

ARECLS, 2013, Vol.10, 69-90.

***THE INFLUENCE OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP ON TEACHER
ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT: INITIAL EVIDENCE FROM VIETNAM***

NGUYEN NGOC DU

Abstract

The present study examines the relationships between distributed leadership, demographic factors and teachers' organisational commitment in Vietnam by using a questionnaire involving 76 teachers in three secondary schools. Consistent with previous studies, such as Bogler and Somech (2004) and Hulpia et al.(2009a), there was a significant correlation between the respondents' perceptions of leadership distribution and their organisational commitment. Of the four independent variables examined, teacher commitment was highly correlated with and more likely to be influenced by Team leadership and Participative decision-making. Data analysis also indicates that in contrast with findings of studies conducted in Western countries, male teachers in the surveyed schools were found more committed to schools than females whilst experienced teachers showed slightly more organisational commitment than those with less experience. Cultural factors, such as gender inequality, higher respect and salaries for experienced employees were employed to shed light on these differences.

Keywords: distributed leadership; team leadership; participative decision-making; demographic factors; teacher organisational commitment

Introduction

Distributed leadership has been drawing large amounts of attention from scholars (Harris 2004; Mascall *et al.* 2008; Harris 2009a; b; Chang 2011). Like the term leadership, it has caused substantial debate among scholars (e.g. Gronn 2002; Spillane *et al.* 2008; Harris 2009a). In the field of education, its advocates share a common view that leadership distribution could improve students' achievement (Griffin 1995; Leithwood *et al.* 2006; Harris 2008; Harris 2009a; Chang 2011) by exerting positive influence on teachers' academic optimism (Mascall *et al.* 2008; Chang 2011), providing teachers with more motivation to pursue change in their pedagogical practice (Firestone & Pennell 1993). Distributed leadership can turn schools into learning organisations (Bennett *et al.* 2003; MacBeath *et al.* 2004; Southworth 2005); it is the inevitable in an organisation wishing to prosper in a world of increasing challenges (Harris 2004; Southworth 2005; Spillane 2006).

However, some studies have shown that distributed leadership could probably result in teacher conflicts and a deterioration in the leader's role due to power delegation, change resistance and risk avoidance of followers (Harris 2004; Hargreaves & Fink 2006). The distribution of leadership may give rise to confusion and job duplication in teachers because more members are involved in leading the school (Hay Group Education 2004; Hulpia *et al.* 2009b). Particularly, when inappropriately applied, for example at schools

with developed management hierarchy, distributed leadership can turn into poor leadership (Hargreaves & Fink 2006; Harris 2009a).

Though distributed leadership is in vogue, there is insufficient empirical evidence to underpin this leadership style (Harris 2005; Levin 2006; Harris 2009a). Particularly, there is little evidence from Asian developing countries, including Vietnam, where educational leadership and management were evaluated as ineffective (CCCCPV 2011) partly due to a dearth of empirical studies (Phường 2012).

The purpose of the current study is, therefore, twofold. First, it aims to gain some insight into leadership practice in Vietnamese secondary schools. Second, it verifies the relationship between distributed leadership and teachers' organisational commitment, one of the essential conditions for enhancing school performance (Park 2005), which is claimed to be in decline in many countries, including Vietnam (Brunetti 2001; Leithwood & Beatty 2008; Hulpia & Devos 2009; Anh 2012; Hội 2012). The study also examines the relationships between gender, work experience and teachers' commitment to schools because these demographic variables have been identified as important predictors of teacher commitment (see Park 2005; Hulpia *et al.* 2009a; Hulpia *et al.* 2009b). Building on the research objectives, the following research questions were put forward.

Question 1: What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of leadership distribution and their organisational commitment?

Question 2: What are the relationships between demographic factors (gender, work experience) and teacher commitment to schools?

The paper is divided into four parts. Part one focuses on defining the studied constructs and reviewing the relationships between the independent variables: distributed leadership, demographic factors and the dependent- teachers' organisational commitment. Part two introduces the research design whilst the third part discusses the empirical findings. Finally, conclusions and recommendations follow.

Defining key concepts

Distributed leadership

As a 'fuzzy concept' (Hulpia *et al.* 2009a, p. 40), distributed leadership has been conceptualised in various ways (Bennett *et al.* 2003). While some authors, such as Shelley (1960, cited in Harris 2008) describe the term as a type of leadership advocating leadership hierarchy, others (for example, Bennett *et al.* 2003; Spillane 2005; Chang 2011) see distributed leadership as synonyms of "shared leadership", "team leadership" and "democratic leadership". Despite the fact that distributed leadership and these above related terms all support the viewpoint that leadership should not simply focus on a single person (MacBeath *et al.* 2004), they are different in several aspects. For example, whilst shared leadership regards leadership as a joint action of a group of people, paying little attention to the roles they hold, distributed leadership occurs in both formal and informal forms; leadership is distributed to both employees holding formal positions and those who have ability to lead certain activities (MacBeath *et al.* 2004; Harris 2009b). While democratic leadership refers to a positive personal leadership style that encourages followers to discuss problems and propose solutions (Kippenberger 2002), distributed leadership advocates the idea that anyone can become a leader provided that they have knowledge and ideas to share (Education 2004; Harris 2005; Southworth 2005). According to distributed leadership

theory, by showing respect for staff, the leader can have the task accomplished more effectively (Chang 2011).

