

Commitment to School and Students

Çağrı Tuğrul Mart

Ishik University, Erbil, Iraq

Email: tugrulbey@hotmail.com

Abstract

Teaching necessitates passion, dedication, and commitment. Teachers, critical factors of any education system, play an important role in promoting education by enhancing the abilities of students through their work in schools. Commitment is highly related to teachers' work performance. Teacher commitment deeply contributes to future of students and schools. Committed teachers make a difference to the success of the school and the learning of the students.

Keywords: Commitment, teacher, school, students

Introduction

Teachers are all aware of the role of commitment in learning. Commitment is defined by Buchanan (as cited in Salancik, 1977, p.2) as "an additive function related to issues: organizational identification, job involvement, and organizational loyalty." Commitment is a key factor that influences teachers' work and student performance in schools. Commitment is teachers' psychological attachment to the teaching profession (Coladarci, 1992). Teachers with high levels of commitment work harder, are emotionally attached to their schools, and make more effort to carry out the goals of teaching. As Hanson puts it (1955, p. 143) "commitment must thus be looked upon both as a precaution and as a prescription". Teacher commitment includes commitment to (Crosswell, Elliott, 2004)

- 1- The school or organization
- 2- Students
- 3- Career continuance
- 4- Professional knowledge base
- 5- The teaching profession

This study focuses on teachers' commitment to their school and students.

Commitment to school

Teaching is a complex and demanding career that requires intense dedication (Carbonneau, 2008). Commitment is defined as a high level of attachment to an organization (Crosswell, 2006). Commitment, by Kanter's (1974) definition, is the process through which people become willing to give their loyalty and energy to a particular social system. Teacher commitment is the

emotional bond between the teacher and the school. Commitment refers to teachers' motivation to work. Commitment is "one's attitude, including affect, belief, and behavioral intention toward his work" (Cohen, 2003, p.26). Commitment is regarded as the strength of an individual's involvement in an organization (Mowday et al. 1979). Teacher commitment and engagement has been identified as one of the most critical factors in the success and future of education (Huberman, 1993; Nias, 1981). Similarly, Crosswell (2006) is of the opinion that teacher commitment is one of the major professional characteristics that influence an educator's success.

Mowday et al. (1979) define commitment to school as teachers' belief and acceptance of the goals and values of the school; teachers' efforts for adopting those goals and values, and their strong desire to keep up involvement in the school.

The adoption of the goals and values of the school constitutes the basis for teachers' commitment to school. Variables that determine the level of teachers' commitment to school (Celep, 2000); interaction between teachers, relationship between teacher and student, the quality of the work being done by teachers and a compatible working environment between teacher and school administration. Ebmeier and Nicklaus (1999) state that teachers who are committed to the goals of the school, work collaboratively and cooperatively with other teachers in the school to seek ways to promote school and teaching profession. Administrative implementation of the school promotes commitment of teachers.

Commitment results from the job satisfaction (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988). High level of job satisfaction will influence teachers' commitment. The attitudes of committed teachers are (Celep, 2000): they are proud of the school in which they work, the school inspires enthusiasm in their work, and they deeply care for the future of the school.

Commitment to the institution in Education manifests itself in identifying with the school, feeling like part of the school, and loyalty to the school (Glickman, 1993). Teachers play a crucial role in promoting school. It should be noted that commitment level of teachers to their profession, students, and school increases when they achieve something through their efforts. Commitment is the emotional reaction towards education, therefore, commitment is the investment of teachers in their profession (Tyree, 1996; Woods, 1981). Oberholster and Taylor (1999) point out that teachers with low levels of commitment are less loyal to the organization,

There is sufficient research evidence argue that institutional commitment is associated with behaviors that advance organizational efficiency (Mowday, 1982). A committed teacher has strong psychological ties to the school, students and knowledge of subject area, and committed teachers make a difference to the learning and the lives of the students.

Commitment to education requires three provisions: (presupposes) having faith in making a difference in education, students' expectations in learning, willingness of establishing an effective learning environment (Balay, 2000).

Education researchers list some characteristics of teachers for their organizations as (Balci,1993, p.56):

1. Teachers constantly should talk about developing teaching approaches
2. Teachers should continuously observe each other's performance, and evaluate their own performances through these observations.
3. Teachers should together supply education materials
4. Teachers should help each other with development of teaching approaches.

It is noteworthy that some factors influence the organizational commitment of teachers negatively. These factors include (as cited in Abdul Raheem, 2009, p.6) nonalignment of personal and organizational goals and values (Menzies, 1995), lack of communication and trust (Varona, 1991), high levels of interpersonal conflict (Booker, 1990), and imposing or withdrawing conflict resolution style on the part of principals (Hajzus, 1990). Good working conditions will increase teachers' commitment and will allow them to perform their job more properly.

