

A STUDY OF ASSOCIATION AMONG DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP,
ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL
CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR OF PRIVATE COLLEGES IN CHINA

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the association among the distributed leadership of private college presidents, teachers' organizational commitment and teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. A questionnaire survey was used and the data analyzed using regression analysis to determine the association among the abovementioned variables. Conclusions are drawn, and recommendations are provided for private college presidents to implement distributed leadership to enhance teachers' organizational commitment, and subsequently their organizational citizenship behavior.

Keywords: Distributed leadership, Organizational commitment, Organizational citizenship behavior, Private colleges, Higher education

Introduction

The emergence and development of private higher learning in China have given rise to increasing difficulties and challenges. The survival of private colleges is under stress, testing the wisdom, competence and vision of

their leaders.

Research motivation

Does the manifested leadership of college presidents influence teachers' sense of identity, work commitment, retention and motivation to demon-

strate organizational citizenship behavior such as sacrificing personal interests, thereby facilitating the development of teacher resource in private colleges? This is the first motivation of this study.

There are few studies exploring how distributed leadership in colleges can enhance teachers' organizational citizenship behavior (Cheng & Zhang, 2017) . Hence the second motivation of this study is to examine the association among distributed leadership, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior.

Research Purpose And Questions

The research purpose and questions first determine whether distributed leadership of private college presidents has a direct impact on teachers' organizational commitment and teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. Second, this study examined whether organizational commitment has a direct impact on teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. Third, this study examined whether teachers' organizational commitment has a mediating effect on the impact of distributed leadership of college presidents on teachers' organizational citizenship behavior.

Literature Review

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior refers to behavioral performances that exceed required roles, excluding behaviors based on the individual's personal motivation, reward attainment or organizational contract (Organ, 1988) . Organizational citizenship behaviors are actions beyond the requirement of job duties and the expectation of employers, and they enhance organizational functioning. (Robbins & Judge, 2012) . DiPaola and Tschanen (2001) found that teachers' organizational citizenship behavior not only improves the overall effectiveness of the school. Their helping behaviors also extend their colleagues, superiors and students. Based on Organ's (1988) concept of organizational citizenship behavior and DiPaola's definition of teachers' organizational citizenship behavior, this study summarized teachers' organizational citizenship behavior as active concern for the development of the school, their willingness to help others and their willingness to invest extra time to help with the school's development and performance beyond the basic responsibilities required by their job position or employment contract.

Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership directly challenges old thinking on leadership and education reform in schools. It regards everyone in the organization as a leader while the organization also gives all its individuals the opportunity

to lead (Dampson, Havor, & Laryea, 2018) . Hulpia and Devos (2010) argue that distributed leadership is viewed as a phenomenon where leaders are distributed to every member of the school. Gronn (2000) found that distributed leadership within an organization comprises interaction and collaboration among many. Through the synergy and cooperation of numerous people, the potential in each person is stimulated. By combining their abilities, the resulting capability is greater than individual abilities.

This study defines distributed leadership as the conscious effort of college presidents to distribute leadership functions to members at all levels of the organization. Under an atmosphere of cooperation, all members of the organization have the opportunity to participate in organizational decision-making through communication and coordination. They share leadership responsibilities to jointly achieve organizational goals and improve organizational effectiveness.

Organizational Commitment

Through literature review, Morrow (1983) delineates three most important components of organizational commitment. The first is a strong sense of identity with organizational goals, values and beliefs; the second is the willingness to contribute to the organization; the third is the willingness to remain in the organization. Further

analysis of cognition, attitude and behavior shows that to be strongly motivated to remain as members of an organization; individuals must identify and have loyalty to organizational goals and values at the attitudinal level.

This study defines organizational commitment as teacher identification with the educational vision of their school, and their subsequent internalization of educational values and beliefs. Behaviorally, they are willing to dedicate themselves to teaching and administrative work. Attitudinally, they have a strong sense of belonging and loyalty to the school, expecting to remain teaching at the school, working hard together with the school, and being honored to be a member of the school.