One of the widely accepted definitions of distributed leadership identified by Gronn (2002) proposes that distributed leadership is a leadership style in which leadership is dispersed among numerous members of the organisation. Collaboration among employees is encouraged as it brings about larger effects than the sum of individual efforts. Recently, a landmark study by Spillane et al. (2008) claims that there are two ways of investigating leadership distribution in schools, either through focusing on people holding formal leadership positions or through actual practice of leadership. This proposition has achieved considerable scholarly support, exerting substantial influence on more recent studies (see, for example, Harris 2009a; Hulpia & Devos 2009; Hulpia *et al.* 2009a). Based on the findings of Gronn (2002) and Spillane et al. (2008), within the current study, distributed leadership is understood as a leadership style in which interaction among teaching staff is encouraged; leadership is not only distributed to teachers holding certain positions within the school, but also to others who would like to share their knowledge and expertise.

Teacher organisational commitment

Like the term “commitment”, teacher organisational commitment has been conceptualised in various ways. According to Park (2005), teacher commitment to school means ‘considerable loyalty to the specific school’ and a strong desire to put constant effort into work to develop the school (p. 463). Another perspective comes from Nguni et al. (2006) who take organisational commitment as a two-dimensional concept including ‘value commitment and commitment to stay with the organisation’

(p. 150). Many other scholars have also attempted to define the construct to make it more easily comprehensible (see Bogler & Somech 2004; Razak *et al.* 2010). One of the most widely accepted and comprehensive definitions is explored by Mowday *et al.* (1979, p. 226) who define teacher organisational commitment as three ‘related factors’. They include a strong belief in and willingness to accept the organisational goals and values (identification), a willingness to make an effort for the benefit of the organisation (involvement) and a definite desire to stay in the organisation (loyalty). Within the present study, the author follows Mowday’s definition, conceptualising teacher organisational commitment as an acceptance of the values and mission of a specific school, a desire to stay in and a willingness to make more contribution to the school than one is expected.

The relationships between the studied variables

To date, there have been some efforts to investigate the relationships between distributed leadership, demographic variables and teachers’ organisational commitment. However, it is worth mentioning that most of the recent studies have been conducted by the same groups of researchers headed by Hulpia within the context of Belgian schools (see Hulpia *et al.* 2009a; Hulpia *et al.* 2009b; Hulpia & Devos 2010; Hulpia *et al.* 2011). The main findings of these studies include:

Team leadership, leadership support and participation in decision-making can significantly strengthen teacher organisational commitment; whereas leadership supervision is identified as exerting only a modest positive influence on the extent teachers feel committed to their schools (Hulpia *et al.* 2009a; Hulpia *et al.* 2009b; Hulpia *et al.* 2011).

Male teachers are reported as being less committed to their schools than females meanwhile there is a negative correlation between teachers' working years and their organisational commitment (Hulpia *et al.* 2009a; Hulpia *et al.* 2009b).

The above findings on the relationships between distributed leadership, demographic variables and teachers' organisational commitment by Hulpia and his colleagues provided the theoretical framework for the present study.

Research design

A quantitative research design was employed in the present study as this approach, with the support of a questionnaire survey, was reported as being effective in determining the relationships between variables (Punch 2007; Bryman 2012). Another reason for this design was its strength in ensuring anonymity for informants (Gillham 2000; Johnson & Turner 2003; Neuman 2006), which is crucial in the context of Vietnam where people tend to hesitate to speak their mind if anonymity is not ensured (Vương *et al.* 1998; Goldman 2009).

Research Instrument

A questionnaire in form of a Likert-scale was employed as it is considered a proper technique for measuring participants' attitudes (Johnson & Turner 2003; Denscombe 2010).

The questionnaire was composed of 30 items distributed in four sections (see Appendix). The first section included three questions asking respondents about their gender, qualification and work experience. Of 11 question items in the second section, which asked respondents to indicate the frequency (never to always) of leadership activities, seven items were about supportive while the other four about supervisory

leadership function. These items were adapted from a set of questionnaire items in the Distributed Leadership Inventory (DLI) (Hulpia & Devos 2009; Hulpia *et al.* 2009a). Section three had 16 items asking respondents to show their agreement on the statements (strongly disagree to strongly agree). The first six were designed to ask about the cooperation of team leadership since this cooperation provides teachers with powerful informal learning opportunities and reflects leadership at the group level (Firestone & Pennell 1993). In addition, team leadership has been identified as ‘an important precondition for successful distributed leadership’ and exerting positive influence on teachers’ organisational commitment (Hulpia & Devos 2009, p. 294). Five of six items were taken from the DLI and the last one was taken from MacBeath *et al.* (2004). This is because the answer to this question could partially reflect the level of informal leadership distribution. The next four items were designed based on the combination of the DLI and the questionnaire in Bogler and Somech (2004). They explored the practice of decision-making in the school because this process mirrors teacher autonomy and leadership (Bogler & Somech 2004). The six final questionnaire items were about teacher commitment to their schools. They were built based on the items in Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday *et al.* 1979, p. 228) with some amendments to make them more appropriate to local teachers.

