

Relationship Between Organizational Trusts Posed by the Principal and the Teachers' Professional Commitment in Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract

The present study aims to explore the relationship between organizational trust posed by the principal and the teachers' professional commitment in higher education institutions in the province of Punjab. The given phenomenon is related to the teachers' professional commitment, as when the college teachers enjoy the trust of their institutional principals, their professional commitment towards their job is increased. The study follows the positivistic paradigm and quantitative approach through survey method and correlational design. The two variables of the study are organizational trust and professional commitment. The population of the study consists of public-sector college teachers from the province of Punjab, Pakistan. Through a multistage sampling technique, data were collected from 803 public college teachers. The data was collected through two self-developed questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis were applied to answer the study's research questions. The descriptive results reflect that the occurrence of trust in teachers by the principals hardly reaches a moderate level, while the commitment to teaching and teamwork is at a low level. At the same time, the correlation between overall trust and commitment to teaching, teamwork and students' welfare is significantly positive but moderate. Conclusively, the given levels of trust and particularly of commitment are critically below expectations, while the strength of correlation between the variables is also not very promising. Such results demand immediate initiatives to address the poor professional commitment and enhance the perception of trust among college teachers for the resurgence of the instructional system.

Keywords: Relationship, Organizational, Trust, Professional, Commitment

Introduction

The educational system in Pakistan comprises three tiers, i.e. elementary, secondary and graduate studies. Where the in-between level is higher secondary or intermediate and Bachelor qualifications in the national education qualification framework (Amir et al., 2022). The given level of education is served somewhat in Pakistan in higher secondary schools, but the majority of students are provided education in intermediate, degree or graduate colleges.

Keeping in this perspective, there is a continuous decline in public sector schools and parallel, the colleges of the public sector are not competitors of the private colleges in attracting students admission (Mughal et al., 2019) after they complete the secondary level. The reported recession in

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colleges is frequently discussed in the education circles in Pakistan, where the management of the colleges is supposed to need to improve in their leadership role, particularly in the academic settings where soft skills are essential. Along with management, college teachers are also under criticism that they are losing their professional commitment. Hence, the quality and effective teaching-learning environment is not very conducive in public sector colleges.

In today's businesses, soft skills are seen as more helpful in meeting the expanding needs of both internal and external stakeholders (Chin, 2021). The comparable case is with the instructive establishments in Pakistan, which need to have expert school personnel as well as administration with the end goal of successful and proficient working. Such methodologies are viewed as more pertinent in adding to the advancement of scholarly associations. According to Lewicka et al. (2017) it is consistent with the widespread belief that dedicated employees perform better, are more loyal, and contribute to the organization's long-term objectives. Additionally, the 'social trade hypothesis', which makes sense of the way of behaving of individuals in associations, mirrors the way that in an association, significant activities like trust, support, common sharing and ability and so on, of its administrators and staff are compensated with accomplishing the objectives and targets they have set for themselves. According to Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) nearly every employee's performance correlates with their level of satisfaction with the organization as a whole—both in terms of the nature, climate, and culture of the organization as well as the trust they acquire—and with their perception of an increasing sense of charge within the organization. Teachers play a crucial role in an educational setting, so the environment must be conducive to their optimal performance. The expected climate relies upon different related factors, such as the trust of educators, which can prompt collaboration between people, gatherings, and associations (Fard & Karimi, 2015). The developing and influential associations seek new answers for further development support between people and gatherings and to have wanted results and accomplish objectives. However, for hierarchical connections, the directors and representatives of associations ought to think about the significance of trust, advancement and their part in trust for the framework (Fitzroy, 2007). Hierarchical trust is advanced as an essential necessity of the association, social union and vote-based system associations. Today, trust is a significant construction in different types of boards (Horn-Nord et al., 2014). The interpersonal trust and the institutional trust are two types of organizational trust (Joo et al., 2022).