Similarly; excessive non-teaching responsibilities, large classes, lack of job autonomy and discretion, sense of isolation from colleagues and supervisors, insufficient administrative support, and powerlessness regarding important decision making processes influence commitment of teachers in a negative way ((Coladarci, 1992, s. 327).

Commitment to students

Teacher commitment is highly related to teachers' work performance which has a significant influence on students' achievement. In any educational institution student is the most important element (Celep, 2001). A committed teacher always makes every effort to advance students' professional competence by providing them a quality learning environment. A committed teacher, through making effective contribution to the achievement of students, endeavors their students to be well-educated in their community. It should be noted that student achievement deeply depends on teacher commitment. Singh and Billinnsley (1998) stress that low level of teachers' commitment reduces students' achievement.

Motivation, which is one of the leading factors in educational achievement, can be easily maintained by commitment. As long as teachers sustain their personal commitment to teaching profession, through creating an effective learning environment, they can influence students' learning. In a healthy school environment, which is a vital factor to enhance students' achievement, students will be more motivated.

Conclusion

Teachers with high level of commitment will be more loyal to schools where they work; similarly, teachers with high level of commitment will contribute students' achievement effectively. Commitment is praiseworthy because it facilitates learning. If good working conditions are provided for committed teachers, effectiveness of the educational organization that will lead to positive consequences for the school and students will enhance.

References

- Abdul Raheem, M. (2009). The level of commitment and its relation to Students' Achievement as perceived by English Language teachers in Public Schools in Tulkarm District. Master Thesis.
- Balay, R. (2000). *Yönetici ve Öğretmenlerde Örgütsel Bağlılık*. Ankara: Nobel Yayıncılık.
- Balcı A., (2001), *Etkili Okul ve Okul Geliştirme*, 2.bs, Pegem A Yayıncılık, Ankara.
- Carbonneau, N., Robert J. V., Claude, F., & Frederick, G. (2008). The Role of Passion for Teaching in Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Outcomes. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 100(4), 977-987. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0012545>
- Celep, C. (2000). Teachers' Organizational Commitment In Educational Organizations. *Trakya University. Edirne, TURKEY. National Forum of Teacher Education Journal*, 1 (10E), (3). ERIC NO: ED452179.
- Cohen, A. (2003). *Multiple commitments in the workplace: An integrative approach*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Coladarci, T. (1992). Teachers' Sense of Efficacy and Commitment to Teaching. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 60 (4), 323-337
- Crosswell, L. & Elliott, B. (2004). Committed Teachers, Passionate Teachers: The Dimension of Passion Associated with Teacher Commitment and Engagement. [Proceedings] AARE Conference, Melbourne, Australia.
- Crosswell, L. (2006). *Understanding Teacher Commitment in Times of Change*. Doctoral Thesis.
- Ebmeier, H., & Nicklaus, J. (1999). The impact of peer and principle collaborative supervision on teachers' trust commitment, desire for collaboration, and efficacy. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 14(4), 351-369.
- Firestone, W. A., & Rosenblum, S. (1988). Building commitment in urban high schools. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 10, 285-299. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/01623737010004285>
- Glickman, C. (1993). *Renewing America's School: A Guide for School-based Action*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA
- Hanson, J.W. (1955). *The Role of Commitment in Learning*. *Educational Leadership*. 142-147.
- Huberman, M. (1993). *The Lives of Teachers* (J. Neufeld, Trans.). London: Cassell Villiers House
- Kanter., R.M. (1974). Commitment and Social Organization. In D. Field (Ed.), *Social Psychology for Sociologists* (pp. 126-146). London: Nelson.
- Oberholster, F. R. & Taylor V, J. W. (1999). *Spiritual Experience and Organizational Commitment of College Faculty*. Unpublished master's thesis, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Silang, Cavite, Philippines Vol. 2, No. 1, Pp. 57- 78.
- Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. W., & Steers, R. M. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 14, 224- 247.
- Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. W., & Steers, R. M. (1982). *Employee organisational linkages*. New York: Academic Press.
- Nias, J. (1981). 'Commitment' and Motivation in Primary School Teachers. *Educational Review*, 33(3), 181-190.
- Salancik, G. R. (1977). "Commitment and the control of organizational behavior and belief." In Staw, B. M., & Salancik, G. R. (Eds.). *New Directions in Organizational Behavior*. Chicago: St. Claire Press.
- Singh, K., & Billinnsley, B. S. (1998). Professional support and its effects on teachers' commitment. *Journal of Educational Research*, 91(4), 229-239.
- Tyree, A.K. (1996). Conceptualising and measuring commitment to high school teaching. *Journal of Educational Research*, 89(5), 295-304.
- Woods, P. (1981).

Strategies, commitment and identity: Making and breaking the teacher role. In L. Barton & S. Walker (Eds.), *Schools, teachers and teaching* (pp. 283-302). Barcombe, UK: Falmer Press.