Sampling

The survey was conducted in three lower secondary schools in Hung Ha district, the Northern Province of Thai Binh, Vietnam. These schools were purposefully chosen with the aim of meeting criteria of diversity in school sizes, leadership styles and working environments. The first school (A) was a relatively large school in the region with 18 classes and a teaching staff of 33. The second school (B) was much smaller with nine classes and 29 teachers. The third school (C) had many differences in terms of

working environment and teacher quality compared to the other two schools. It was located in the centre of the district with greater support from parents and local authorities. The school had 15 classes and 32 teachers. Each surveyed school had two leaders: one head teacher and one deputy head. It is worth noting that these leaders were all male.

Ethical matters need to be carefully treated in educational research (Du 2012) because such issues can occur at any stage of research (Strike 2006; Cohen *et al.* 2007). Accordingly, prior to the data collection process, permission and consent had been obtained from the respondents as well as their school leaders. As widely recommended (see Wiersma 2000; Opie 2004; Gall *et al.* 2007), anonymity and confidentiality of respondents and collected information were carefully explained and assured.

In order to eliminate errors in terms of item relevance, ambiguities, design appropriateness and difficulty levels, as suggested by Wiersma (2000) and Bryman (2012), questionnaires were piloted with five teachers in a local school. After several minor amendments, they were delivered directly to teachers in the surveyed schools to obtain a high response rate.

Findings and discussion

The data from the survey were analysed using SPSS version 19. First, items in each variable were coded by using a key word in the name of the variable and their positions within the variable, for instance Support1, Team2, or Comittment3. Next, answers to items were coded using numbers from 0 to 4. As suggested by some statisticians (e.g. Cohen 1990; Sosu *et al.* 2008), in terms of constructing new variables, five main variables: Support, Supervision, Team , Participative and Commitment were computed by summing

and averaging scores of all items within each variable. In that way, the author could obtain the scores of individual computed variables that can be easily compared to the values of the scale. More importantly, these data appear to share more characteristics with interval data, making them more appropriate to further analysis (Blaike 2003).

Seventy-six teachers completed the survey, representing a response rate of 84.4%. Detailed demographic information about respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: *Demographic data of the participants*

Schools	School A (N and %)	School B (N and %)	School C (N and %)	Whole sample (N and %)
Demographic data				
Genders	31 (100%)	20 (100%)	25 (100%)	76 (100%)
- Male	6 (19.4%)	7 (35.0%)	11 (44.0%)	24 (31.6%)
- Female	25 (80.6%)	13 (65.0%)	14 (56.0%)	52 (68.4%)
Qualification	31 (100%)	20 (100%)	25 (100%)	76 (100%)
- College bachelor degree	20 (64.0%)	15 (75.0%)	2 (8.0%)	37 (48.6%)
- University degree	13 (36.0%)	5 (25.0%)	23 (92.0%)	39 (51.4%)
Work experience	31 (100%)	20 (100%)	25 (100%)	76 (100%)
- 1 to under 10 years	18 (58.1%)	13 (65.0%)	7 (28.0%)	38 (50.0%)
- 10 to under 20 years	9 (29.0%)	6 (30.0%)	16 (64.0%)	31(40.8%)
- 20 to under 30 years	3 (9.7%)	0	1 (4.0%)	4 (5.3%)
- 30 years or over	1 (3.2%)	1 (5.0%)	0	2 (2.6%)
- Unknown	x	x	1 (4.0%)	1 (1.3%)

To examine participants' scores in each variable, univariate descriptive analysis was performed. Of all indicators, the leadership function - Support achieved the lowest average score of 2.44 indicating that the participants were not very satisfied with the support they received from their school leaders. Leadership supervision and Participative decision-making were rated with the same mean scores of 2.74 while Team leadership

obtained a slightly higher mean score of 2.78. It seems that leadership was not widely distributed within the surveyed schools as found in previous studies conducted in Western contexts (e.g. Bogler & Somech 2004; Park 2005; Hulpia *et al.* 2009a). Organisational commitment achieved the highest mean score of 2.82. Nevertheless, data show that only 45 informants (59.2%) indicated commitment or high commitment to schools. In accord with data reported in recent studies (see Anh 2012; Hội 2012), such a score indicates that teaching is no longer an attractive career in Vietnam.

