

Teachers' Commitment and Students' Performance in English at a University in South Korea

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Abstract

This study attempted to determine how the teachers' level of commitment to job and commitment to organization affect the students' performance in English. The study hypothesized that teachers' commitment both to job and to organization do not affect the students' performance in English. The respondents to this study were foreign English teachers and their respective students. The descriptive research technique was applied in this study. Both the teachers' commitment to job and commitment to organization and the students' performance in English were treated using frequency counts and means. Regression analysis was used to determine the effects of teachers' commitment to students' performance. The weighted mean of the teacher-respondents' commitment to job and commitment to organization when interpreted indicate that they are committed to both job and organization. The average means of the students' performance in the areas of writing, listening and speaking are high. It was in speaking where the students had their best performance. It can be inferred from the results of the regression analyses that taken aggregately, commitment to job and commitment to organization are not predictors of the students' performance in writing, listening and speaking. However, the P value of commitment to job indicates that it can predict students' performance in speaking.

Keywords: Commitment to Job, Commitment to Organization, Listening, Speaking, Students' Performance, Writing

1. Introduction

Quality education is a hallmark of school effectiveness. The quality of education a school is capable of delivering bespeaks of its effectiveness as an educational institution and such is measured through the academic performance of its students.

There are many factors that may affect the performance of students, generally or in specific subject areas. According to Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder¹, these variables are inside and outside school, which includes characteristics, things or conditions related to school, teachers, environment, peers, family and students themselves.

Most significant among the aforementioned determinants of students' performance are characteristics attributed to teachers. There maybe many factors that

contribute to a student's academic performance but research suggests that among them teachers matter most². Such may not be considered surprising for the teachers are the ones directly carrying out academic programs. Heck³ wrote that academic performance does not depend largely in the efforts and perseverance of the students, rather on both the teaching-learning process and the effort showed by the teachers.

When it comes to students' performance, a teacher is estimated to have two to three times the impact of any other school factors, including services, facilities, and even leadership². This means that no matter how good are the services rendered by the school and no matter how modern are the equipment and facilities used if the teachers do not perform the way they ought to then the educational objectives of the school will not be met. Even

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when the school is supervised by the best educational leaders but the teachers fail to deliver their best then the goals of the school will be in jeopardy. The teachers, being at the forefront of the learning and teaching processes then need to be effective in the performance of their job. This entails not just possession of the required teaching competencies but also commitment.

The focal point of this study is teachers' commitment and how it affect students' performance.

Commitment is the key to better educational outcome. Huberman, as cited by Crosswell and Elliot, espoused that teacher commitment is one of the most critical factors, if not the most critical one, for the future success of education and school⁴ Crosswell and Elliott themselves were also cited by Mart. Teacher commitment involves commitment to the following: teaching profession, school or organization, students, career continuance and professional knowledge base⁵.

Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp⁶ hypothesized that effective teachers possess high level of organizational commitment. This implies correlation between effectiveness of teachers and organizational commitment. When teachers are committed to the organization they are effective in the performance of the job thus helping students perform better.

Ponnusamy⁷ added that teachers who are committed to their job would associate themselves with their school organization. This in turn would make them work towards the organizational goal and students' academic progress. When teachers are committed to their job and organization they will strive toward the improvement of the school and improving school means guiding the students to greater heights of academic achievement.

Of all the characteristics attributed to teachers, students identified commitment as one of the most important, if not the most important. Huberman⁸ explained that many times it was proven that better performance of students in their academic undertakings was a result not of the educational attainment and length of teaching experience of their teachers but of the unwavering commitment of the teachers to their profession.

In the locale of the study, the situation is such that the English teachers serving as respondents are foreigners and that their students are second-language learners. In taking on the task not only must the teachers be trained in the pedagogy of language learning but they must also learn to deal effectively with the challenges that cultural diversity brings. They will have to be concerned not just

with individual differences among students but also contend with the fact that these are students who grew up in a culture different from theirs. All these would require a great deal of commitment on the part of the teachers.

Teaching English to mix-ability non-native speakers of the language is a great challenge to English teachers. Raising the quality of the students' academic performance is the greater challenge. It is by no means an easy task. It would indeed test to the limit one's commitment to job. It is an equally daunting task to develop commitment to an organization whose cultural orientation and values are vastly different from theirs.

This study investigated how "teacher-related" factors called commitment to job and commitment to organization affect the performance of students in the subject area, English. The performance of the students was measured through their test scores in the subject, separately in the areas of writing, listening and speaking.

Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions:

- 1) What is the English teachers' level of commitment to job and organization?;
- 2) What is the students' level of achievement in English in terms of their scores in writing, listening and speaking?; and
- 3) Does the teachers' level of commitment to job and organization affect the students' performance in English?