According to Vakola et al. (2011) competence, performance, and the ability to solve problems in an environment that is not particularly supportive are all components of organizational trust, which is essential to the success of organizations. According to Sheik-Mohamed et al. (2012), the system is bolstered by factors such as commitment, job satisfaction, and the strength of the relationship, in addition to the degree of trust and its contribution to the organization. In a similar vein, a focused analysis takes into account the infrastructure, climate, curriculum, and learning resources that influence teachers' performance.

They considered the above background of the prevailing management and teaching-learning conditions in HEIs, i.e., colleges functioning in the Public sector. The researcher delimited the scope of the study to two critical variables: organizational trust and professional commitment. Therefore, the study was planned to find out the relationship between organizational trust and teachers' professional commitment at the college level.

Statement of the Problem

The background of the study established that organizational climate needs various factors to have a conducive working climate. Among those, the critical factors are assumed to be interrelated, i.e.,

principals' trust that they possess in their teachers and the commitment that teachers have to their instructional responsibilities. However, teachers are generally vocal that the institutional principals most minors possess trust in them. Hence, their professional commitment, which plays a significant role in the success of the institutions, is probably influenced by a lack of trust. Such assumed settings in educational institutions have far-reaching repercussions on the system. Therefore, the present study was planned to find out the current level of trust posed by the educational principals in teachers. Moreover, investigating the level of teachers' professional commitment is probably the consequence of organizational trust by assessing the relationship between the given variables.

Research Questions of the Study

The following are the research questions to address the objectives of the study:

1. What is the level of trust that college teachers perceive to have in their competence and credibility when sharing information from the principals of the colleges?
2. What is the perceived level of professional commitment that college teachers have to teach, teamwork, and student welfare?
3. What is the relationship between organizational trust posed by the principal and the teachers' professional commitment in higher education institutions?

Review of Literature

The word "trust" is considered a fundamental component in schools. The examination of this significant component is somewhat restricted. According to a few studies, teachers, administrators, and organizational functions are all affected by trust. Additionally, it differentiates between inefficient and effective educational establishments (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). According to Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001), trust makes educational establishments better environments for students' learning, teaching, and administration. The school results are straightforwardly connected with trust.

Trust is depicted as an assumption for a dynamic result that one individual can establish on the assessed demonstration of the elective party in a correspondence considered by unclarity. Scientists from various departments have examined the origins, nature, and effects of trust. However, conviction has been marked by a fluctuation of strategies; the dubiousness and confusion of the idea among risk and confidence are at the beginning of vulnerability in gatherings. An association's profile is addressed as an authoritative conviction inside associations. Organizational culture is outlined by processes like undertaking, setting, management, policy, comprehension, and socialization (Tierney, 2008).

A principal is responsible for a variety of tasks, such as developing a shared vision for the institution and supervising the vision. He is also responsible for fostering a conducive environment for learning, engaging all college community members, managing the institution, ensuring the efficacy of the teachers, and performing all these tasks with fairness and integrity (Young, 2020). Principals influence student learning both directly and indirectly. Although they are the ones who are held answerable for student learning on their premises, the most reliable research results suggest that their impact on students' achievement is essentially indirect (Hong et al., 2020). College principals who build trust are able to build an environment to inspire teachers to higher levels of struggle and accomplishment (Rudo & Dimock, 2017).

On the contrary, a lack of trust between teachers and principals results in each of them seeking to minimize their vulnerability and risk, thus adopting self-protective attitudes. The consequences

can lead to disengagement that eventually weakens student learning (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Few other variables explored by the researchers are as crucial for student achievement as the predictive power of trust. According to Grego-Planer (2019), commitment is an emotional connection that an individual has with an organization in terms of its objectives and values without expecting a reward. A similar definition was given by Celep (2000), who defined commitment as an individual's attitudes towards the values and goals of an organization beyond the formal and standard expectations of the organization.