There were considerable differences in the scores between the surveyed schools (school level) as well as within a school (individual teacher level). For instance, while mean scores in Team leadership in school B and C were 3.00 and 3.11 respectively, that of school A was just 2.40. In the same way, while mean scores in Participation in decision-making for school B and C were 2.95 and 3.20, just a very modest score of 2.23 was obtained from school A. Despite receiving less support and supervision from leaders than their colleagues in school B (2.79 and 2.83 compared to 2.89 and 3.19), teachers in school C showed a higher level of commitment (3.29 compared to 2.98). Such a high level of commitment could result from other factors such as higher degrees of support and cooperation from the local authority and students' families.

At the individual teacher level, the differences were more statistically significant. For example, the lowest mean scores of Leadership support and Leadership supervision in school C were 1.00 while the highest scores were 3.43 and 3.50 correspondingly. Such remarkable differences in scores among teachers led to rather high standard derivations as shown in table 2 below. However, Skewness and Kurtosis values indicate that the distribution of scores in all variables were normal, lying within the range $-/+1$

Table 2: *Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Leadership support	76	.71	3.57	2.44	.69
Leadership supervision	76	1.00	3.75	2.74	.61
Team leadership	76	1.50	3.50	2.78	.54
P. decision-making	76	1.00	3.75	2.74	.66
Organisational commitment	76	1.00	3.83	2.82	.71
Valid N (listwise)	76				

To test the reliability of all variables, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated. Outcomes demonstrate that most variables obtained “acceptable” levels of internal reliability (Bryman 2007, p. 151), with the highest score (.86) belonging to Leadership support, followed by Organisational commitment (.86), Leadership supervision (.78), Participative decision making (.74) and Team leadership (.74).

In an effort to obtain a general picture of the scores in each item, means of all indicators were calculated. Of all items, the lowest mean score of 2.11 belonged to Support2 (Complimenting teachers) and the second lowest (2.25) was that for Support1 (Communicating the school vision). These scores imply that leaders in the surveyed schools may have spent inadequate time transforming school visions to their followers. Due to the Eastern cultural milieu in which people prefer to use non-verbal communication to express feelings and actions (Acacia 1993; Tuong 2002; Golema 2009), the school leaders tended to spare their compliments to teachers. The highest score (3.09) found in Team6 (Seeking academic support from colleagues) indicates that the surveyed teachers enjoyed good professional relationships and informal leadership.

Bivariate correlations were calculated to examine the associations between the variables. First, the relations between the independent variables and the dependent variable were examined. The highest correlation between Participative decision-making and Organisational commitment ($r=.67$, $p<.001$), imply that teachers tend to be more committed to their schools when they have a stronger voice in decision-making. This finding confirms those found in earlier studies (for example, Firestone & Pennell 1993; Hulpia & Devos 2009; Hulpia *et al.* 2009b).

The second highest correlation ($r=.66$, $p<.001$) was that between Team leadership and Organisational commitment. Unsurprisingly, there was just a modest relation between Leadership supervision and Organisational commitment ($r=.36$, $p<.001$). This finding supports Hulpia *et al.* (2009b) who suggests that leadership supervision does not exert much influence on teacher commitment to schools. In terms of associations between independent variables, a large correlation ($r=.66$, $p<.001$) has been identified between Team leadership and Participative decision-making. Other pairs show “medium” or “large” correlations (Field 2009, p. 173) ranging from .36 to .64 (See Figure 1)

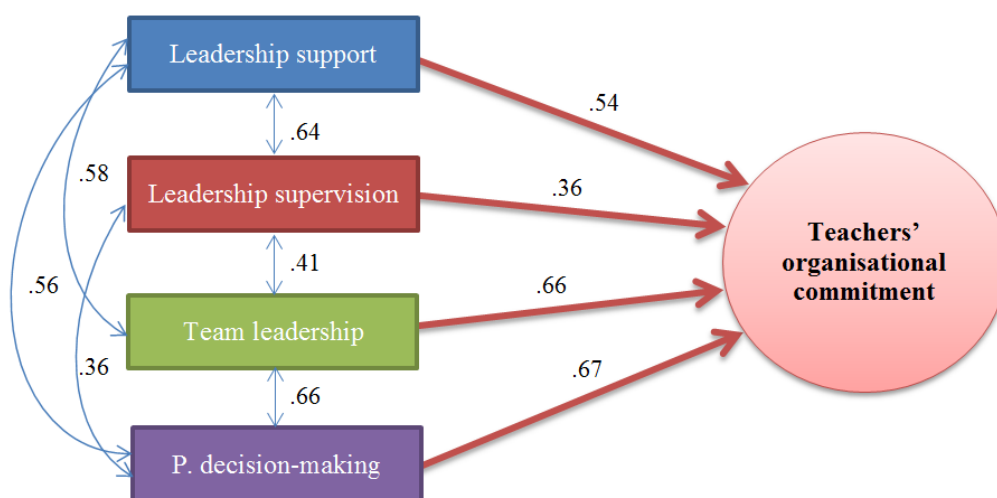


Figure 1: Correlations between four domains of distributed leadership and teachers' organisational commitment