Research Method

Research Framework

The research framework is formulated according to the purpose of this study and literature review, as shown in Figure 1.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the research goals and research framework, the following hypotheses are formulated:

Hypothesis H₁: Distributed leadership of college presidents directly impacts teachers' organizational

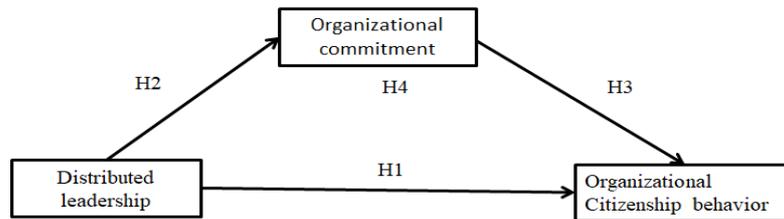


Figure 1. Research framework

citizenship behavior.

Hypothesis H₂: Distributed leadership of college presidents directly impacts teacher's organizational commitment.

Hypothesis H₃: Teachers' organizational commitment directly impacts teachers' organizational citizenship behavior.

Hypothesis H₄: Teachers' organizational commitment has a mediating effect on the impact of distributed leadership of college presidents on teachers' organizational citizenship behavior.

Research tools

Distributed leadership scale. This study uses the distributed leadership scale compiled by Chang & Yen (2012) to measure the distributed leadership of private college presidents. The scale comprises 4 dimension and 26 items. The dimensions show good reliability of .94, .93, .88 and .92, and therefore usable.

Teachers' organizational commitment scale. This study used the revised organizational commitment scale by Meyer, Allen, & Smith (1993) to measure teachers' organizational commitment. The scale comprises 3 dimensions and 18 items. The dimensions show good reliability of .85, .83 and .77, and therefore usable.

Teachers' organizational citizenship behavior scale. This study used the organizational citizenship behavior scale compiled by Farh, Earley, & Lin (1997) to measure the organizational citizenship behavior of teachers in private colleges. The scale comprises 5 dimensions and 20 items. The scale shows a good reliability of .92, and therefore usable.

Research Sample

The study subjects are teachers at private colleges in Shandong Province (including part-time administrative staff). A total of 1,500 questionnaires were distributed to 6 private colleges and 1358 questionnaires were collected. After eliminating invalid question-

naires, there were 1147 valid questionnaires.

Results and Discussion

Relationship Between Distributed Leadership Of College Presidents, Teachers' Organizational Commitment And Teachers' Organizational Citizenship Behavior

(1) Direct impact of distributed leadership of college presidents on teach-

ers' organizational citizenship behavior.

To determine the predictive power of distributed leadership of college presidents on teachers' organizational citizenship behavior, this study used the distributed leadership of college presidents to predict the variables and teachers' organizational citizenship behavior as overall variable. Regression analysis was conducted and the results shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Regression analysis results of distributed leadership and teachers' organizational citizenship behavior

	Organizational citizenship behavior			
	B	SEB	β	<i>p</i>
Distributed leadership	.296***	.038	.221***	.000
R^2			.049	
Adj R^2			.048	
<i>F</i>			59.074***	
df			1,1145	

Note: *** $p < .001$ Source: Compiled by the researcher.

Results show that distributed leadership of college presidents is significantly correlated to teachers' organizational citizenship behavior, $\beta = .221$, $p < 0.001$, where the higher the distributed leadership score, the higher the teachers' organizational citizenship behavior score. This finding is consistent with the outcome of Kılınc's (2014) quantitative study on the relationship between distributed leadership and organizational citizenship behavior, which found a significant positive cor

relation between schools' distributed leadership and teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. Murat and Ebru (2015) found that distributed leadership by school administrators has a significant positive correlation to teachers' organizational citizenship behavior, which is also consistent with the result of this study.

(2) Direct impact of distributed leadership of college presidents on teacher organizational commitment.

Table 2 shows the regression analysis results of distributed leadership of col-

lege presidents and teachers' organizational commitment.

Table 2. Linear regression analysis results of distributed leadership and teachers' organizational commitment.

Teachers' organizational commitment				
Distributed leadership	B	SEB	β	<i>p</i>
	.624***	.032	.494***	.000
R^2			.244	
<i>Adj R</i> ²			.244	
<i>F</i>			370.258***	
df			1,1145	

Note: *** $p < .00$; 1 Source: Compiled by the researcher

Results show that the distributed leadership of college presidents has a significant direct impact on teachers' organizational commitment, $\beta = .494***$, $p < .001$, where the higher the score of the distributed leadership, the higher the score of teachers' organizational commitment. In their study on the relationship between the distributed leadership of elementary school principals, teacher organizational commitment and communications technology use, Hsieh, Lai, &

Hsu, (2016) also found positive correlation between the distributed leadership of principals and teacher organizational commitment.

