EXAMINING TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: DOES TEACHERS' EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION, TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND GENDER MATTER?

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' commitment towards their job is regarded as one of the key elements in building a quality education system of the country. In fact, teachers are the key players in the quality education delivery and nation building. So, this study examines the teachers' job commitment towards their organization. Basically, this quantitative study tried to answer two research questions: What is the level of organizational commitment of teachers in the higher secondary school of Bhutan?; and Are there differences in perception of teachers on their organizational commitment level based on gender, educational qualification and teaching experience in the higher secondary schools of Bhutan? The target population was the school teachers in different higher secondary schools of Bhutan of the academic year 2018. A self-administered survey questionnaire was distributed to 305 higher secondary school teachers selected through a simple random sampling method. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS. The descriptive results revealed that the overall teachers' level on the organizational commitment is high with statistical differences in teachers' level on their organizational commitment based on gender. The Independent t-test analysis indicated that females showed little higher commitment level towards their organization than males. However, it was found that there was no relationship between teacher's educational qualification, teaching experience and organizational commitment of teachers.

Keywords: Teachers' organizational commitment; teachers' gender; educational qualification; teaching experience; higher secondary school

1. INTRODUCTION

The studies on the organizational commitment theory were well proposed in the "Side Bet Theory" of Howard Becker in 1960 where the author explains that "commitments come into being when a person by making a 'Side Bet' which "associate unrelated curiosity with an unfailing line of action" (Becker, 1960). After "Side Bet theory", O'Reilley and Chatman (1986) theory on "affective dependency" further added new

knowledge in this field. According to this theory a person gets associated with an organization depending on his or her "physiological connection" such as his or her attitude and interest. The person's strong acceptance, participation and loyalty were the key components of organizational commitments. The final development in the theory of organizational commitment came in 1991 popularly regarded as "multi-dimensional theory" proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991). The theory basically explains that employees experience three simultaneous mindsets: "affective", "normative", and "continuous" commitments (Meyer and Allen, 1991) towards their organization.

Voluminous definitions were forwarded by different researchers and authors. For instance, Sani (2013) puts organizational commitment as an "employee's desire to belong and willingness to make extra effort for the benefit of the organization". Similarly, organizational commitment was explained as the loyalty, attachment, mental contract, voluntary cooperation and working attitude of employees to its organization to accomplish the organizational goals (Bello, 2012; Robbins, 2001; Wallace, 1995; Wu et al., 2006,). The school is one of the most important educational organizations where teachers play a pivotal role in the functioning and success of organization. In short, teacher's commitment towards their organization is very crucial in advancement of the education system. Reyes and Pounder (1990) underscored that teachers' commitment is determined by the organizational goals and values rather than their personal benefit which ultimately motivate them to continue serving the organization. In other words, teachers' organizational commitment can be referred to as a teacher's sense of belongingness towards a school and putting effort to achieve the organizational goals.

Numerous studies on the teachers' gender, teaching experience, education qualification and teachers organizational commitment has been widely explored in many countries as teachers' commitment was found as a very important factor behind student's performance and motivation in the school (Reyes, 1990). However, the studies on this aspect were inconclusive due to many other factors associated with teachers' commitment. A study conducted by Ingersoll et al. (1997) found that female teachers showed higher commitment level towards teaching profession than male teachers while the findings of Schwartz (1989) contradicts their findings. In addition to teachers' gender, volumes of researches were also carried out on teachers' educational qualification and teaching experience. These two factors were also viewed as a crucial factor in enhancing teachers' job commitment. However, mixed arguments were provided in this field. Some findings revealed that teachers' organizational commitment is greatly predicted by teachers' experience and educational qualification (Adeyemi, 2010) while some authors found that teachers' teaching experience and educational qualification does not influence teachers' job commitment (Rivkin et al., 2005).

2. HISTORY OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN BHUTAN

Although modern education was introduced in Bhutan by 1960s but most of the teachers in the school were expatriates who were better qualified in teaching than locals. In 1968 the Teacher Training Institute (TTI) was established in Samtse to produce national teachers for the primary schools (Dorji, 2005). To further add to the number of Bhutanese teachers, Teacher institute known as the Teacher Training Center (TTC) and Demonstration School (DS) was started in Paro. The center was established to specialize teachers for teaching lower primary level. However, teachers from India were teaching at secondary school level. Starting from mid 1970s to 1980s, few Bhutanese graduates from university colleges joined the teaching profession which increased the number of Bhutanese teachers in secondary schools. In 1983, the Teacher Training Institute (TTI) was upgraded to National Institute of Education (NIE) offering Bachelor of Education Degree further adding to number of Bhutanese teachers teaching in secondary school (Dorji, 2005). In 2003 with upgradation of National Institute of Education to Samtse College of Education and establishment of College of Education at Paro, these two educational colleges became the main training and learning centers of teachers in Bhutan offering Distance Education, Bachelor and Master's Degree in Education.