ANOVA was performed to see if there was a significant difference between mean scores of organisational commitment among four groups of teachers with different levels of work experience. Data outputs reveal that there appeared to be a ‘marginal’ variation in levels of organisational commitment between four groups of teachers ($F=2.166$, $p=.099$). Experienced teachers showed slightly more commitment to schools than those with fewer working years. This result contradicts the findings in earlier studies (e.g. Brunetti 2001; Leithwood & Beatty 2008; Hulpia *et al.* 2009b), which claim that the more experienced teachers are, the less committed they feel to their schools. Such a contrary finding could be explained by the fact that, in Vietnam experienced teachers are always respected and consequently provided with better working conditions (Acacia 1993; Vượng *et al.* 1998; Goldman 2009), a key factor contributing to organisational commitment (Firestone & Pennell 1993). Another cause that makes teachers remain committed might be the significant difference in salary between novices and experienced teachers (Anh 2012; Hội 2012).

To compare means of scores for variable Organisational commitment between male and female teachers, an Independent Sample t Test was performed. The outcomes demonstrate that the mean score of females was 2.67 ($N=52$) while that of their male colleagues was 3.12. This difference was significant ($p=.009$) implying that male teachers in the survey schools were more committed to their schools than females. This finding challenges those claimed in previous studies (e.g. Park 2005; Hulpia *et al.* 2009a): female teachers are more committed to their schools than males.

There may be several causes for male teachers’ higher levels of commitment to schools. One of them could be the long-lasting tradition of male preference in leadership roles in Vietnam (Long *et al.* 2000; Nguyen 2013). Take the studied schools as an example. Whilst nearly 70% of teachers were women, all heads and deputy heads

were men. Additionally, it is probable that the difference in the commitment levels between male and female teachers was caused by the misconceptions in the roles of men and women in Confucian heritage cultures, such as China and Vietnam. Whilst men are expected and supported to achieve career success, women are required to take more responsibilities for family and household issues (Long *et al.* 2000; Nguyen 2013). As a result, female teachers tend to be less involved in school activities than their male colleagues.

A final statistical technique, multiple regression was performed to evaluate the independent variables' abilities to predict the outcome variable (Morrison 2009). Though this application concerns prediction rather than causation (Blaike 2003; Field 2009; Morrison 2009; Gorard 2012), it may act as 'useful guides' to probabilistic causation, the major method to identify causes in social research (Singh 2007; Morrison 2009, p. 39).

A multiple regression analysis using the Enter method indicates that of the five variables valid for the application, just Team leadership and Participative decision making with Beta values of .33 and .37 respectively ($p < .01$) could predict the outcome, organisational commitment (see Table 3).

Table 3: Coefficients

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.143	.343		.416	.678
	Leadership support	.135	.125	.131	1.077	.285
	Leadership supervision	.010	.121	.008	.079	.938
	Team leadership	.441	.150	.334	2.949	.004
	P. decision-making	.397	.119	.372	3.348	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Commitment

By running regression using the Stepwise method, two models that could predict teacher commitment were produced (see Table 4). Model 1 shows that 43.8% of the variation in teachers' commitment in the whole population could be explained by Participative decision-making. The capability to predict increased to 51.7% when the data of Team leadership were added in the second model. F value standing at 59.42 ($p < .001$) implies that results of regression analyses were unlikely to happen by chance. It is clear that, organisational commitment could be well predicted by participation in decision-making and team leadership, two important constituents of distributed leadership. However, it is worth noting that prediction and causation are not the same (Morrison 2009), so we cannot say for sure that Participative decision-making and Team leadership influenced teachers' organisational commitment. Instead, we can only say that there is a high likelihood that teacher organisational commitment is influenced by Team leadership and Participative decision-making.

Table 4: *Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.667 ^a	.445	.438	.532
2	.728 ^b	.530	.517	.493

a. Predictors: (Constant), Participative

b. Predictors: (Constant), Participative, Team

Conclusions and recommendations

The main findings of the present Vietnam-based study confirm those found in earlier studies in Western contexts (e.g. Firestone & Pennell 1993; Bogler & Somech

2004; Hulpia *et al.* 2009a; Hulpia *et al.* 2009b), claiming that there is a close relationship between teachers' perceptions of leadership distribution and their organisational commitment. Of the four independent variables examined, Teacher organisational commitment was largely positively related to and more likely to be influenced by Team leadership and Participative decision-making. Meanwhile, Leadership supervision had a moderate association with Teacher organisational commitment. Such consistence in findings implies that teachers regardless of their cultures tend to commit to their schools if they are respected, provided with adequate opportunities to participate in team leadership and school leadership activities.