(3) Direct impact of teachers' organizational commitment on teachers' organizational citizenship behavior

Table 3. shows the regression analysis results of teachers' organizational commitment and teachers' organization citizenship behavior.

Table 3. Linear Regression Analysis Results Of Teachers' Organizational Commitment And Teachers' Organization Citizenship Behavior.

Teachers' organization citizenship behavior				
Teachers' organizational commitment	B	SEB	β	<i>p</i>
	.352***	.029	.334***	.000
R^2			.111	
<i>Adj R</i> ²			.110	
<i>F</i>			143.324***	
df			1,1145	

Note: *** $p < .001$; Source: Compiled by the researcher.

Results show that the teachers' organizational commitment has a significant direct impact on teachers' citizenship behavior, $\beta = .334^{***}$, $p < .001$, where the higher the score of the teachers' organizational commitment, the higher the score of teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. Results show that teachers' organizational commitment has a significant impact on the teachers' organizational citizenship behavior, $\beta = .334^{***}$, $p < .001$, where the higher the distributed leadership score of the college president, the higher the score of teachers' organizational commitment. Using satisfaction and organizational commitment as antecedents of teachers' organizational citizenship behavior, Zeinabadi (2010) found that teachers' organizational commitment has a significant direct impact on teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. In their study, Hasani, Branch, & Boroujerdi (2013) found that teachers' organizational commitment is positively correlated to teachers' organizational citizenship behavior.

(4) Mediating effect of teachers' organization commitment on the relationship between distributed leadership and organizational citizenship behavior

Regression analysis was used to test for mediating effect of teachers' organization commitment on the distributed leadership of college presidents and teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. As shown in Ta-

ble 4, results indicate that the distributed leadership of college presidents has a significant explanatory power for teachers' organizational commitment ($\beta = .494$, $p < .001$). The distributed leadership of college presidents also shows a significant explanatory power for teachers' organizational citizenship behavior ($\beta = .221$, $p < .001$), and teachers' organization commitment shows a significant explanatory power for teachers' organizational citizenship behavior ($\beta = .334$, $p < .001$). In terms of the simultaneous impact of the distributed leadership of college presidents and teachers' organization commitment on teachers' organizational citizenship behavior, the distributed leadership of college presidents continues to show significant explanatory power ($\beta = .075$, $p < .05$). However, the decrease in the β value from .221 to .075 indicates a weakening of the impact of distributed leadership on teacher organizational citizenship behavior. Based on the standards used by Baron and Kenny (1986) for testing mediating effect, this study verified the mediating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between the distributed leadership of college presidents and teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. Moreover, organizational commitment has a mediating effect on the relationship between the distributed leadership of college presidents and teachers' organization citizenship behavior.

Table 4. Regression Analysis Of Mediating Effect In Distributed Leadership, Organizational Commitment And Organizational Citizenship Behavior.

	Teachers' organizational commitment		Teachers' organizational citizenship behavior	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Distributed leadership	.494***	.221***		.075*
Organizational commitment			.334***	.296***
R^2	.244	.049	.111	.115
$Adj R^2$.244	.048	.110	.114
F	370.258***	59.074***	143.324***	74.687***
df	(1,1145)	(1,1145)	(1,1145)	(2,1144)

Note: : *** $p < .001$; Source: Compiled by the researcher.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Results show not only a linear relationship between the abovementioned distributed leadership and teachers' organizational commitment, and between teachers' organizational commitment and teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. Teachers' organizational commitment is also found to have a mediating effect on the relationship between the distributed leadership of college presidents and teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. The more frequently college presidents demonstrate distributed leadership behavior, the greater the organizational commitment of teachers. Subsequently they are more likely to help the organization achieve its goals and demonstrate organizational citizenship behavior.

To promote school development, principals must pay attention to organizational citizenship behavior of teachers. One way is to establish a vision that is consistent with the characteristics of the school and attract teachers to jointly contribute to school develop

ment. A second way is to further standardize school management, clarify teachers' duties and reasonably arrange specific responsibilities that correspond to their position. The third is to value the opinions of school members and trust their professional performance, thereby cultivating a positive interaction between principals and teachers. Last, assume joint leadership by establishing a rotational system so that teachers and administrators can rotate their duties.

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