The concept of commitment is discussed in various fields of knowledge (Altun 2017). He considers an educator's commitment to be a passion that is central to effective teaching and learning. Mart (2013) suggests that passionate teachers are recognized by their commitment to their students' success. In Mart's view, an educator's commitment is to devote oneself, physically and spiritually, to teaching and learning tasks. In other words, a committed educator is a passionate, dedicated teacher full of enthusiasm.

In a study "investigating the relationship between trust, contrast and organizational belonging considering the moderate effect of organizational commitment," Khorshid and Yazdani (2012) observed that the expectation of personnel to the institute and contrasting indicators within the organization have a constructive and substantial impact on worker trust. Moreover, among the different aspects of organizational commitment, employees' emotional commitment to the organization, their trusting relationship with the organization, their association with the organization, and standards of organizational duality positively and significantly regulate employee-organizational relationships.

There is a substantial and constructive connection between interactive trust and organizational assurance in the study on the impacts of organizational commitment and interpersonal trust (Bakiev, 2013). Tit concluded that relational confidence among workers creates an environment of confidence, which leads to significant levels of obligation and enhanced enactment.

Faculty's commitment to the institution is based on the adoption of the institution's goals and values. Variables that determine the level of teachers' commitment to the institution are determined by variables such as interaction with other teachers, relationship with students, the quality of the work, and a harmonious working climate with administration (Celep, 2000). Harfitt (2018) states that committed teachers adhere to the institutional goals, work in collaboration and cooperation with other teachers and seek out techniques to promote the school as well as the teaching profession. Administrative implementation of the school encourages teachers' commitment.

The teacher is considered the fundamental component of the learning structure in the institute. The character of teachers is critical in altering educational contribution to guarantee that there is only alteration or growth in excellence in schools with modification and enhancement in the worth of teachers. A commitment is a psychosomatic association between a person and his task constructed on a demonstrative reply to the exertion. An individual with a developed work obligation obviously recognizes their work and has a constructive outlook regarding it (Riyadh et al., 2020).

Student respect and achievement for teachers increases engagement in teaching: the better you become as a teacher, the more rewarding your task will be. It is also noticed that the students pay more respect to such committed teachers regarding to their duties and profession. It explained that students respect the commitment of teachers as compared to their attitude and their results. They are even facing complex and challenging days in class. Only in this way can the teacher show self-confidence and display an optimistic and passionate approach in class. Empowering the students is another quality of teachers (Riyadh et al., 2020).

Managers have faith that workers undoubtedly inspire each other to express themselves. Nevertheless, they accept recognized approaches for dealing with employee objections. Indeed, the components of organizational silence, management's attitude towards silence, and supervisor's attitude towards stillness, announcement chances, and workers' silent manners clarify the position of this organizational sensation amongst workers (Vakola et al., 2011).

Organizational trust and teacher commitment have significant relations in order to keep organizational performance at a high level and to get anticipated results in organizations. Teachers' commitment and organizational trust are the most essential forces for organizational success. The trust between the employees and the management in any organization is vital (Callaway, 2007). The manager's leadership is considered to be important in relation to employees' trust. Specifically, the behaviour and the roles of the manager affect the trust of employees in the organization (Yeh, 2007). The mutual trust of the employees and the management results in communication and great success within the organization (Callaway, 2007). Ertosun and Ascı (2021) discovered that the transformational behaviour of leadership affects organizational citizenship behaviour where the employees have trust in leaders. On the basis of their findings, they emphasized that transformational leadership results in better performance than expected. Korkmaz (2008) had a similar observation about the influence of the transformational leadership of the principals on the trust and compliant atmosphere within the schools.

