

Influence of Teacher Empowerment on teachers' Professional Commitment in S.S.C, C.B.S.E and I.C.S.E board of Mumbai

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Abstract

Quality of a school education depends upon teachers. Teachers play an important role in the school, and it is through their involvement and commitment that the organisation becomes competitive. A teacher is committed to his/her profession if and only if they are empowered i.e. teachers are given the freedom with respect to all the activities of a school. Thus, Empowerment is sum as a process of growth and development which enables teachers to optimise not only the teaching learning situation but also their own potential. There are mainly three types of educational board in Mumbai city viz S.S.C, C.B.S.E and I.C.S.E. The present study focuses on to study how far teachers are empowered in relation to their professional commitment. The data were collected through a tool whose reliability and validity were ascertained and then administered on a sample of 570 secondary school teachers of Mumbai. Therefore this research paper is a summary of the findings of relationship between teacher empowerment and professional Commitment (PC).

Introduction

Teacher Empowerment

We learn democracy by living it. They (students) are not going to experience democracy unless teachers are committed to democracy. Democracy is not frill. It is what education is all about.

Empowerment is summation of a process of growth and development which enables teachers to optimise not only the teaching learning situation but also their own potential. The term teacher empowerment invokes different ideas, emotions and concerns in the people. Bolin (1989 in Terry undated) confirms that it refers to the right of teachers to be involved because of they are professionals. Singh's (2003) views is that empowerment is to allow the participation and give equal power in decision making, especially to those who have been kept out. It means giving power to the teachers to decide what will be taught. Empowerment has to do with things such as sharing of power right to participate, the right to articulate oneself and be heard, equality and accommodation. Vavres (1989:2-4) describes empowerment as the overcoming of workplace alienation and gaining the freedom to participate more fully in public affairs as a teachers.

Glenn (1990) suggested that the real power behind the construct of teacher empowerment is authority derived from teacher command of the subject matter and essential skills necessary to successfully teach students. Empowered teachers believe they have the skills and knowledge to act on a situation and improve it (Short, 1994). The foundation for teacher empowerment consists of enabling experiences, provided within the organization that fosters autonomy, choice, control, and responsibility, that allows teachers to display expertise that support and strengthen school functioning (Short, 1994).

Melinyisa (1990) alleges that true empowerment leads to growth in professionalism as teachers become involved with and take responsibility for decision taken by them. The relevant environment must there be conducive to teacher participation. In this connection Browder (Browder and Singer 1999:3) says that empowerment in its broader sense includes any activity which enhances the professional status of the teachers. This implies that the self image of teachers must be promoted as well as the prestige they enjoy, that they will be more subject proficient and that they will be able to work within a team context. Empowered teachers Are highly

Competent and work in schools that provide opportunities to show competence (Short, 1998). A school that values empowerment of teachers and students will be better at finding and developing resources than a school that does not support or hold an empowerment philosophy (Short, 1998). There is strong support for the view of Stone (1995) when she stated that empowerment grants individual the ability to direct his or her own life. Kavina and Tanaka (1991:115) in turn accerlate great professionalization and calling it, most striking as the power to exercise ones craft. In the present study the researcher is studying how far the teachers of S.S.C, C.B.S.E and I.C.S.E board are empowered.

Professional Commitment

Professional commitment refers to teacher's loyalty to his/her profession, his/her passion for teaching/learning and his/her willingness to exert effort to uphold the values and goals of the profession and their compliance to be member of the profession. In other words Professional commitment is an outlook of a person in relation to his/her profession and self-motivation to work on the profession chosen. Professional commitment has been identified as one of the most critical factors for the future success of education and schools (Huberman, 1993). Professional commitment is closely connected to teachers' work performance and their ability to innovate and to integrate new ideas into their own practice, absenteeism, staff turnover, as well as having an important influence on students' achievement in, and attitudes toward school (Firestone, 1996; Graham, 1996; Louis, 1998; Nias, 1981; Tsui & Cheng, 1999).

The concept of professional commitment signifies an attitude reflecting the strength of the bound between an employee and an organization. Most of the authors define this concept as "the strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in an organization (Morrow, 1993, apud Charles-

Pauvers, Wang, 1999, p.1) or the "psychological attachment felt by an individual within an organization and reflecting the degree to which an individual has interiorized and adopted the organisation's characteristics or perspective" (Oreilly, Chatman, 1986).

The level of teachers' commitment is considered to be as a key factor in the success of current educational reform agenda as it heavily influences teachers' willingness to engage in cooperative, reflective and critical practice. A teacher with high level of professional commitment is one who is job centered and who tends to view organizational demands as pressure not a nuisance to avoid them. Professionals exhibits the following tendencies-

1. Experience occupational socialization that instills high standard of performance in the chose fields.
2. See organizational authority as non-rational when there is pressure to act in ways that are not professionally acceptable.
3. Are highly ideological about work values.
4. Tend to feel that their skills are not fully utilized in organization. Self esteem may be threatened when the professional feels that he/she does not have the opportunity to do those things for which he/she has been trained.
5. Refuse to play the organizational status game except as it reflects their worth relative to others in the organization.
6. Seek recognition from other professionals outside the organization.

In the present study the researcher is trying to study which board teachers'- S.S.C, C.B.S.E or I.C.S.E are more professionally committed to their organization.

