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Paternity Leave: Improving Global Trade and Competitiveness among Philippine Workers

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Abstract

This study examines the current state of paternity leave in the Philippines (R.A. No. 8187). Paternity leave is compared in different corporate settings in the Philippines to explore the possible effects of mandating an equal number of paternity leaves among corporations or extending the duration of leaves for the employees. Findings showed that in some collectivistic countries, there is no mandated set of paternity leaves in all corporations that follow it due to the doubt that these men use it for relaxation instead of doing fatherly duties. Moreover, it was also seen in different Western Countries that extending the duration of leaves created a positive work environment for individuals. It also had a positive impact on creating a competitive organization. This study uses purposive sampling for selecting participants. The results aim to replicate the results from Western Countries and understand the phenomenon of paternity leave in the Philippines. The study hypothesizes that an increase in mandated paternity leave has a positive effect on the well-being of the individual especially towards work performance. This could possibly boost income for the corporations as well as reduce conflicts, early retirement, improve the company's competitiveness and improve global trade.

Key Words: *Self-Determination Theory, Paternity Leave, Global Trade, Industrial Relations, Work Benefits*

Introduction

In 1996, the Philippine Labor Code established the “Paternity Leave” which acknowledged that children are both a parental and state responsibility (Serrano and Certeza, 2014). Men over the years have had more responsibility with handling a child’s well-being as well as their physiological needs in order to help fulfill the work-life balance and gender stereotypes with their female partners (Lewis and Humbert, 2010; James, 2013; Baird and Litwin, 2005). Paternity leave is also defined as a statutory entitlement to enable a father to be absent from work for a period of time when a child is born (O’Brien, Brandth and Kvannd, 2007). Parental leave policies have continuously evolved wherein implementation is responsive to local political and cultural agendas and more global processes such as work intensification and creating flexible labor markets (O’Brien, 2009). According to the Hein (2005), collective bargaining agreements have led paternity leave to become an entitlement. However, the duration of leaves varies from country to countries such as one day only for Chile and Saudi Arabi, seven days for the Philippines, twelve days for France, Denmark and most European countries, while Finland has 18 days of paternity leave. In several studies, it was seen that countries that promote longer days of duration of paternity leave with pay generated happier and satisfied individuals both in well-being and in work as compared to those who were given a minimum time of duration, had no pay and had a very strict work life (Klinth and Fathering,

2008; O'Brien, 2009; O'Brien, Brandth and Kvande, 2007; Hein, 2005; Ahmad, 2007, Kamerman, 2003). This could mean that an extended duration or a mandated number of leaves could increase motivation towards work as it supports their personal life and job satisfaction for employees because of the autonomy the company allows them. However, paternity leave without pay seems to remove the external motivation for the employees, increases job dissatisfaction, conflict and the like because they can't lose their income (England, 2005; Casey and Corday, 2009) as compared to the intrinsic motivation they seem to get from taking care of their child, helping in the household or helping his wife with domestic chores (England, 2005).

Employees in different market economies are time-poor and organizations look for ways to increase organizational competitiveness and efficiency. The biggest concern of workers, employers and governments are what could be the best solution to balance the work and family needs (Baird and Litwin, 2005). Moreover, the changes in the market environment affect human resource management and stipulate its strategic significance in the success of a company (Kuznetsova, Sinitsina, Gafurova, Pavluchina, Salyaeva and Puzankova, 2017). This could mean that work-life balance provisions such as paternity leave are still being evaluated in different parts of the world. This is because there is a need to minimize costs and maximise the employee's welfare. It was found that paternity leave strengthens fathers' caring role with their infants, and also encourages fathers to take a greater share of leave to support gender equity in the workplace (Brandth and Kvande, 2001). Organizations want to have family-friendly or family-first centered environment for its employees as this creates a positive perception on the employee's well-being. In turn, this leads to job satisfaction, less occurrence of costs or conflicts and increased productivity during work hours. This leads to more profit and reduced demands to stay at work (Thompson and Prottas, 2006; Buss, 2011; Khan, Nawaz, Aleem and Hamed, 2012). Moreover, the employee's motivation is increased by the benefits offered by the organization such as leaves. Leaves may lead to increased satisfaction at work which boosts not only productivity and motivation but also increases the organization's competitiveness as a whole. It has a positive effect in terms of employee commitment (Kontoghiorghes and Bryant, 2004) because it retains critical employees for the job and reduces further employee turnovers. This is crucial in sustaining a competitive advantage within the global economy (Ramlall, 2003). James (2005) stressed that employees which do not have support from employers, such as leaves, tend to under-perform due to stress, frustration and a perceived lack of employer autonomy support.