Inconsistent with those found in previous studies (e.g. Brunetti 2001; Park 2005; Leithwood & Beatty 2008; Hulpia & Devos 2009; Hulpia *et al.* 2009b), data analysis reveals that male teachers were more committed to their schools than females while experienced teachers appeared to show marginally more commitment to schools than those with less experience. Such varying results may be attributable to the research context of Vietnam where males gain more support to advance their careers from both families and schools; experienced teachers are respected and provided with better working conditions and opportunities. Empirical evidence also reveals that there was a notable variation in the amount of leadership distribution and organisational commitment between the three surveyed schools, and among teachers within a school. Such a variation raises concern about leadership styles employed in certain local schools.

Despite the researcher's endeavour, the study was not without limitations. First, only a quantitative method was used to examine the viewpoints of the participants, thus the research could not claim causal relationships. Second, the sample was not sufficient in number to make the findings broadly generalised. A final limitation of the study concerns the number of context variables used. The research results could have been more reliable

if other important variables considered as relevant to organisational commitment, such as working condition (Firestone & Pennell 1993) and job satisfaction (English *et al.* 2009; Hulpia & Devos 2009) had been included.

The findings of the study imply that more support should be provided to the participants. School leaders in Vietnam should create more opportunities for teachers, especially females to take part in leadership activities, for example decision-making or school vision building, to maintain and strengthen their organisational commitment. Research has evidenced that teachers may resist administrative and peer expectations if they are not allowed to participate in decision making (Firestone & Pennell 1993).

It is my hope that the present study will make a modest contribution to our global understanding of the relationship between distributed leadership and teachers' organisational commitment. It is expected that the study will stimulate further empirical research into the effects of distributed leadership on crucial aspects of schools, such as teachers' job satisfaction and pupils' learning outcomes in Southeast Asian contexts, particularly in Vietnam.

About the author

Nguyen Ngoc Du is doctoral student at the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences, Newcastle University. His research interests include educational leadership, learning assessment, school culture and critical thinking.

E-mail: n.d.nguyen@ncl.ac.uk

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his sincere thanks to Project 165, Vietnam for its financial support for his studies. Thanks also to his family members for their immense love and support.

REFERENCES

- Acacia (1993). "Some Aspects of Vietnamese Culture in Child Rearing Practices ". Retrieved 15/08/2011, from <http://www.acacia.org.au/resources/someaspectsofvietnamesecultureinchildrearingpractices.pdf>.
- Anh, B. (2012). "Giáo viên chán nghề: Kinh tế chưa phải là điều quyết định [Teachers' low professional commitment: Salary is not a decisive factor]." Retrieved 09/08/2012 from <http://news.zing.vn/Giao-vien-chan-nghe-Kinh-te-chua-phai-la-dieu-quyet-dinh-post266721.html>.
- Bennett, Nigel, et al. (2003). Distributed leadership: A review of Literature. National College for School Leadership.
- Blaikie, N. (2003). Analyzing Quantitative Data: From Description to Explanation. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Bogler, R. and A. Somech (2004). "Influence of teacher empowerment on teachers' organizational commitment, professional commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in schools." Teaching and Teacher Education 20: 277-289.
- Brunetti, G. J. (2001). "Why do they teach? A study of job satisfaction among long term high school teachers." Teacher Education Quarterly 28: 49-74.
- Bryman, A. (2007). "Barriers to Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Research." Journal of Mixed Methods Research 1(1): 8-22.
- Bryman, A. (2012). Social research methods. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- CCCCPV (2011). Documents at 11th Congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party. Hanoi, Vietnam National Publication of Politics.
- Chang, I.-H. (2011). "A study of the relationships between distributed leadership, teacher academic optimism and student achievement in Taiwanese elementary schools." School Leadership and Management 31(5): 491-515.
- Cohen, J. (1990). "Things I have learned (so far)." American Psychologist 45(2): 1304-1312.
- Cohen, L., L. Manion, et al. (2007). Research Methods in Education. 6th ed. London: Routledge.
- Denscombe, M. (2010). The good research guide for small-scale social research projects. 4th ed. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Du, N. N. (2012) Educational Research: Purpose, Quality and Effectiveness. Annual Review of Education, Communication and Language Sciences 9,
- Education, H. G. (2004). The Five Pillars of Distributed Leadership in Schools, National college for school leadership.
- English, A., H. Peacock, et al. (2009). "Distributed Leadership: stress relief for heads." Retrieved 07/11/2011, from <http://www.prometheanplanet.com/en/Search/resources/language/english/?Keywords=distributed+leadership&SortField=relevance>.
- Field, A. (2009). Discovering Statistics Using SPSS. 3rd ed. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Firestone, W. A. and J. R. Pennell (1993). "Teacher Commitment, Working Conditions, and Differential Incentive Policies " Review of Educational Research 63(4): 489-525.
- Gall, M. D., W. R. Borg, et al. (2007). Educational research : an introduction. 8th ed. Boston, Mass: Allyn and Bacon

