RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPALS LEADERSHIP PRACTICES, TEACHERS PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITIES & ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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Abstract

This study attempts to identify the relationship between perception of teachers on leadership practices of their principals, teacher's professional communities and teachers' organizational commitment in private secondary schools in National Capital Region in India. To identify the relationship between three variables, survey is conducted in thirty reputed private schools in National Capital Region of India. A survey instrument is developed using different theoretical perspectives from instructional leadership, transformational leadership combined as leadership for learning, teachers professional learning communities and organizational commitment in schools. This survey instrument is used as rating scale comprising different constructs of all the three variables. The instrument is subjected to pilot testing for reliability analysis and validity on a sample of at hundred teachers. The instrument is administered on 450 teachers from 30 selected schools and data obtained is subjected to analysis using SPSS. The findings reveal that teachers have perceived leadership for learning practices of their principals at moderate level. Teachers have also perceived their organizational commitment and teachers' professional community at

moderate level. It is also found that all of the three variables under study are moderately correlated with each other.

Keywords

Leadership for Learning, Teachers' Professional Community, Organizational Commitment, Principals

1. Introduction

Schools in India are facing utmost challenges from the rapid changes that are burdened on them as per so called educational reforms or transformation by Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India and Government in respective states. The failure of Government in providing quality education in Public Schools is highly discussed by scholars like (Sharma, 2016) and this failure has led to mushrooming of new private schools in the last five years. In spite of such massive privatization of school education in India, a general opinion of parents tends to be negative about schools.

> *"And this transition means that we need quality teachers. My heart bleeds when I hear a teacher say she chose the profession as her family said it would be a good way to keep her busy, spend some time with cherubic children within the security of a school, and earn some money along the way. Or that they couldn't get selected to, or handle the rigours of corporate jobs, becoming teachers. Teaching needs to stop being the back-up or easy option, as it definitely is not! Teaching is the only profession that creates all other professions in the world. The future of a country is directly related to its teachers, as they are ones literally building the future, Podar, 2017."(Kindly refer https://yourstory.com/2017/04/private-education)*

1.1 Teachers' Organizational Commitment

As evidenced from the above stated quote, most of the teachers tend to be teachers by chance than teachers by choice. However, it is also evident that a considerable number of private schools are rated highly by the stakeholders for assuring quality in their education (eduvidya.com). Raman, Ling, and Khalid (2015) have noted that the teachers' initiatives in schools directly influence a wide range of student outcomes. Hence they affirm that the teacher's commitment serves as a key indicator for improving and sustaining student outcomes and school effectiveness. Scholars like (Gupta & Gehlawat, 2013; Noordin, Rashid, Ghani, Rasimah, and Darus, 2010; Shirzadi, Shad, Nasiri, Abdi, and Khani, 2013) argue that high commitments towards school

motivate teachers to perform their teaching activities willingly. Besides these, teacher commitment towards their school, empirically is one of the dominant factors in ensuring teacher job performance, job satisfaction, retention, increased visibility in schools and teacher capability to innovate new teaching practices and future success in education sectors (Chan, Lau, Nie, Lim, & Hogan, 2008; Nagar, 2012). Additionally, a supportive and collaborative culture must be established to ensure commitment levels of teachers through high quality of teaching in schools to enhance authentic and productive learning (Lee & Ahmad, 2009). It clearly confirms that teachers' commitment in schools is key factor for school effectiveness and improvement.

From the perspectives of school system attention has been paid to teacher organizational commitment (TOC) that is proved to be the root of all types of teacher commitment. Organizational commitment comprises of multidimensional perspectives (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Allen & Meyer, 1997; Meyer & Allen, 2004; Nesje, 2016; Somech & Bogler, 2002) though it consists of trust, acceptance and willingness of employees toward the institution (Bogler & Nir, 2012; Kurland & Hasson, 2015). Organizational commitment, furthermore enhances the employee's involvement physical, emotional and mental to ensure positive impact for the organization. Teacher organizational commitment serves as an imperative factor in maintaining and sustaining organization and employee's association (Bond, 2015). Moreover, organizational commitment influences employees' responsibilities, accountability, job satisfaction and, responsibility, motivation and sense of ownership for their organization during their tenure with organization. (Brookfield, 2015; Yalabik, Van, Kinnie, and Swart, 2015; Yousaf, Yang, & Sanders, 2015). The organizational commitment of teachers relates positively with teachers' tenure and visibility, develops organizational citizenship behavior and enhances success within organizational (Nagar, 2012). Since schools are social organizations, teacher organizational commitment is a crucial factor for higher quality of teaching practices which enhances student learning (Hulpia, Devos and Van K 2011) and direct effects student outcomes and sustains school effectiveness (Murphy & Torff, 2016; Sun and Leithwood,2015). Furthermore, organizational commitment is associated with obligation based, cost based and desire-based, imperatives for three dimensions, continuance, normative and affective commitment of employees (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Since Teachers' organizational commitment has direct effect on student outcomes and school effectiveness, there is need to study the organizational commitment of teachers in

reputed private schools in NCR to support the existing international literature with the Indian study which is hidden.