For this study, the researcher focused on the perspectives of Filipino workers and their experiences in using paternity leave and how these experiences impact their motivation in creating a competitive organization. Likewise, the current state of paternity leave in the labor code was examined whether it has an effect on the employee's performance at work. Therefore, the entirety of the research assumes that (1) the labor code may need to revise the duration of the leave with pay or number of leaves in the labor code for paternity leave to improve work motivation, especially in global trade and that (2) additional paternity leave may promote better results for workers to create a more competitive organization.

This research study focuses on how workers' motivation is affected by the paternity leave and its impacts on the company's competitiveness as an organization. It also explores why workers are inclined to increasing the duration of the leave or mandating a consistent duration for all companies.

1. What factors of paternity leave affect the motivation of employees to perform better at

- work?
2. If the duration of paternity leave is increased or the mandating of the leave is enforced among all corporations, how does it affect the motivation of the worker in the workplace?
 3. How does the perceived change of benefits in paternity leave affect the company's competitiveness as an organization and on global trade?

Framework

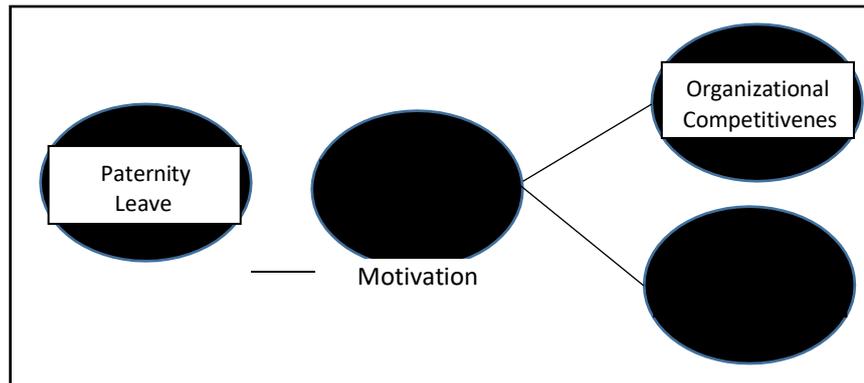


Figure 1. Modified Conceptual Framework by Ryan and Deci (1987)

The study will make use of Ryan and Deci's Self Determination Theory framework (1987) which was modified by the researcher to fit the study on paternity leave and how an increase in paternity leave duration or mandating affects the motivation of workers in different corporations and its effect on organizational competitiveness and on global trade. This is to determine whether the changes in paternity leave may have an effect on motivation and see the factors responsible for causing the shift in the global trade economy and organizational competitiveness.

Methodology

The study used a phenomenological exploratory design. A qualitative method was used to identify what factors of paternity leave affected the employees' motivation. The study will also analyze the effect of the perceived changes of benefits on the workers' motivation. The research design made use of interviews to examine the workers' experience on paternity leave in organizations and effect on motivation. Open-ended interviews were conducted. Responses were probed to gather further information on the relationship of the increase in paternity leave duration and motivation, what factors help or hinder the motivation of workers and how it affects the organizations' competitiveness and effect on global trade. Interviewees were interviewed in the English language.

Eight workers who met the following criteria were interviewed: experienced filing or availing for paternity leave at least once, must have worked in the corporation for at least 2 years and the same paternity leave duration of 7 days with paid leave in the formal sector. Two participants were removed because they did not satisfy the criteria of working for at least 2 years. The pilot study used a total of two extra employees. After the pilot study, a set of two workers were interviewed for phase one. The data was analyzed to assess the questions if they were not leading and test if the interviewee comprehended the same understanding of paternity leave as the interviewer so that they may be revised to reduce the bias, get an exact description of their feelings, create follow-up questions for the first set of participants, and further improve the interview structure for phase two. In phase 2, 7 new participants were interviewed. Participants in the study were provided with informed consent forms and their identities remained confidential.

