

Relationship between Role Overload and Affective Commitment among Private School Teachers

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between role overload and affective commitment among private school teachers in Jos metropolis. The paper adopts the position that although teachers in private schools experience significant levels of workload and occupational stress, such overload does not necessarily weaken their affective commitment toward their institutions. A correlational design was utilized for the study. The paper argues that affective commitment is largely emotional and value-driven, making many teachers remain attached to their schools despite stressful work conditions. The study further maintains that while role overload may affect continuance commitment and employee wellbeing, teachers who are emotionally connected to their schools often continue to demonstrate loyalty and dedication irrespective of workload pressure. The paper recommends that stakeholders in the education sector should focus on improving teachers' psychological wellbeing, reducing excessive workload, and providing institutional support systems capable of sustaining teacher commitment and educational effectiveness.

Keywords: Role overload, Affective commitment, Teachers, Private schools, Organizational commitment

Introduction

Educational institutions depend heavily on the commitment, loyalty, and emotional dedication of teachers for effective teaching and learning outcomes. In recent years, however, inadequate employee commitment among teachers has become a disturbing trend in many schools, especially private schools. Many teachers no longer demonstrate the level of dedication expected within their professional responsibilities, thereby negatively affecting students' academic performance, institutional growth, and school enrolment rates. This decline in teacher commitment is often associated with excessive workload and occupational stress resulting from role overload.

Role overload occurs when employees are assigned duties beyond their physical, emotional, or psychological capacities. In many private schools, teachers are expected to perform multiple academic and non-academic responsibilities simultaneously. Such responsibilities include classroom teaching, lesson preparation, grading, student supervision, extracurricular coordination, administrative work, and school marketing activities. These overwhelming responsibilities often leave teachers mentally exhausted and emotionally drained.

According to Agu et al. (2024), role overload contributes significantly to workplace inconsistencies such as declining employee health, increased sick leave, mood swings, fatigue, helplessness, worthlessness, poor communication, and declining teaching effectiveness. The scholars further argue that employees experiencing excessive workload are more likely to develop strained interpersonal relationships and poor workplace interactions.

Similarly, Bagobiri et al. (2024) describe role overload as a stress-inducing condition that places excessive and conflicting demands on employees to the extent that their coping resources become depleted. The scholars emphasized that overloaded employees often carry unfinished work home, thereby interfering with family responsibilities and creating emotional exhaustion and role conflict. Botha and Steyn (2024) also maintain that role overload develops when workers perceive that assigned tasks exceed their professional competence and available time. The scholars argued that employees subjected to excessive workload become pressured because of the mismatch between assigned duties and available skills or resources. When poorly managed, this imbalance contributes to role conflict, ineffective performance, and reduced job satisfaction.

Furthermore, Habimana (2023) observed that educational reforms and increasing institutional expectations have greatly expanded the responsibilities of teachers and school administrators. Teachers are now expected to perform curriculum implementation, student management, community relations, staff coordination, and administrative duties simultaneously. These multidimensional responsibilities significantly increase occupational stress and workload burden. Despite these realities, many teachers continue to demonstrate emotional attachment and loyalty toward their institutions. This raises an important debate about whether role overload necessarily reduces affective commitment among teachers. This paper therefore argues that although role overload remains a serious occupational challenge, it does not significantly influence affective commitment among private school teachers in Jos metropolis.

Background to the Issue

Teachers in private schools have increasingly become victims of role overload. Many are assigned responsibilities beyond their areas of specialization while simultaneously handling administrative and extracurricular duties. Despite efforts by government agencies, educational authorities, and non-governmental organizations to improve working conditions in schools, teachers continue to experience excessive workload. The persistence of role overload raises concerns about teacher wellbeing, organizational loyalty, and institutional productivity. Excessive workload has the potential to reduce teachers' emotional attachment to their schools and ultimately affect educational outcomes. However, empirical findings on the relationship between role overload and affective commitment remain inconsistent. While some studies report a significant negative relationship, others reveal no significant relationship between the variables. This inconsistency creates the need to further examine whether role overload truly influences teachers' emotional attachment to their institutions, particularly within the context of private schools.

Conceptual Clarification

Role Overload

Role overload refers to a condition where employees are assigned responsibilities beyond their physical, emotional, or mental capacities. It occurs when workers lack sufficient time, resources, or energy to effectively accomplish assigned tasks. In private schools, role overload often manifests

through large class sizes, multiple teaching assignments, extracurricular responsibilities, lesson preparation demands, and administrative duties.

Affective Commitment

Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment employees develop toward their organizations. Employees with strong affective commitment remain loyal because they genuinely identify with organizational values and goals. Such workers remain emotionally invested in their institutions irrespective of workplace difficulties or challenges.