- Gillham, B. (2000). The Research Interview. London, New York: Continuum.
- Goldman, C. (2009). Vietnamese Culture Profile. West End, Australia, Diversicare.
- Golema, C. (2009). Vietnamese Culture Profile. West End, Australia: Diversicare.
- Gorard, S., Ed. (2012). Multiple Linear Regression. Research Methods and Methodologies in Education. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Griffin, G. A. (1995). "Influences of Shared Decision Making on School and Classroom Activity: Conversations with Five Teachers." Elementary School Journal 96(1): 29-45.
- Gronn, P. (2002). "Distributed leadership as a unit of analysis." The Leadership Quarterly 13: 423-451.
- Hargreaves, A. and D. Fink (2006). Sustainable Leadership. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Harris, A. (2004). "Distributed Leadership and School improvement." Educational Management Administration & Leadership 32: 11-24.
- Harris, A. (2005). Distributed Leadership. The Essentials of School Leadership. B. Davies. London, Paul Chapman Publishing and Corwin Press.
- Harris, A. (2008). "Distributed leadership: according to the evidence." Journal of Educational Administration 46(2): 172-188.
- Harris, A., Ed. (2009a). Distributed Leadership: What We Know. Distributed leadership: Different Perspectives. Pringer.
- Harris, A., Ed. (2009b). Introduction. Distributed leadership: Different Perspectives. Pringer.
- Hội, T. (2012). "Một nửa giáo viên hối hận vì nghề đã chọn [Half teachers feel regret for their job choice]." Retrieved 06/08/2012, from <http://kienthuc.net.vn/dien-dan/mot-nua-giao-vien-hoi-han-vi-nghe-da-chon-137477.html>.
- Hulpia, H. and G. Devos (2009). "Exploring the link between distributed leadership and job satisfaction of school leaders." Educational Studies 35(2): 153-171.
- Hulpia, H. and G. Devos (2010). "How distributed leadership can make a difference in teachers' organizational commitment? A qualitative study." Teaching and Teacher Education 26: 565-575.
- Hulpia, H., G. Devos, et al. (2009a). "The Influence of Distributed Leadership on Teachers' Organizational Commitment: A Multilevel Approach." The Journal of Educational Research 103(1): 40-52.
- Hulpia, H., G. Devos, et al. (2011). "The Relation Between School Leadership From a Distributed Perspective and Teachers' Organizational Commitment : Examining the Source of the Leadership Function." Educational Administration Quarterly 47(5): 728-771.
- Hulpia, H., G. Devos, et al. (2009b). "The relationship between the perception of distributed leadership in secondary schools and teachers' and teacher leaders' job satisfaction and organizational commitment." School Effectiveness and School Improvement 20(3): 291-317.
- Johnson, B. and L. A. Turner, Eds. (2003). Data collection strategies in mixed methods research. Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social&Behavioral Research. California: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Kippenberger, T. (2002). Leadership Styles. Castone Publishing.
- Leithwood, K. and B. Beatty (2008). Leading with teacher emotions in mind. California: Corwin Press.