Figure 1 shows the conceptual paradigm or model that was used in this study.

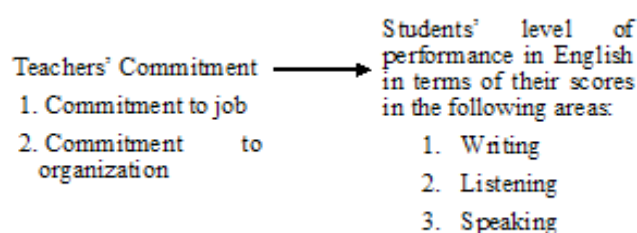


Figure 1. A conceptual model of the study.

The paradigm which is divided into two (2) parts, show that the study attempted to find out how teachers' commitment affect the students' performance in English separately in the areas of writing, listening and speaking. A lot of studies have proven that in measuring performance of students the most effective criterion that can be used are the test scores in the subject areas being studied.

The students' level of performance in English served as the dependent variables while the teachers' commitment to job and commitment to organization are used as independent variables. The effects of both teachers' commitment to job and commitment to organization to the students' performance in writing, listening and speaking were measured separately.

This study hypothesized that both commitment to job and commitment to organization do not affect the performance of students in the areas of writing, listening and speaking.

Accordingly, the following specific null hypotheses were formulated:

- 1) Commitment to job and commitment to organization do not predict students' performance in writing;
- 2) Commitment to job and commitment to organization do not predict students' performance in listening; and
- 3) Commitment to job and commitment to organization do not predict students' performance in speaking.

2. Methods and Techniques

The descriptive survey research technique was applied in this study. Fifteen (15) English teachers and 420 students served as respondents. The test scores of the students in English in the areas of writing, listening and speaking were included in the study.

The questionnaire used to gather data needed was adapted from an instrument developed by Barundia⁹ who conducted a similar study.

Data processing was done using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS).

The data gathered through the questionnaires on teachers' commitment to job and to organization were treated using frequency count and means. The teacher-respondents themselves evaluated their commitment to job and to organization following a 5-point scale defined below. Indicated opposite the scale is the corresponding interpretation.

Scale	Interpretation
5 - Strongly Agree	(Very Committed)
4 - Agree	(Committed)
3 - Undecided	(Moderately Committed)
2 - Disagree	(Uncommitted)
1 - Strongly Disagree	(Very Uncommitted)

The level of students' performance in English was determined through their scores in the writing, speaking and listening tests which were analyzed using mean. The scores in writing, listening and speaking were processed separately.

The effects of teachers' commitment to job and to organization on the students' performance in English was treated using regression analysis.

3. Result

3.1 Teachers' Level of Commitment to Job and Organization

As shown in Table 1, commitment to job received an aggregate mean of 4.00 which means that the teacher-respondents are committed to their job. Commitment to organization had a computed over-all mean of 3.80 which

Table 1. Teachers' level of commitment to job and organization

Teachers' Commitment	Overall Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Commitment to Job	4.0	Committed
Commitment to Organization	3.8	Committed
Total	3.9	Committed

indicates that the teachers are also committed to the organization.

With commitment to job (4.00) getting the higher computed mean compared to commitment to organization (3.80), it could be construed that the teacher-respondents are more committed to their job than to the organization. When aggregated the overall mean for Teacher Commitment is 3.9 with the interpretation "committed" which means that generally the English teachers are committed.

3.2 Students' Performance in English

Table 2 presents how the student's performed in the English tests. The computed mean indicates that the average score in writing is 7.245. The standard deviation of 1.85 implies that the students have scores that fall within the range of 5.40 and 9.1.

Table 2. Students' performance in the english tests

Test in English	Mean	Standard Deviation
Writing	7.245	1.85
Listening	8.43	1.79
Speaking	7.84	1.74

The computed mean and standard deviation in speaking are 7.84 and 1.74, respectively, which implies that the scores of the students in the said area ranges from 6.1 to 9.58. The average score is 7.84.

The computed mean indicates that the average score in listening is 8.43. The value of standard deviation is 1.79.

From the comparative examination of the average scores obtained by the students in the three areas it could be inferred that it is in the speaking where their performance was highest and the lowest was in writing.

3.3 Regression Analysis of Teachers' Level of Commitment on Student's Performance in Writing

Ho1: Commitment to Job and commitment to organization do not predict students' performance in writing.

Presented in Table 3 is the regression of teachers' commitment on students' performance in writing.

Thirty-six percent (36%) of the variations in writing scores is explained by its linear relationship with the independent variables. This is indicated by value of R Square which is .36. The students' performance in Listening can not be reliably predicted by variables that appeared in the regression since the P value of the F is not significant.