Teachers and the teaching profession have been considered as one of driving force behind the quality of education in Bhutan. So, whenever something goes wrong in the system of education, teachers' commitment towards their profession is questioned. In addition, teaching has rarely been a popular job among young Bhutanese people and many Bhutanese feel that many join teaching profession by chance than by choice (Dorji, 2005). In addition, a study conducted by the Royal Education Council revealed the poor standard of teachers on their content knowledge and pedagogical skills which has further questioned the competency of teachers in the country (Ministry of Education, 2014). In addition, teacher attrition and retention have become a major issue in Bhutan which further accelerated the debate on teachers' commitment towards their profession. Therefore, understandings on how teachers perceive their job commitment towards their organization are very important.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of organizational commitment of teachers in the higher secondary schools of Bhutan as perceived by teachers?

2. Are there significant relationships between teachers' organizational commitment and teachers' gender, educational qualification and teaching experience as perceived by the higher secondary school teachers in Bhutan?

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Although, numerous theories on organizational commitment were referred, this study centers on the work of Meyer and Allen (1991) who forwarded the "three dimensional organization commitment theory" comprising of "affective", "continuance", and "normative" commitment". The first dimension was "affective/emotional commitment" which generally referred to as "emotional feelings, identification, and involvement with the organization" (Meyer and Allen, 1997). This first dimension explains the employees' trust and approval of organizational purpose and values. Meyer and Allen (1997) explained that employee's "affective commitment towards their organization could positively be influenced by occupational skills and practices such organizational reward, fairness and supervisor's assistants". In summary, affective commitment basically outlines the emotional and psychological attachment of employees to their organization. The second dimension is "normative commitment" which is defined as a "sentiment of compulsion" to persist employment with that particular organization. Further Meyer and Allen (1997) explained employees with "normative commitment" feel that they should stay with organization as it is proper thing to do. In summary, employees stay with the organization based on ethical reasonings. The third dimension is "continuance commitment" which is associated with profit and lost status of employees. Generally, employees are concerned with the risk involved in leaving the organization such as retirement benefits, relationship with other employees, etc. Meyer and Allen (1991; 1997) put this as a 'non-transferable investment' of employees.

In conclusion, the theory explains the employee's emotional attachment, personal core beliefs for their organization as well as the pros and cons associated to leaving their parent organization as the key elements associated with their organizational commitment.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was quantitative as it analyzed the numerical data collected to clarify the phenomena (Aliaga and Gunderson, 2002). Furthermore, this approach allows the researcher to "establish, confirm or validate relationship that could contribute towards proposed theory" (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001). The population of the study was the 2005 higher secondary school teachers of Bhutan (Ministry of Education, 2018). The sample sizes of 305 teachers were selected using simple random sampling method by referring Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size table.

The data analysis was operated through SPSS program. Descriptive analysis was employed to find out the teachers' level of organizational commitment and One Way Annova, as well as Independent t-tests were used for analyzing the relationship between teachers' level of organizational commitment, teachers' gender, teaching experience and educational qualification. The data was collected using a self-administered survey questionnaire using 5-point rating scales, (Best and Kahn, 1998). Section A consisted of demographic data and section B consisted of 14 items questionnaire on organizational commitment adapted from the "organizational commitment scale" items prepared by Meyer and Allen in 1991. The reliability test for the questionnaire was checked by 30 teachers that were not part of the sample study. The Cronbach's α (alpha) reliability coefficient was shown at .836 for organizational commitment which indicated greater internal consistency of items (Variables) in the scale. This was done before the actual survey and the reliability coefficient was found.

6. RESULT ANALYSIS

The findings of the study were discussed under following headings;

6.1 Teachers perception level on the organizational commitment in the higher secondary schools of Bhutan

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis on the Teacher's Level of Organizational Commitment (N=305)

Items on Organizational Commitment	M	SD	Level of commitment
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization	3.14	1.15	Moderate
I enjoy to discuss about my organization with people outside it	3.51	1.06	High
I feel organization problem is my problem	3.76	.989	High
My values and organization values are similar	3.69	.894	High
This organization is the best possible organization to work	3.24	1.09	Moderate
I feel strong sense of belonging to my organization	3.87	.971	High
This organization inspires me in my job performance	3.40	1.10	Moderate
It would be very hard to leave this organization	3.35	1.13	Moderate
It would be too costly to leave this organization	3.27	1.01	Moderate
I feel I have few options to leave this organization	3.21	1.07	Moderate
I believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization	4.24	.951	High
I feel jumping from one organization to another organization is unethical	3.03	1.29	Moderate
I would accept any type of job assignment to work in this organization	3.58	1.03	High
I am willing to put great deal of effort to help this organization	4.03	.862	High
Overall Organizational Commitment Level	**3.52**	**.625**	**High**

