected outcome performance, teachers may consider moving to the publishing industry because of their knowledge in pedagogy and technology. They are confident that can get the work done in this new evolving industry.

It is recommended however, that further studies be done to examine closely the structure and operations in the publishing industry and create a solid foundation on the demand for educational technology

teachers. Because of these changes in the external environment, it is expected that more changes will happen from the traditional point of view to a more dynamic organization. It is also recommended to involve a larger population in other locales and universities to see and affirm the results of this research.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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