The trust situation in organizations draws a substantial amount of research in Turkey. Men et al. (2022) discovered the need for sufficient trust and differences in perceptions among managers and officers. Özer et al. (2006) found a medium level of trust in high schools. Bee and Tosunoglu (2011) found that honesty, openness, loyalty, and consistency influence trust in subordinates which is influenced by loyalty, honesty, competence fairness, and consistency. The leadership conducts the principals' influence and decides many variables within the schools. One crucial variable is the perception of trust among employees. With the improvement in the leadership behaviours of the principals, the trust perception level of the teachers gets better. While the leadership behaviour of the principals was the primary focus of the research, the perception of trust was studied in three dimensions. "Trust in colleagues", "trust in students and their parents", and "Trust in principal".

Research is carried out on organizational and professional commitment, loyalty, and academic research productivity at a large Midwestern University by the researchers (Bieńkowska, 2012). They discovered that loyalty was not related to productivity, and its relation with professional commitment offered no clarification of unique variance in research output over the significant impact of professional commitment. The researchers with the highest professional commitment had a higher research yield. Maheshwari (2004) researched secondary school teachers' professional commitment. She discovered that the gender of the teachers had been a predictor of professional commitment. Female teachers demonstrated more commitment than their male colleagues. Samart (2003) studied professional commitment teachers at the primary school level and its relation to working circumstances and certain personal elements. Gender, salary, qualification and working conditions were the significant predictors of professional commitment, with the working environment emerging as the most significant predictor, followed by gender, salary and qualification.

Research Methodology

To explore the theorized relationship of two variables, i.e., 'organizational trust' and professional commitment was explored to find evidence through a positivistic paradigm, and quantitative approach through survey method and correlational design. The study is co-relational where two

aspects were determined, as whether statistical relationship exists or not and if it exists then with what degree of that relationship existed (Gay et al., 2012). The rationale behind correlation is that the researcher found through literature review that the two variables are better to be studied through co relation rather than causation. Furthermore, each of the two variables of the study were operationally defined as organizational trust, i.e., principals' trust in teachers' competence, credibility and sharing information. Teachers' professional commitment was operationally defined as their commitment to institutional goals, teamwork, teaching and students' welfare etc. Two different scale were developed to collect the data for this study. First scale was developed to measure the level of organization trust in the teachers and the second scale was developed to explore teachers' professional commitment. Following procedure was followed to proceed the study. All teachers of Govt. colleges of province Punjab were the target population of this study while all teachers working in Govt. colleges of three divisions were the accessible population. Multistage sampling technique was used to select the sample for this study. At first stage three divisions (Lahore, Rawalpindi and Gujranwala) were selected conveniently. Then in second stage, sample of 50% of the total 352 accessible colleges i.e., 176 colleges were taken from three divisions i.e., Lahore, Gujranwala and Rawalpindi. At the next stage, 5 teachers from 176 colleges were selected for data collection. So, total sample of study was 803 teachers.

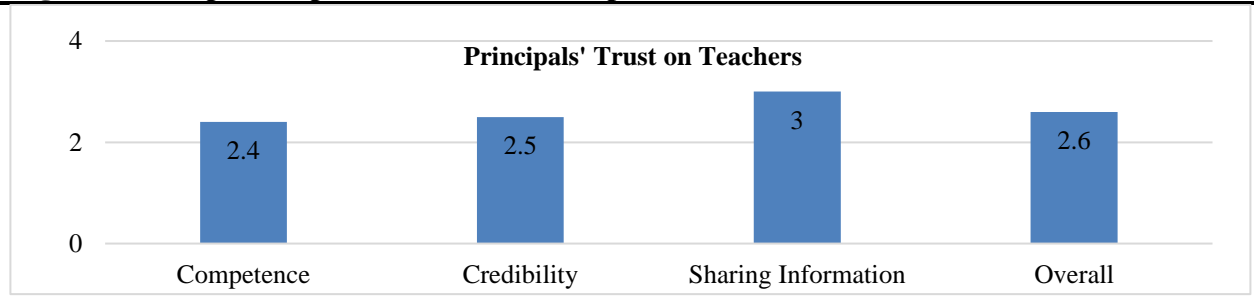
Data collected through both the scales were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics i.e., mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of organizational trust and the level of professional commitment of teachers. Furthermore, inferential statistics i.e., Pearson product-moment correlation was used to find out the relationship between organizational trust and professional commitment of teachers.

