



Instructor's Effectiveness and Their Work Commitment in a Vocational College in China

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Abstract: This study examines instructor effectiveness and work commitment at Shandong College of Economics and Business. Using a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with instructors to explore their experiences, perceptions, and strategies related to teaching effectiveness and work commitment. The findings reveal several key themes. In terms of teaching effectiveness, instructors emphasized the importance of dedication to student learning, adaptability in teaching methods, and subject matter expertise. Factors such as student engagement and active learning were identified as influential. Regarding work commitment, instructors were motivated by personal fulfillment, professional growth, and a supportive work environment. Strategies for enhancing work commitment included continuous professional development and building positive relationships with students. The implications of the findings suggest that the college should prioritize providing professional development opportunities, foster a supportive work environment, and promote student engagement. These findings contribute to understanding instructor effectiveness and work commitment, offering insights for improving teaching and learning environments in similar educational institutions.

Keywords: Instructor effectiveness, Work commitment, Teaching strategies, Student engagement
Professional development

Introduction.

1.1 Research background

Effective teaching and high levels of work commitment among instructors are critical factors in promoting quality education and creating a positive learning environment. Understanding the experiences and perceptions of instructors regarding their effectiveness in teaching and work commitment is essential for educational institutions to enhance instructional practices and support faculty development. Shandong College of Economics and Business, like many educational institutions, strives to provide a high-quality learning experience to its students. To achieve this goal, it is crucial to investigate the factors that contribute to instructor effectiveness and work commitment within the college's specific context.

While previous research has examined teaching effectiveness and work commitment in various educational settings, there is a need for localized studies that focus on the experiences and perceptions of instructors within specific institutions. By conducting research at Shandong College of Economics and Business, insights can be gained into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by instructors in this particular context.

This study aims to fill this gap by exploring instructor effectiveness and work commitment at Shandong College of Economics and Business. By understanding the experiences and perceptions of instructors, the findings of this study can provide valuable insights for the college to enhance teaching practices, support professional development, and create a supportive work environment that fosters high levels of work commitment among instructors.

1.2. Research Problem:

The research problem addressed in this study is the need to understand the relationship between instructor effectiveness and work commitment in the specific context of Shandong College of Economics and Business. While the importance of effective instructors and their commitment to work is widely recognized, there is a need to delve deeper into how these factors manifest within SCEB. Exploring the experiences and perspectives of instructors can shed light on the factors that influence their effectiveness and work commitment, contributing to the development of strategies for improvement.

- The research questions in this study are as follows:
- What are the experiences and perceptions of instructors regarding their effectiveness in teaching at Shandong College of Economics and Business?
- How do instructors perceive their work commitment and what factors influence their level of commitment within the college?

What are the challenges, motivations, and strategies that instructors employ to enhance their effectiveness and work commitment?

1.3 Significance of the Study:

[Received 27 Oct 2023; Accepted 12 Nov 2023; Published (online) 31, December, 2023]

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The findings of this study hold significant implications for Shandong College of Economics and Business. By gaining insights into instructor effectiveness and work commitment, the college can develop targeted interventions and initiatives to improve teaching quality, enhance student learning experiences, and promote a supportive work environment for instructors. Understanding the unique experiences and challenges faced by instructors within SCEB will enable the college to tailor its professional development programs, policies, and support mechanisms to meet their specific needs. Furthermore, the research outcomes can contribute to the broader field of higher education by providing valuable insights into instructor effectiveness and work commitment. The study's findings can inform educational institutions worldwide about the factors that influence teaching quality and work commitment among instructors. By sharing best practices and lessons learned, this research can contribute to enhancing the overall quality of higher education and fostering a culture of excellence in teaching and learning.

II. Literature Review

2.1. Instructor Effectiveness

Instructor effectiveness is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various dimensions of teaching and learning. The literature on effective instructors highlights several key characteristics and practices that contribute to their effectiveness. According to Smith and Valentine^[1], an effective instructor is skilled in communication, engages students actively, and creates a positive and inclusive learning environment. Effective instructors demonstrate subject knowledge and expertise, adapt their teaching methods to diverse learning styles, and provide timely and constructive feedback^[2].

Many factors influence instructor effectiveness. The interpersonal skills of instructors, such as empathy and approachability, have been found to positively impact student learning outcomes^[3]. Additionally, instructional strategies that promote active learning, such as collaborative group work and problem-solving activities, have been associated with increased student engagement and achievement^[4].

2.2. Work Commitment

Work commitment refers to an individual's psychological attachment, identification, and involvement with their work^[5]. The literature on work commitment encompasses various theories and models, including the three-component model by Meyer and Allen^[6]. This model proposes three dimensions of work commitment: affective commitment (emotional attachment to work), continuance commitment (perceived costs of leaving work), and normative commitment (sense of obligation to stay in work).