The researcher transcribed and evaluated the participants' responses. In the first stage of data analysis, the researcher studied the transcript comprehensively and listed the responses. The second stage involved identifying themes and concepts in the transcribed interview data through thematic analysis. The emerging categories and concepts were organized and compared until no new concept could be created. The units that had similar categories were grouped and broken down into themes that described experiences of paternity leave on organization competitiveness and on global trade.

Discussion of Results

Figure 2: Master table of themes for Paternity Leave on Motivation

Master table of themes

Main themes	Sub-themes
Personal Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Leave with Pay 1.2 Duration of Leave 1.3 Security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.3.1 Utang Na Loob
Job Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Productivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1.1 Responsibility 2.1.2 Organization 2.2 Loyalty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.2.1 Retention 2.2.2 Gratitude 2.2.3 Satisfaction
Increased Intellectual Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Staff Performance 3.2 Corporate Image

By the end of the study, the main theme that was driving the Philippine workers to work better in their organization because of paternity leave was *Personal Benefit*. Under this, three subthemes were identified: *Leave with Pay*, *Duration of leave* and *Security*; and under *Security* is another sub-theme entitled: *Utang Na Loob*.

Another main theme that affected the motivation of the workers was *Job Satisfaction*. Under this, two sub-themes were formed: For *Productivity*, it had two more sub-themes which were *Responsibility* and *Organization*; while for *Loyalty* three sub-themes were formed which were *Retention*, *Gratitude*, and *Satisfaction*.

The process of how workers affected global trade and organizational competitiveness was under the main theme called *Increased Intellectual Capital*. Under this, two sub-themes were formed. The first one being *Staff Performance* and the second being *Corporate Image*.

Personal Benefit

This has shaped how most Filipino workers viewed paternity leave as both intrinsic and extrinsic. Since they have to financially support their households, they cannot afford to leave work if there is no compensation. They also considered personal benefits in terms of security of tenure and their rights as employees.

Leave with Pay

Employees are motivated when their leave is supported with additional paid leave because missing a day could be a general loss for the breadwinner. It somehow motivated them extrinsically as it persuades them monetarily to go on leave supported by the company. All interviewees favored leaves with pay stating it was not only their right but also because it made them feel that they are supported by their respective companies.

When I went on leave, it made me feel happy that I had pay because not only pwede ako mag-alaga ng family ko but I can take care of my family and provide for them with the incentive that was given to me. (Participant 1)

Duration of Leave

Workers are also motivated by the perceived duration of leave. Two participants stated that they could use it for relaxation and organization of work or priorities instead of handling family affairs. However, the remaining six said that the number of leaves is extra support which made them focus more on taking care of their family and helping them take care of their own responsibilities at work by being more focused:

If I had a paternity leave of more than 7 days, I'd really help my wife take care of Karlo but what secures me is when I'm confident that my family is safe and I've done my part, I can take care of my work in peace. (Participant 3)

Security

The third sub-theme is security; it is the safety that people hold which intrinsically

motivates work because of the satisfaction in one of the hierarchies of needs. Five interviewees had almost the same view on security which people had a positive view on the safety and security met by the given company policy on paternity leave. However, three participants found that they do not feel it as security but more of putting “utang na loob” to the corporation.

In my perspective, I really feel safe knowing that my family is taken care of after I took care of the company too, it's more than just payback to my company that allowed me to go but I can do my work better knowing that if I take care of them (company), they will take care of me too. (Participant 5)

Utang Na Loob

The other interviewee who shared the perspective of using “utang na loob”, which means having the need to pay back the company for its kindness to the employees, also showed as a theme for them to work harder because of this allowance instead of seeing it as an entitlement:

Eh kasi ang feeling ko parang 7 days matagal na tapos matatagal ako ng extra pero may sahod, masarap siya oo at lahat pero sa kahuli-hulihan parang ang laki ng utang na loob ko sa kumpanya para mabalik ko yung kabaitan sa akin, kaya gagalingan at gaganahan ko lalo sa trabaho. (Participant 7)