Analysis of the Data and Results

Table 1: Results Factor wise & Overall Principals' Trust on Teachers

| Sub scales | N | Mean | SD |
|---------------------|-----|------|-----|
| Competence | 803 | 2.37 | .69 |
| Credibility | | 2.52 | .63 |
| Sharing Information | | 2.95 | .74 |
| Trust Overall | | 2.6 | .54 |

The data given in the table 1 about the descriptive values on the trust scale, where mean scores on competence is 2.4, with SD .69, and 2.5, SD .63, 3.0, SD .74 and 2.6, .54, on credibility, sharing information, and trust respectively. Further for easier and better understanding the data results is presented in the graphical form in the following.

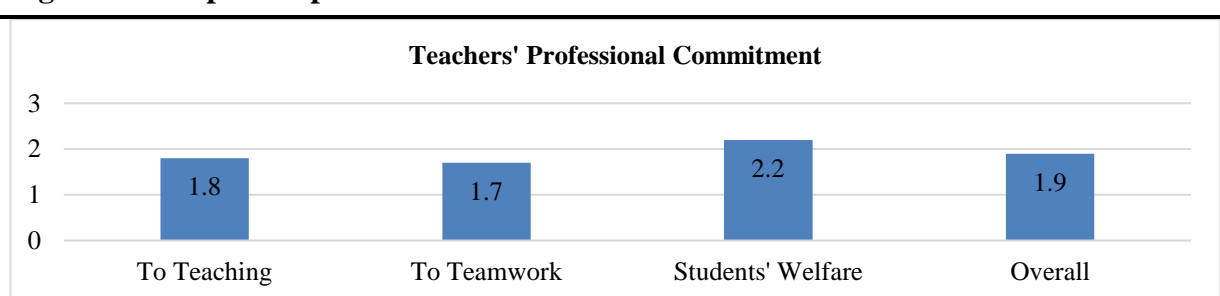
Figure 1: Graphic Representation of Principals' Trust on Teachers

Keeping in view the research question about the levels on different factors of the organizational trust, figure 1 shows that principals' trust on teacher competence ($M=2.4$) and credibility ($M=2.5$) is low while their trust in sharing information ($M=3.0$) and overall trust ($M=2.6$) is moderate.

Table 2: Descriptive of Data Results on Teachers' Professional commitment

| Sub scales | N | Mean | SD |
|---------------------------------|-----|------|-----|
| Commitment to teaching | 803 | 1.83 | .72 |
| Commitment to teamwork | | 1.70 | .57 |
| Commitment to Students' welfare | | 2.17 | .75 |
| Trust Overall | | 1.86 | .59 |

The data given in the table 4.5 about the descriptive values on the professional commitment scale, where mean scores on commitment to teaching is 1.83, with SD .72, and 1.70, SD .57, 2.17, SD .75 and 1.86, .59, to teamwork, to students' welfare and overall respectively. Further for easier and better understanding the following data results are presented in the graphical form.

Figure 2: Graphic Representation of Teachers Professional Commitment

Keeping in view the research question about the levels on different factors of the professional commitment, figure 2, shows that teachers' professional commitment on different factors i.e., commitment to teaching ($M=1.8$) and to teamwork ($M=1.7$) is very low while their commitment to students' welfare ($M=2.2$) and overall professional commitment ($M=1.9$) is also low.