Review of Related Literature

Several empirical studies have investigated the relationship between role overload and affective commitment among teachers across different countries and educational settings. Agu et al. (2024) conducted a study in Enugu State, Nigeria, using teachers selected through simple random sampling. The study revealed a significant negative relationship between role overload and affective commitment, indicating that excessive workload reduces teachers' emotional attachment to their schools. The researchers recommended workload reduction and improved organizational support.

Similarly, Oredein and Bello (2022) investigated teachers in Oyo State and found that role overload significantly lowered affective commitment. The study recommended supportive leadership styles and workload management strategies. Bagobiri et al. (2024) also discovered that role overload indirectly reduced affective commitment among teachers in Niger State. Their findings emphasized the importance of reducing role stress and improving institutional support structures.

Additionally, Tumwesigye and Atuhairwe (2022) found that teachers in Uganda experiencing excessive workload demonstrated lower levels of affective commitment. Likewise, Okello and Gilchrist (2022) reported that role overload negatively predicted teachers' emotional commitment in Northern Uganda. In Rwanda, Habimana (2023) observed that high job demands significantly reduced affective commitment among teachers. The study further noted that supportive work environments improved teacher commitment despite workload pressures.

Studies conducted in South Africa also reported similar findings. Vander and Wessels (2021) found that excessive workload negatively affected teachers' emotional attachment to their schools. Naidoo and Martins (2022) equally reported that teachers experiencing excessive demands were less emotionally committed to their institutions. However, not all studies support the argument that role

overload weakens affective commitment. Oba et al. (2024) found no significant relationship between role overload and affective commitment among teachers in Kwara State. Similarly, Waweru et al. (2021) and Muthoni (2021) reported that role overload did not significantly affect teachers' emotional commitment.

These contradictory findings suggest that affective commitment may not always be determined by workload alone. Emotional attachment, organizational culture, professional values, and personal passion for teaching may also influence teachers' commitment levels.

Position of the Paper

This paper strongly maintains that role overload does not significantly influence affective commitment among private school teachers. Although excessive workload creates stress and emotional exhaustion, many teachers continue to demonstrate emotional loyalty and attachment to their schools. This suggests that teachers' emotional commitment may be influenced more by intrinsic motivation, institutional identity, professional values, and emotional attachment than by workload conditions alone. Affective commitment is fundamentally emotional in nature. Teachers who genuinely identify with the vision, goals, and values of their schools often remain committed irrespective of workplace difficulties. Many teachers perceive teaching not merely as employment but as a calling and a moral responsibility toward society.

Methodological Perspective

The study adopted a correlational research design because it enabled the researcher to examine the nature of the relationship between role overload and affective commitment among teachers.

Discussion

The position of this paper aligns with those of Oba et al. (2024), Waweru et al. (2021), and Muthoni (2021), all of whom reported that role overload does not significantly influence affective commitment among teachers. One possible explanation for this finding is that affective commitment is fundamentally emotional in nature. Teachers who are emotionally attached to their institutions may continue demonstrating loyalty irrespective of workplace challenges. Such teachers often perceive teaching as a vocation rather than merely an occupation. Another possible explanation is that teachers may consciously protect the image of their schools when responding to questionnaires. Because

affective commitment reflects emotional attachment, some teachers may avoid responses that portray their institutions negatively. The position of this paper also suggest that emotional attachment may be sustained through organizational culture, interpersonal relationships, religious beliefs, passion for teaching, and professional identity rather than workload conditions alone.

Policy Implications

First, educational authorities should establish enforceable policies regulating teacher workload in private schools. Such policies should ensure balanced workload distribution and adequate staffing. Second, schools should prioritize teachers' psychological wellbeing by providing counseling services, stress management programs, and supportive work environments.

Third, educational stakeholders should improve teachers' welfare through better remuneration, professional development opportunities, and adequate teaching resources and government agencies should strengthen monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance with teacher welfare standards in private schools.

Recommendations

1. Further studies should examine the relationship between role overload and psychological wellbeing among employees.
2. Future studies should adopt experimental designs involving participants from both public and private schools.
3. Government and educational stakeholders should recruit more teachers to reduce excessive workload.
4. School administrators should provide supportive organizational climates capable of enhancing teacher wellbeing and commitment.
5. Teachers should be provided with adequate teaching facilities and professional support systems to improve educational effectiveness.

Conclusion

This position paper concludes that although role overload remains a major challenge confronting teachers in private schools, it does not significantly influence affective commitment among teachers

in private schools. Teachers who possess strong emotional attachment toward their institutions often remain loyal despite stressful working conditions. The paper therefore maintains that affective commitment is influenced more by emotional connection, institutional identity, and professional dedication than by workload alone. Nevertheless, reducing excessive workload remains important for promoting teacher wellbeing, improving educational outcomes, and sustaining institutional productivity.

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