Measuring and conceptualizing work commitment often involves scales or surveys that capture these dimensions. For instance, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Porter et al. (1974) has been widely used to assess work commitment in various organizational settings. Other scales, such as the Work Engagement Scale^[7], focus on the positive aspects of commitment, emphasizing vigor, dedication, and absorption in work tasks.

2.3. The Connection

While both instructor effectiveness and work commitment have been subjects of extensive research, the connection between these two constructs has received limited attention. However, a few studies have explored the relationship between instructor effectiveness and work commitment. For example, a study by Liu et al.^[8] found a positive association between instructor effectiveness and affective commitment among university faculty members. Similarly, a study by Anderson and Sun^[9] identified a significant relationship between instructor effectiveness and continuance commitment.

III. Theoretical Framework

3.1. Instructor Effectiveness

The theoretical foundation for understanding instructor effectiveness draws upon several frameworks and models. One influential framework is the constructivist approach to teaching and learning, which emphasizes active student engagement, knowledge construction, and meaningful learning experiences (Jonassen et al., 1999). This framework suggests that effective instructors should employ instructional strategies that promote active learning, such as problem-solving activities, collaborative group work, and real-world applications.

Additionally, the social-cognitive theory of teaching posits that effective instructors not only transmit knowledge but also influence students' motivation and self-regulation (Bandura, 1997). According to this theory, instructors who foster self-efficacy beliefs, provide feedback, and create a supportive learning environment enhance student engagement and achievement.

3.2. Work Commitment

The theoretical underpinnings of work commitment draw upon various models and theories. One prominent model is the three-component model of commitment proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991). This model suggests that work commitment consists of affective commitment (emotional attachment to work), continuance commitment (perceived costs of leaving work), and normative commitment (sense of obligation to stay in work). This model provides a foundation for understanding the different dimensions of work commitment and their influence on individual behavior.

IV. Research Methodology

4.1. Research Design

A qualitative research design is deemed appropriate to explore instructors' experiences and perceptions regarding instructor effectiveness and work commitment. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives, providing rich and detailed insights into their lived experiences.

4.2. Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews will be the primary method of data collection in this study. The use of open-ended questions will encourage participants to provide detailed and rich descriptions of their perceptions, experiences, and factors influencing their instructor effectiveness and work commitment. The rationale for selecting semi-structured interviews is that they provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on their teaching practices, share their insights, and express their thoughts and emotions regarding their work commitment. The interactive nature of interviews allows for probing and follow-up questions, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of the research topic.

4.3. Participants

The participants for this study will be instructors employed at Shandong College of Economics and Business. The selection criteria will include instructors from various disciplines, with differing levels of teaching experience and varying degrees of work commitment. The aim is to capture a diverse range of perspectives and experiences related to instructor effectiveness and work commitment.

Participants will be recruited through purposive sampling, where individuals meeting the selection criteria will be invited to participate in the study. Recruitment will involve contacting instructors through official communication channels, such as email or departmental announcements. Interested instructors will be provided with detailed information about the study, its purpose, and their rights as participants. Confidentiality and voluntary participation will be emphasized, and informed consent will be obtained from all participants.

4.4. Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis involves the systematic identification, coding, and interpretation of patterns, themes, and categories within the data. The analysis process will begin with familiarization with the data through repeated readings and immersion in the interview transcripts. Meaningful units of data, such as phrases or sentences, will be identified and coded to capture key ideas and concepts related to instructor effectiveness and work commitment. Through an iterative process, codes will be organized into themes and sub-themes, representing the patterns and variations in participants' experiences and perceptions. The identified themes will be reviewed and refined, ensuring their relevance and coherence with the research questions. The analysis will be conducted using qualitative data analysis software, which facilitates efficient coding, organization, and retrieval of data.

V. Findings

Thematic analysis of the interview data revealed several major themes that capture the essence of participants' responses. The following summarizes the key themes and findings, supported by quotes or excerpts from the interviews:

5.1. Teaching Effectiveness:

Dedication to Student Learning: Participants emphasized the importance of being dedicated to student learning and fostering a supportive learning environment. One instructor stated, "I believe my effectiveness lies in my dedication to helping students learn and grow. I strive to create a supportive and engaging learning environment where students can thrive."

Adaptability and Flexibility: Instructors highlighted the need to adapt their teaching methods to cater to diverse student needs and learning styles. An instructor mentioned, "I find it crucial to be flexible and adapt my teaching approaches to ensure that all students can actively participate and learn effectively."