Table 3. Regression analysis of teachers' commitment on students' performance in writing

Variables	Beta	T	Sig.
Commitment to Job	-.062	-.220	.829
Commitment to Organization	-.179	-.633	.538
R Square = .36 F = .225 Sig of F = .802			

This study hypothesized that both commitment to Job and commitment to organization do not predict students' performance in writing.

The P value of t is .829 for commitment to job. For this predictor the null hypothesis is accepted meaning it can not serve as predictor of students' performance in writing. For commitment to organization the null hypothesis is also accepted. It's P value of t at .538, which is more .05, makes it not a predictor of students' performance in this area.

3.4 Regression Analysis of Teachers' Level of Commitment on Student's Performance in Listening

Ho2: Commitment to Job and commitment to organization do not predict students' performance in listening.

In Table 4 the regression analysis of teacher's commitment on students' performance in listening is displayed.

Table 4. Regression analysis of teachers' commitment on students' performance in listening

Variables	Beta	T	Sig.
Commitment to Job	.431	1.670	.121
Commitment to Organization	.117	.452	.660
R Square = .200 F = 1.496 Sig of F = .263			

The value of R square indicates that 20% of the variations in listening scores are explained by its linear relationship with the independent variables. The P values associated with F are not significant. This indicates that taken jointly, the predictors that appeared in the regression can not reliably predict the students' performance in listening.

This study hypothesized that both commitment to Job and commitment to organization do not predict students' performance in listening.

The P value of t is .121 for commitment to job and .660 for commitment to organization. Both are more than .05 thus the null hypothesis is accepted for both variables. This means that they are not predictors of students' performance in listening.

3.5 Regression Analysis of Teachers' Level of Commitment on Student's Performance in Writing

H03: Commitment to Job and commitment to organization do not predict students' performance in speaking.

Table 5 shows the regression analysis of teachers' commitment on students' performance in speaking.

Table 5. Regression analysis of teachers' commitment on students' performance in speaking

Variables	Beta	T	Sig.
Commitment to Job	-.532	-2.274	.042
Commitment to Organization	-.247	-.247	.331
R Square = .344 F = 3.143 Sig of F = .080			

The value of R square which is .344 indicates that 34% of the variations in speaking scores are explained by its linear relationship with the independent variables. The P values associated with F are not significant. This indicates that taken jointly, the predictors that appeared in the regression can not reliably predict the students' performance in listening.

This study hypothesized that both commitment to job and commitment to organization do not predict students' performance in speaking.

The null hypothesis for commitment to organization is accepted. The P value of its t is .311 which is more than the significant level. However, commitment to job's P value of t is .042 which is less than .05. In this case, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that commitment to job can predict student's performance in Speaking.

4. Discussion

The higher mean computation of commitment to job shows that the teachers are more committed to their job than to the organization. This means that teachers are more dedicated to the profession of teaching than to the organization where they belong. Although it can be argued that a thin line separates commitment to job and commitment to organization. The Three-Component Model of Commitment, a theory related to this study, articulates

that articulates that commitment to an organization is a psychological state and has three distinct components, namely, affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment¹⁰. Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization¹⁰. When employees are attached to their profession they become directly or indirectly involved in the pursuance of the goals and objectives of the organization. This explains why the difference between the mean computations of commitment to job (4.00) and commitment to organization (3.80) is not very significant, at only .20.

Graham¹¹ noted that research on teacher commitment indicates that teachers with high level of commitment work harder, demonstrate stronger affiliation to their schools, and demonstrate more desire to accomplish the goals of teaching than teachers with low levels of commitment. More importantly, students of highly committed teachers are more likely to perform better in school most especially in the core subject areas of Math, Science and English.

The P values of t of commitment to job and commitment to organization shown in Table 2 are both more than .05 leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis 1. This signifies that both are not predictors of students' performance in writing.

The null hypothesis is accepted for both variables in Table 3. Both are, also, not predictors of students' performance in listening. The computed P values of t of the two variables are more than .05.

Table 4 shows that while the P value of t of commitment to organization is more than the .05 level of significance that of commitment to job is less than. Thus the null hypothesis for the former is accepted and rejected for the latter. Commitment to job can predict students' performance in speaking. This means that the more committed to job a teacher is the better will be the performance of students in speaking.

5. Conclusion

Commitment to job and commitment to organization are not significant predictors of student's performance in writing and listening. Therefore, null hypotheses 1 and 2 are accepted.

Null hypothesis 3 is also accepted only for commitment to organization and rejected for commitment to job.

The latter therefore is a significant predictor of students' performance in speaking.

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To GOD be the glory!

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