Job Satisfaction

According to all eight workers, intrinsic motivation seems to be heavily affected by determinants on how happy or satisfied you are in your job. Several of the workers stated that they were motivated by the extra time given to them along with the autonomy and independence offered by the workplace for them to operate and focus on their responsibility. Further, it also highlighted their need for an organization to collect themselves and prepare things needed for work-life balance, especially work-related matters after settling family matters:

I have nothing but appreciation towards Globe. The workplace is fun, they treat me very well both as an employee and friend. Nung nanganak si Sofia, it moved me that Globe would help me to settle my things especially understand my situation first as long as I continue with my projects without me having to report in the office. There was a control, a loose control that allowed me to move freely too. (Participant 4)

Productivity

Majority of the interviewees expressed how their productivity is affected positively because of how they are able to organize themselves for work or how they are able to take up more work or responsibility:

It's easier to work because I feel extra productive. Like I could organize myself especially face whatever work I have in store for me from my boss. (Participant 1)

Responsibility

Five respondents stated that they felt more responsible with the work they have because

they feel good, meaning to say their well-being is high or cared for; they can produce better results. Others, however, saw that responsibility came with being able to handle more work given to them regardless of the situation:

As I said, I feel good. And because I feel good, I can do more, handle more and because I'm being listened to what I want, I don't mind doing what others want me to do, I think they deserve it. (Participant 1)

Organization

Three respondents stated another type of productivity more likely in organizing such as having a good clear thought and idea on how to proceed with work conflicts or responsibilities. It allows workers to compose themselves and prepare for tasks at hand:

If I had more leaves, I'd be able to fix or really compose myself fitting to help her and if there is time, I would really take the time to not just relax but prepare for my other responsibilities sa department ko. (Participant 4)

It was also seen that organization meant to other respondents in feeling good to have a well clear of thought because of satisfaction and properly taken care of well-being:

Yeah because, when I have a clear mind of thought; maybe it's the satisfaction or my very mental state because it gives that feeling like I feel valued. (Participant 2)

Loyalty

Trust in the corporation or the organization and its people and policies are one of the main factors that contribute to job satisfaction:

Loyal ako sa Coke, more than other companies out there I can see that the benefit I'd get here regardless of the extended paternity leave is better with the people I surround myself with especially the leaders that train me. (Participant 2)

Retention

If workers aren't considering vertical promotion, they have the idea of staying with the company instead of looking for outside opportunities, keeping the trained employees intact with the company. Loyalty has overlapped with retention because it lets workers have more of the initiative to stay:

If given another choice, siguro I'd stay here in this firm so that's assuming hindi ako kukuhain ng ibang agencies for a higher position but I'd rather use what I learned here because I think I have a possible future here. (Participant 8)

Gratitude

When workers are grateful for the opportunity to take an extended leave, happy with how they are or what they do, they are more motivated to return the favor for the company or give back to them by producing more profit:

More than thankful for the opportunity if I was actually given an extended leave compared to other companies. I'm more than happy with how things are especially in what I do and this makes me want to give back to the company however I can even if it means overtime or such. (Participant 3)

Satisfaction

In all workers, it showed that they would actually be more motivated if it satisfies three criterions for them: good relationship, rest and satisfied with the conditions of the work or workload such as not too much to do or not too easy also:

A nice and working relationship would be more than enough, parang bonus na lang yung rest for me but I think another thing that's notable is if the workload isn't too much, easy or too difficult, it would make me more satisfied because I feel I could trust this place and enjoy myself while doing so. (Participant 6)

Increased Intellectual Capital

Keeping people in the organization means an increase in intellectual capital or developing and retaining important relationships that make the company grow because of the employees' knowledge, skills and the like. It was found that it affects the organization's competitiveness and global trade positively through staff performance and corporate image.

Staff Performance

The first sub-theme would be staff performance. Workers would again perform better because they are cared for by the company which would entail that they generate more productivity, increase profit and generate fewer costs, reduce conflicts and the like what is essential for a more developed organization and a more competitive stance in the global market because of supported retainment in skills, knowledge, and loyalty to the company.