1.2 Leadership for Learning-Facts and Effects

The success of any school is derivative of its leadership. School principals have mandate to lead the schools. A systematic literature review conducted by Sharma, Barnett, Chua, Mei and Maloud (2018) has confirmed that leadership of school principals significantly influences a wide range of school outcomes, directly or in directly. The principals as school leaders are accountable for developing teacher organizational commitment in schools and their leadership directly influence the level of organizational commitment of teachers (Ling & Ibrahim, 2013). Furthermore, conducive working environment created by principal's leadership motivates the teachers in increasing their commitments and enhancing their tenure with organization (Shirzadi et al., 2013). Effective leaders have the ability to influence people in enhancing performances which are required for the organization (Northouse, 2013). However, principals' instructional leadership practices significantly correlate with teacher organizational commitment (TOC) for enhancing school effectiveness. It's on school principals to ensure job satisfaction of teachers through his or her effective leadership among teachers (Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012). Instructional leaders contribute to the best practices of teaching and learning practices in schools (Bush, 2014; Bush & Glover, 2016; Gumus & Akcaoglu, 2013; Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Robinson, 2007) which has influence on teacher organizational commitment (Premavathy, 2010). In particular, principals lead the instructional processes, like monitoring student learning, coordinating and supervising instruction, and supporting teacher development (Hallinger, 2011; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). However, Sharma (2016) argues that it's not only instructional leadership practices of school principal but also transformational leadership that influences school outcomes in one and other way. Sharma (2016) and Sharma et.al (2018) further argue mere influence of instructional leadership on school outcomes as distorted picture of leadership and influence and advocates the inclusion of both instructional and transformational leadership as leadership for learning. Hence in this study leadership for learning is supported by two influential leadership practices, instructional leadership by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) and Transformational leadership by Leithwood (1994). Leithwood's transformational model consists of eight dimensions: Building a widely-shared vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals,

strengthening school culture, building collaborative structures, providing intellectual stimulation, modelling behavior and creating high performance expectations. Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) conceptual model has clarified three dimensions: defining the school mission, managing the instructional program and developing a positive school learning climate. As mentioned earlier that instructional leadership and transformational leadership subsumes the concept of leadership for learning (Sharma, 2016). As mentioned earlier, the success and effectiveness of any school depends on its principal, it is essential to study leadership of principals in these high performing schools.

1.3 Teacher Professional Community

Teaching quality in schools is ensured by teachers who contribute to teacher accountability, student concerns, and school achievement. Since schools are ongoing communities, every member in the community must collaborate with colleagues in the leading learning within schools as teacher professional community (TPC) (Lee, Louis, and Anderson, S. 2012). As argued by (Li, Hallinger, and Ko, 2016) the practices in TPC contributes to teachers with regular feedback on student learning and can enhance teaching quality through a shared and reflective conversation. Role of school principals as instructional coach through their effective leadership practices enhance teacher professional community practices in an effective way (Hallinger, Lee, & Ko, 2016). Since the teachers are key elements of professional communities, it's need of an hour to find out their perceptions regarding their professional community. Scholars like Lee, Louis, and Anderson (2012), advocate that teacher professional community practice prepares teachers as lifelong learners, which in turn enriches the commitment of teachers towards their organization. These scholars further argue that TPC has a positive and significant effect on TOC (Lee et al., 2012). Hence, the support of committed teachers held a strong collegial base and brings stability to school system (Collie, Shapka, Perry, & Martin, 2015). Furthermore, the leadership practices of school principals also enhance teacher organizational commitment indirectly and mediated by teacher professional community (TPC) practices within schools (Hallinger, Lee, & Ko, 2014; Hausman & Goldring, 2014). Therefore, TPC practices in schools has addressed a severe influence for formulating education system in Western context but in Asian countries like Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia, it has been addressed as emerging concept (Walker, Lee, & Bryant, 2014). In context of Indian school leadership for learning, teachers' professional communities and

teachers' organizational commitment are never studied, hence this article becomes basis to start up the research and scholarship. Therefor this study intends to answer the following questions

1. How do teachers perceive leadership for learning of principals, teachers' organizational commitment and teachers' professional communities in private schools in National Capital Region in India?
2. Is there any significant correlation between leadership for learning of principals, teachers' organizational commitment and teachers' professional communities in private schools in National Capital Region in India?

2. Methodology of Study

This study employed qualitative survey designed to study nature of relationship between principals' leadership for learning, teachers' organizational commitment and teachers' professional communities in private schools in National Capital Region in India. In this section the sample for data collection, the research instrument and process of data analysis is discussed.

2.1 Sample

This study is focused on reputed schools in National Capital Region, a list of top 60 private schools (20 from each city) from three major cities Delhi, Gurgaon and Noida (Twin cities Noida and Greater Noida) are identified based on their reputation as surveyed by various agencies. 10 schools are randomly selected from each city, total being 30 schools. Teachers working in these schools are the population for this study. It is found that each school have approximately 50 to 60 teachers, total being 1500 to 1800 teachers. The minimum sample size as specified by Krejice and Morgan (1970) is 306 to 317 respectively. In order to avoid issues of probable outliers, incomplete or biased responses, the sample for this study is 450 (15 teachers from each school). The teachers are randomly selected from each school.