Table 3: Correlation between Trust Total Scale and Professional Commitment Factors

| | | Commitment to Teaching | Commitment to Teamwork | Commitment to Student Welfare | Professional Commitment Overall |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Trust total scale | Pearson Correlation | .430** | .384** | .368** | .388** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | .002 | .004 | .002 |
| | N | 61 | 61 | 61 | 61 |

**p <.01, *p<.05

Table 3 shows the correlation between principals' trust in teachers and teachers' commitment factors having an interaction period of 1 to 5 years. There is a significant positive correlation between principals' trust in teachers and teachers' commitment to teaching ($r=0.430$, significant=.001), commitment to teamwork ($r=0.384$, significant=.002), commitment to students' welfare ($r=0.368$, significant=.004), and commitment total scale ($r=0.388$, significant=.002). However, the relationship is at a moderate level for all the values.

Discussion

The results show that the principals have a low level of trust in teachers, particularly with time; hence, as Bryk and Schneider (2002) reported, when teachers and principals do not trust each other, the resultant disengagement consequently diminishes students' learning. The overall trust level posed by the principals is evident to be moderate, which is critical for educational institutions where soft skills matter a lot for effective and efficient management.

As far as the teachers' professional commitment is concerned, the level of professional commitment overall is low. In contrast, all three factors, like commitment to teaching, teamwork and students' welfare, are shallow, particularly in commitment to teaching and teamwork. It is reported by Khorsheed and Yazdani (2012) that organizations, particularly the employees' emotional commitment and trusting relationship, positively strengthen the association between the workers and the work association.

The results of the factor-wise correlation between the principal's trust in teachers and teacher's commitment reflect that the head's trust in the teacher's competence is low but supportive to influencing teacher's teaching commitment, their passion for teamwork and urge for students' welfare as well as professional commitment. However, there is evidence (Goddard et al., 2007) that trust makes educational institutions better places to learn, teachers to teach and administrators to manage. The study revealed a positive relationship between trust and the achievement of school outcomes.

There are specific correlations that are negative but insignificant between heads' trust and teachers' teaching commitment. At the same time, Rudo and Dimock (2017) are of the view that college leaders who develop bonds of trust with staff create the conditions that inspire teachers to move to higher levels of effect on students' learning and their academic achievement. Similar results were reported by Altinkurt and Karakose (2009) that approximately 50% of working teachers were of the view that college principals were intolerant and unfair in their management.

Conclusion

1. Having a low level of trust in their teachers' competence and credibility reflects a weak working relationship between leaders and followers in college settings to achieve institutional goals.

However, they pose overall moderate trust, i.e., somewhat better, particularly for sharing information with the teachers.

2. The organizational culture regarding trust in institutions could be better. Hence, the organizational climate is similar and least supportive of good working relationships between heads and staff at educational institutions.
3. They reported teachers' low-level professional commitment, which is alarming. Furthermore, such poor professional commitment is the reason for the absence of 'will of work' and 'lack of initiatives' and, consequently, rare professional growth and development among educational institution personnel.
4. The significant positive correlation between principals' trust in teachers' professional competence and college teachers' professional commitment supports the idea that the upward increase in the existing principals' poor trust in teachers' pedagogical competence might have a more significant influence on the college teachers' professional approach.
5. There is a significant correlation coefficient between principals' trust in teachers' credibility and their commitment to teaching, teamwork, and students' welfare. The credibility factor contributes moderately to the prior two factors but poorly to students' welfare. Such weak relationships between teachers must be revisited in order for them to be credible and to change students' personalities.

Recommendations

1. A low level of principals' trust in teachers' competence and credibility requires that the higher education system focus on enhancing teachers' professional knowledge and ethics through continuous professional seminars and training.
2. The low level of teachers' professional commitment is critically important to address through the selection of teachers who have teaching as their first choice of job to ensure intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, incentives, appreciation, and social recognition might be supportive of enhancing their commitment to teaching.
3. The decreasing correlation strength between principals' trust in teachers' professional commitments needs to maintain teaching passion and loyalty with the organization by providing them with an attractive and conducive environment.

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