The descriptive analysis in Table 1 revealed that overall teachers' organizational commitment level were shown high with mean = 3.52 and SD = .625. Of 14 survey questionnaire items, the respondents level of commitment were shown high for 7 items including discussing about their organization with people (3.51), organization problem is my problem (3.76), my values are similar to organization values (3.69), strong sense of belongingness their organization (3.87), their belief on showing loyalty to his or her organization (4.24), accepting any type of job assignment to work in this organization (3.58) and willing to put their effort to help their organization (4.03). The rest seven items were shown at moderate level as indicated in the descriptive analysis table above.

6.2 Relationship between teachers' organizational commitment and teachers' gender, educational qualification and teaching experience as perceived by the higher secondary school teachers in Bhutan

Table 2: Comparison on the Teacher's Level of Organizational Commitment by Gender (N=305)

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig[2-tailed]
Male	149	3.45	.664	-2.017	.045
Female	156	3.59	.578		

The independent *t*-test result in Table 2 showed a significant difference between teachers' organizational commitment level of males and females, t (303) = -2.017 and *p*=.045. The result signifies that female teachers (mean = 3.59) showed higher commitment level towards their job than male teachers (mean = 3.45) significant level at .045.

Table 3: Comparison on the Teacher's Level of Organizational Commitment by Educational Qualification (N=305)

Educational Qualification	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig[2-tailed]
Master	74	3.55	.670	2.378	.094
PDGE	140	3.59	.599		
B.Ed	91	3.41	.617		

Statistically not significant at .05 level

From the result in Table 3 generated through a one-way ANOVA, it is confirmed that there is no relationship between level of teachers' organizational commitment and educational qualification. The data shows the *p* value at .094 with f = 2.378 which is higher than .05.

Table 4: Comparison on the Teacher's Level of Organizational Commitment by Teacher's Teaching Experience (N=305)

Educational Qualification	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig[2-tailed]
0-5 years	85	3.55	.645		
6-10 years	112	3.42	.605		
11-15 years	72	3.59	.631	1.549	.188
16-25 years	35	3.65	.606		
Above 25 years	1	3.86	-		

* Statistically not significant at 0.05 level

Comparison on the teacher's organizational commitment level and teachers' teaching experience in Table 4 indicated no significant differences was found on the teacher's organizational commitment level by teacher's teaching experience as perceived by the teachers. The data showed the *p* value at .188 with f=1.549.

7. DISCUSSION

The study concluded that overall teachers' organizational commitment level was found at high level. The study supports the work of Shamma (2018) and Mousa and Ruth (2016) who found out similar findings in their study on the teachers' organizational commitment. Furthermore, a Bhutanese based study conducted by Gyeltshen and Beri (2019) in the selected secondary schools of Samdrup Jongkhar and Trashigang found high level of organizational commitment among the teachers.

The study also confirmed that there is significant relationship between teacher's genders and organizational commitment as perceived by the teachers. However, mean of females (3.59) was found higher than male (3.45) with significant level less than .005. From the results it can be concluded that female teachers showed higher commitment level to their organization than males. This result was consistent with the work of Mathieu and Zajac (1990) who in their study found that women showed more commitment to their organization than men and contradicts the works of Moses et al. (2016) and Shamma (2018).

On the other hand, there was no significant relationship between teachers' level of organizational commitment, teachers' educational qualification and teaching experience. The finding was consistent with the earlier findings of Mathieu and Zajac (1990). In addition, there might be other factors like "teachers' professional development, professional policy and interpersonal communication" (Siburian, 2013), "school leadership" (Adams, 1992) and "teachers' morale" (Jones et al., 2000) that may have influence on the teachers' commitment towards their organization.

8. CONCLUSION

The relationship between teachers' gender, teaching experience, educational qualification and organizational commitment were explored vastly in many other countries but very little is known in this field especially in Bhutanese school context. From this quantitative research investigation, it is concluded that the teachers in higher secondary schools in Bhutan showed high level of organizational commitment. Furthermore, significance difference was found between teachers' gender and organizational commitment with female more committed towards their organization. However, no significant relationship was found between teachers' teaching experience, educational qualification and organizational commitment.

9. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following limitations should be considered:

Since the data was gathered only from the higher secondary school teachers and therefore, it cannot be generalized to the rest of the school levels. It would be more appropriate if primary school teachers, lower secondary and middle secondary teachers are also included to acquire more reliable findings.

Another limitation was that the study was quantitative in nature. A mixed method study may allow more in-depth study of teachers' organizational commitment in the schools of Bhutan. The study could be explored on other factors influencing teachers' organizational commitment related to Bhutanese situational context.

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