Operational Definition:

Teacher Empowerment: - The term is conceptually defined as the ongoing capacity of teachers to act on their own to achieve greater control over their lives. It emphasizes that the theme of participation and self help. It implies continuous development involving dynamic changes it thought and action. It entails particular methods, actions, activities and interactions

which lead to empowerment. It recognizes existing competencies and self esteem builds on teacher and collective strength, commitment to a particular cause, opportunities for teacher's autonomy choice responsibilities and participation. In this study Teacher Empowerment is operationalized in terms of

Decision Making: Decision making refers to teachers' participation in critical decisions that directly affect their work, involving issues related to budgets, teacher selection, scheduling, and curriculum. To be effective, teachers' participation in decision-making must be genuine, and the teachers need to be confident that their decisions actually impact real outcomes.

Status: Status refers to the professional respect and admiration that the teachers perceive that they earn from colleagues. Respect is also granted for the knowledge and expertise that the teachers demonstrate, resulting in support of their actions from others.

Professional Growth: Professional growth refers to the teachers' perception that the school provides them opportunities to grow and develop professionally, to continue to learn, and to expand their skills during their work in school.

Self-efficacy: Self-efficacy refers to the teachers' perception that they are equipped with the skills and ability to help students learn, and are competent to develop curricula for students. The feeling of mastery, in both knowledge and practice, that results in accomplishing desired outcomes is critical in the teachers' sense of self efficacy

Autonomy: Autonomy refers to the teachers' feeling that they have control over various aspects of their working life, including scheduling, curriculum development, selection of textbooks and planning instruction. This type of control enables teachers to feel free to make decisions related to their educational milieu.

Impact: Impact refers to the teachers' perception that they can affect and influence school life.

Professional Commitment: - It is the nature and extent of a teacher's desire to remain a member of a particular profession and extent his / her willingness to exert efforts on behalf of the profession.

Job Involvement: It refers to the teacher's personal attachment to their subject and teaching/learning process.

Job Satisfaction: It refers to teacher's perception that they are growing with respect to all the aspects related to their profession.

Professional Growth: It refers to teachers' perception that they are growing in their profession and adding to their existing knowledge.

Status: It refers to the teacher's perception that they are sound in their subject and they earn respect for the power of their knowledge.

Aim of the study

To Study the Influence of Teacher Empowerment on teacher's professional Commitment of S.S.C, C.B.S.E and I.C.S.E boards of Mumbai.

Objective of the Study

To study the relationship of teacher empowerment scores and professional commitment scores of teachers of S.S.C, C.B.S.E and I.C.S.E board.

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship of teacher empowerment scores and professional commitment scores of S.S.C, C.B.S.E and I.C.S.E board.

Method

Design of the study

The method used by the researcher in this study will be the descriptive method of causal-comparative and correlation type.

Sample

The sample comprised of 570 secondary school teachers from Mumbai of S.S.C, C.B.S.E and I.C.S.E boards.

Research instrument

Professional Commitment Scale prepared by Kalpana D Patil (2000)

The reliability co-efficient of stability of professional commitment over time is 0.73 and internal consistency reliability is 0.77.

Teacher Empowerment Scale (TES) prepared by Short and Rienhart (1992)

The dimensions and their internal consistency estimates (coefficient alphas) are: involvement in decision-making (0.89); opportunities for professional growth(0.83); status (0.86); self-efficacy (0.84); autonomy (0.81); and impact (0.82). The overall scale has reliability of 0.94.

Results

TABLE 1

RELEVANT STATISTICS FOR THE 'r' BETWEEN T.E AND P.C OF TEACHERS' OF S.S.C, C.B.S.E AND I.C.S.E BOARD

Boards	Obtained 'r'	Df	Tabulated 'r' at 0.05 level	Tabulated 'r' at 0.01 level	L.o.s.
S.S.C	0.36	188	0.138	0.181	0.01
C.B.S.E	0.49	188	0.138	0.181	0.01
I.C.S.E	0.53	188	0.138	0.181	0.01
TOTAL	0.41	568	0.088	0.115	0.01

From the above data it is seen that the obtained 'r' for S.S.C, C.B.S.E, I.C.S.E board teachers' and total sample of teachers' are more than the tabulated 'r' at 0.01 level. Hence 'r' between Teacher Empowerment and Professional Commitment scores of teacher of S.S.C, C.B.S.E, I.C.S.E board and total sample of teachers' is significant.

Conclusion:-

The 'r' between Teacher Empowerment and Professional Commitment scores of S.S.C board teachers' is 0.36, which is positive, low and significant at 0.01 level. Thus the null hypothesis 1(a) is rejected.

The 'r' between Teacher Empowerment and Professional Commitment scores of C.B.S.E board teachers' is 0.49, which is positive, moderate and significant at 0.01 level. Thus the null hypothesis 1(b) is rejected.

The 'r' between Teacher Empowerment and Professional Commitment scores of I.C.S.E board teachers' is 0.53, which is positive, moderate and significant. Thus the null hypothesis 1(c) is rejected.

Discussion:- Teacher empowerment is the opportunity and confidence to act upon ones' ideas and to influence the way one perform in ones' profession. It was found that empowerment leads to increased professional commitment which is seen in C.B.S.E and I.C.S.E board. Melynsa (1990) alleges that true empowerment leads to growth in professionalism as teachers become involved with and take responsibility for decision taken by them. Teachers' of C.B.S.E and I.C.S.E board perceive that their school provides them with opportunities to grow and develop, to learn continuously, and to expand their own skills through the work life of the school, as well as teachers' beliefs that they can control certain aspects of their work life.

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Books

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