- Leithwood, K., C. Day, et al. (2006). Successful school leadership: what is it and how it influences pupils learning. National College of School Leadership & DfES University of Nottingham.
- Levin, M. (2006). "Can research improve educational leadership?" Educational Researcher 35(8): 38-44.
- Long, L. D., L. N. Hung, et al. (2000). Changing Gender Relations in Vietnam's Post Doi Moi Era. Policy Research Report on Gender and Development, Working Paper Series No. 14, The World Bank: 1-147.
- MacBeath, J., George KT Oduro, et al. (2004). Distributed Leadership in Action: Full report, National College for School Leadership.
- Mascall, B., K. Leithwood, et al. (2008). "The relationship between distributed leadership and teachers' academic optimism." Journal of Educational Administration 46(2): 214-228.
- Morrison, K. (2009). Causation in Educational Research. London and New York: Routledge.
- Mowday, R. T., R. M. Steers, et al. (1979). "The Measurement of Organizational Commitment " Journal of Vocational Behavior 14: 224-247.
- Neuman, W. L. (2006). Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. 6th ed. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Nguni, S., P. Slegers, et al. (2006). "Transformational and Transactional Leadership Effects on Teachers' Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Primary Schools: The Tanzanian case." School Effectiveness and School Improvement 17(2): 145 - 177.
- Nguyen, T. L. H. (2013). "Barriers to and facilitators of female Deans' career advancement in higher education: an exploratory study in Vietnam." Higher Education 66: 123-138.
- Opie, C., Ed. (2004). Research Procedures. Doing educational research : a guide to first-time researchers. London SAGE Publications.
- Park, I. (2005). "Teacher commitment and its effects on student achievement in American high schools." Educational Research and Evaluation: An International Journal on Theory and Practice 11(5): 461-485.
- Phuong, Q. (2012). "Lo ngại cho nghiên cứu khoa học Việt Nam [Worries about scientific research of Vietnam]." Retrieved 14/05/2012, from http://www.bbc.co.uk/vietnamese/mobile/vietnam/2012/10/121026_vn_education_ranking.shtml.
- Punch, K. F. (2007). Introduction to social research. 2nd ed. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Razak, N. A., I. G. N. Darmawan, et al. (2010). "The influence of culture on teacher commitment." Social Psychological Education 13: 185-205.
- Singh, K. (2007). Quantitative Social Research Methods. New Delhi, California, London, Singapore: Sage Publications
- Sosu, E. M., A. McWilliam, et al. (2008). "The Complexities of Teachers' Commitment to Environmental Education : A Mixed Methods Approach." Journal of Mixed Methods Research 2(2): 169-189.
- Southworth, G. (2005). Learning-centred leadership. The essentials of School Leadership. B. Davies. London, Paul Chapman Publishing and Corwin Press: 75-92.
- Spillane, J. P. (2005). "Distributed Leadership." The Educational Forum 64(2): 143-150.
- Spillane, J. P. (2006). Distributed Leadership. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Spillane, J. P., E. M. Camburn, et al. (2008). "Taking a distributed perspective: Epistemological and methodological tradeoffs in operationalizing the leader-plus aspect." Journal of Educational Administration 46(2): 189-213.
- Strike, K. A., Ed. (2006). Ethics in Educational Research. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Tuong, N. H. (2002). "Vietnam: Cultural Background for ESL/EFL Teachers " The Review of Vietnamese Studies 2(1): 6.
- Vương, T. Q., T. N. Thanh, et al. (1998). Cơ sở Văn hóa Việt Nam [Basic understandings of Vietnamese Culture]. Hanoi: Vietnam Education Publishing House.
- Wiersma, W. (2000). Research methods in Education. 7th ed. Needham Heights: Allyn & Bacon.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE (For lower secondary school teachers)

Note: The data collected in this questionnaire will be treated with high confidentiality and used only for research purpose.

Part I. Please provide some personal information by ticking the appropriate box

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
 2. Qualification College bachelor degree ☐ University degree ☐
 3. Work experience
 Less than 10 years ☐ 10-under 20 years ☐ 20-under 30 years ☐ 30 years or more ☐

Part II. Please indicate the level of frequency to which your school leaders do the following tasks. Please circle the number corresponding to your response.

Leadership support:

No	Activities	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Usually	Always
1.	Talk to teachers about the school vision	0	1	2	3	4
2.	Compliments teachers	0	1	2	3	4
3.	Provide organizational support for teacher interaction	0	1	2	3	4
4.	Are always available to help teachers when assistance is needed	0	1	2	3	4
5.	Look out for the personal welfare of teachers	0	1	2	3	4
6.	Encourage you to try new practices consistent with your own interests	0	1	2	3	4
7.	Encourage teachers to take on leadership roles	0	1	2	3	4

Leadership supervision:

No	Learning activities	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Usually	Always
1.	Evaluate the performance of the staff	0	1	2	3	4
2.	Are involved in summative evaluation of pupils	0	1	2	3	4
3.	Are involved in summative evaluation of teachers	0	1	2	3	4
4.	Are involved in formative evaluation of teachers	0	1	2	3	4

Note: This is the translated version. The original version was in Vietnamese.

Part III. In the next set of questions, you are presented with a series of statements. You are asked to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement by indicating whether you: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Uncertain (U); Agree (A); or Strongly Agree (SA). Please indicate your level of agreement by circling the appropriate number.

Team leadership

No	Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA
1.	There is a well-functioning leadership team in our school.	0	1	2	3	4
2.	All members of the leadership team work in the same strain on the school's core objectives.	0	1	2	3	4
3.	In our school, the right man sits on the right place, taken the competencies into account.	0	1	2	3	4
4.	Members of the leadership team have clear goals.	0	1	2	3	4
5.	The leadership team is willing to execute a good idea.	0	1	2	3	4
6.	If teachers have a problem with their teaching they usually turn to colleagues for help.	0	1	2	3	4

Participative decision-making:

No	Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA
1.	I am treated like a professional	0	1	2	3	4
2.	I have an adequate involvement in decision making.	0	1	2	3	4
3.	There is an appropriate level of autonomy in decision making.	0	1	2	3	4
4.	My ideas are always respected.	0	1	2	3	4

Organizational commitment

No	Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA
1.	My school inspires me to do the best I can.	0	1	2	3	4
2.	I am proud to be a part of this school team.	0	1	2	3	4
3.	I really care about the fate of this school.	0	1	2	3	4
4.	I find that my values and the organization's values very similar.	0	1	2	3	4
5.	I regularly talk to friends about the school as a place where it is great to work.	0	1	2	3	4
6.	I am really happy that I chose this school to work for.	0	1	2	3	4

Thank you so much for completing the questionnaire.