How people perform can be better because they are cared for. I can't imagine myself demanding as much when the company is giving almost everything I want. Also with how it makes us have fewer mistakes, making sure we work effectively as a team especially to make us successful as a department. (Participant 1)

Corporate Image

The last sub-theme is about the image of the corporation. If the company is seen having a work-life balance supportive setup or family-friendly values and policies, then people are

bound to have a positive image towards the corporation or business making it an advantage over competitors that they treat their people well as compared to sweatshops

If a corporation like Jollibee is viewed to be restrictive or manipulative, that would be a turn-off. People would rather look at clean images of companies that have positive or friendly policies. (Participant 3)

This research looked into the factors that affect paternity leave especially with its relationship in creating a competitive organization and improving global trade. The findings in the study are consistent with the hypothesis which suggested that paternity leave may need revisions in the duration of leave and pay to improve the motivation and increasing global trade as well as additional paternity leave may generate more positive results in making a competitive organization. This validates studies (Klinth and Fathering, 2008; O'Brien, 2009; O'Brien, Brandth and Kvande, 2007; Hein, 2005; Ahmad, 2007, Kamerman, 2003) that countries that promote longer days of duration of paternity leave with pay generated happier and satisfied individuals both in well-being and in work. This encouraged individuals to be more productive in work. Productive and loyal workers can result to a competitive organization that can compete in the local and global markets.

Conclusion

The study suggests that increasing the duration of paternity leave with pay motivates workers. This can lead to a competitive organization that can compete in the local and global markets. The respondents who were interviewed showed that leave with pay, duration of leaves and security motivated them to become more competent as an employee. This competence can lead to a competitive organization that can win in the local and global markets. Moreover, companies that value work-life balance or has family-friendly policies generate a more loyal and productive work. This workforce can lead to improved staff performance and company image.

Limitations and Areas for Future Research

This study focuses on paternity leave only rather than the relationship of paternity leave, maternity leave, solo parent leave, etc. on motivation. It was also limited to two independent variables that affected sustainability such as organizational competitiveness and global trade. Another limitation is that the study was conducted with few participants. Future studies can involve more respondents.

Conducting a longitudinal study would enhance this study. Future studies can include the various regions in the Philippines. This can yield insights on differences in job satisfaction, productivity or motivation and its effect on organizational competitiveness.

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Appendix

Appendix A Informed Consent Form

Good day! I would like to invite you to participate in a research study and your involvement will be voluntary therefore, the decision to participate is up to you. If you decide to participate in this research study, you will then be asked to fill up and sign this consent form then proceed to the interview proper. This interview will take 30-50 minutes of your time. All personal information contained in this interview will be held strictly confidential and will be used for the sole purpose of this research. Please feel free to ask questions to clarify any concerns you may have about the research.

Participant's Rights:

1. My participation in this study is voluntary. I may withdraw or discontinue from participating in this interview at any time. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation.
2. I am in full knowledge that all the personal information I have provided for this study will be held confidential and secure. No portion or information of my records in this study will be released without my consent.
3. I have read and understood the terms and conditions in this study. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Consent:

I voluntarily join your study and I clearly understand my rights as a participant.

Participant's Signature over

Printed Name

Date

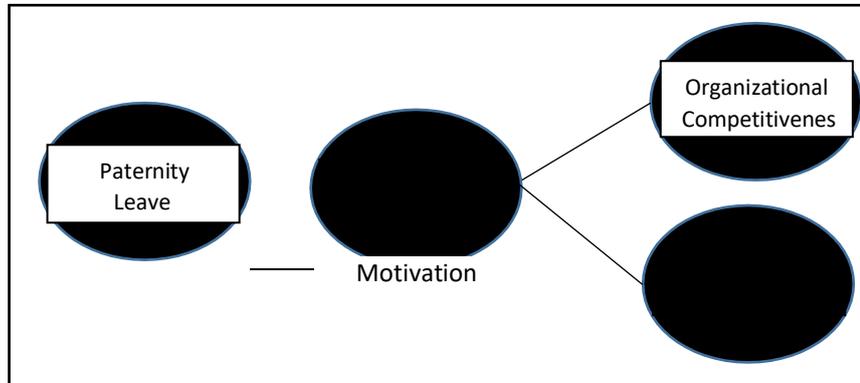
(Researcher Name)

Researcher/Interviewer

For further concerns and questions regarding this interview, you may contact the researcher through (insert email address).

Appendix B

Figure 1. Modified Conceptual Framework by Ryan and Deci (1987)



Appendix C

Figure 2: Master table of themes for Paternity Leave on Motivation

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