2.2 Data Collection

This study utilized three different frameworks to design survey instrument. The first framework being instructional leadership framework by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) and transformational leadership (Leithwood, 1994). The commonalities of two frameworks were integrated to construct termed as Leadership for learning scale. The scale comprises of three dimensions School vision and goals, Supervision and evaluation of instruction and People

development. This leadership of learning scale consists of 16 items anchored over 11-point scale 0 indicating strongly disagree to 10 indicating strongly agree. This leadership for learning scale is validated using the default estimation method of Maximum Likelihood in Mplus version7.The scale shows adequate model fit (optimum fit chi –square $\chi2$= 1512.445, degrees of freedom (df)=425, p<0.01, root mean square of approximation RAMSEA =0.049, comparative fit index CFI=0.938, Tucker Lewis Index=0.955, standardized root mean square residual RMR=0.037. The reliabilities Cronbach alpha for three factors range from 0.89 to 0.91. These results indicate that the dimensions comprising leadership for learning scale meets the acceptable standards of internal consistency and validity. The scales comprising of three dimensions of Teachers' organizational commitment is adapted from (Meyer & Allen, 1991) and its internal consistence reliability ranges from 0.78 to 0.85 and single dimension construct of Teacher professional community with internal consistence reliability of 0.88 is adapted from (Hallinger, Lee, & Ko, 2014).

2.3 Data Analysis

The instrument comprising of three constructs leadership for learning scale, teachers' organization commitment and teachers' professional community is administered on 450 teachers as discussed in sample earlier. The data obtained is analyzed using SPSS version 23. Mean and SD are obtained to examine perception of teachers on three variables. Pearson's' R is calculated to establish relationship between three variables. The perception of teachers on three variables are measured as labels in form of equal interval calculated as below

Formula for equal interval = (Largest value - smallest value)/No of Level = (10 - 0)/3=3.33

Therefore, the interpreting level for this study is as follows:

a. 0 to 3.33 as Low

b. 3.34 to 6.67 as Medium

c. 6.68 to 10.00 as High

3. Results

Descriptive statistics explaining the level of principals' leadership for learning, teacher's organizational commitment and teachers' professional community is displayed in Table 1. From Table 1 it is evident that teachers have perceived the leadership for learning of principals at Medium level (Mean=6.01; SD=0.321). It is also evident from Table 1 that teachers perceive their

organizational commitment at moderate level (Mean=6.55; SD=1.315) and Teachers' professional community at moderate level (Mean =6.28; SD=1.034).

Table 1: *Mean and SD for Leadership for Learning, Teachers' Organizational Commitment and Teachers' Professional Community*

S.No.	Variable	Mean	SD	Level
1.	Leadership for Learning	6.01	0.321	Moderate
	School Vision and Goal	6.09	0.715	Moderate
	Supervision & Evaluation	6.20	1.25	Moderate
	People Development	5.85	1.711	Moderate
2	Teachers' Organizational Commitment	6.55	1.315	Moderate
3	Teachers' Professional Community	6.28	1.034	Moderate

The relationship between Leadership for learning, Teachers' organizational commitment and Teachers' professional community is explored in Table 2. From Table 2 it is evident that all of the three variables are significantly correlated to each other. Leadership for learning is moderately correlated with Teachers' Organizational Commitment (R=.62) and Teachers' Professional Community (R=.58). Similarly, Teachers' organizational commitment is moderately correlated with Teachers' Professional Community (R=.59).

Table 2: *Correlation between Leadership for learning, Teachers' Organizational Commitment and Teachers' Professional Community*

	Teachers' Organizational Commitment	Teachers' Professional Community
Leadership for Learning	.62[**]	.58[**]
Teachers' Professional Community	.59[**]	

P<.001

4. Discussion & Conclusion

The results of this study revealed that teachers' perception of principals' leadership for learning is somewhat positive and at moderate level. Similarly, teachers' perception on their organizational commitment and teachers' professional communities in their school is at moderate level. It's very alarming that none of the school leaders in reputed private schools in National Capital Region in India exhibit high level of leadership skills or demonstrate leadership practices.

The reason underlying such attribute is the principals in these schools are selected on basis of their work experience as teachers and none of them have anytime undergone any professional learning on leadership. Similarly, teachers in none of the schools found to have high level of commitment or working as professional community. Since principals are not developed to be leader hence they could not contribute towards teachers' commitment or teachers' professional communities. This is highly evidenced through moderate correlation between three variables. The findings of this study are highly contradictory to the findings of previous researchers like (Hallinger, Lee, & Ko, 2014). The limitations of results obtained by such quantitative analysis is rightly stated by Sharma et.al (2018). To conduct more reliable studies where there is little evidence of leadership profile of leaders, the further studies need to be conducted in exploratory manner using mixed method approach and 360 degree evaluations. Also to contribute toward more empirical evidence the influence of leadership for learning needs to be verified on Teacher Organizational Commitment and Teacher Professional Community.

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