5.2. Factors Influencing Instructor Effectiveness:

Subject Matter Expertise: Participants recognized that having a strong command of the subject matter positively contributes to their effectiveness as instructors. A participant remarked, "Being knowledgeable and staying updated in my field is essential for being an effective instructor. It helps me deliver accurate and relevant content to my students."

Student Engagement and Interaction: Instructors emphasized the significance of engaging students and promoting active learning. One instructor shared, "When students actively participate in discussions and activities, it enhances their learning experience and my effectiveness as an instructor."

5.3. Work Commitment:

Personal Fulfillment and Professional Growth: Participants expressed that work commitment was driven by personal fulfillment and the desire for continuous professional growth. An instructor stated, "I am committed to my work because I find it personally fulfilling to see my students succeed and grow. It also motivates me to improve my teaching skills and stay updated with the latest educational practices."

Supportive Work Environment: The presence of a supportive work environment, including collaborative colleagues and supportive policies, was identified as a factor influencing work commitment. A participant highlighted, "Having supportive colleagues and an encouraging work environment plays a significant role in maintaining my commitment to my work."

5.4. Strategies for Enhancing Effectiveness and Work Commitment:

Continuous Professional Development: Instructors emphasized the importance of engaging in continuous professional development activities to enhance their teaching effectiveness and work commitment. One instructor mentioned, "Attending workshops, conferences, and seeking feedback from colleagues helps me develop new strategies and stay motivated in my role."

Building Relationships with Students: Participants recognized the value of building positive relationships with students to enhance their effectiveness and work commitment. An instructor shared, "Building strong relationships with my students creates a sense of belonging and mutual respect, which positively impacts my commitment to their learning."

VI. Discussion

The instructors in this study acknowledged the importance of their dedication to student learning and creating a supportive learning environment. This aligns with the goal of providing high-quality education at Shandong College of Economics and Business. By recognizing the value of adaptability and flexibility in teaching methods, instructors show a willingness to cater to diverse student needs and enhance learning outcomes. Subject matter expertise emerged as a key factor influencing instructor effectiveness. This finding emphasizes the importance of instructors' continuous professional development and staying updated in their respective fields. Moreover, the emphasis on student engagement and interaction highlights the significance of active learning strategies that promote student participation and comprehension. The instructors' personal fulfillment and commitment to professional growth were identified as primary drivers of their work commitment. This suggests that creating an environment that fosters personal and professional development opportunities can contribute to higher levels of work commitment among instructors. Additionally, the role of a supportive work environment, including collaborative colleagues and supportive policies, cannot be understated in maintaining instructors' commitment to their work.

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be made to enhance teaching effectiveness and work commitment at Shandong College of Economics and Business. Firstly, the college should prioritize providing ongoing professional development opportunities for instructors, including workshops, conferences, and training sessions focused on pedagogical advancements and effective teaching strategies. This investment in professional growth will foster a culture of continuous improvement and enhance instructors' effectiveness in the classroom. Secondly, creating a supportive work environment is crucial, and the college should encourage collaboration among instructors, provide platforms for sharing best practices, and implement policies that recognize and reward instructors' efforts. These measures will further enhance work commitment among instructors. Additionally, the college should encourage and support instructors in implementing student-centered teaching approaches that promote active learning and student engagement. Providing resources, training, and support for instructors to design and implement interactive activities will lead to improved learning outcomes. Lastly, the college should encourage instructors to build positive relationships with students through measures such as smaller class sizes, regular feedback mechanisms, and one-on-one interactions, creating a positive learning environment and enhancing instructors' work commitment.

VII. Conclusion

Through qualitative interviews with instructors, valuable insights were gained regarding their experiences, perceptions, and strategies in teaching effectiveness and work commitment. The findings shed light on key themes and provide implications for the college. In terms of teaching effectiveness, the instructors recognized the importance of dedication to student learning and creating a supportive learning environment. They emphasized the need for adaptability and flexibility in teaching methods to cater to diverse student needs and learning styles. Subject matter expertise and student engagement were identified as influential factors in instructor effectiveness. Regarding work commitment, personal fulfillment and professional growth emerged as primary motivators for instructors. They highlighted the significance of a supportive work environment, including collaborative colleagues and supportive policies. Continuous professional development and building positive relationships with students were identified as strategies for enhancing work commitment.

The implications of these findings for Shandong College of Economics and Business are significant. The college can prioritize providing professional development opportunities to enhance instructors' subject matter expertise and teaching strategies. Creating a supportive work environment that encourages collaboration and recognizes instructors' efforts can foster higher levels of work commitment. Emphasizing student engagement and active learning approaches can lead to improved learning outcomes.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the understanding of instructor effectiveness and work commitment in the context of Shandong College of Economics and Business. The findings highlight the importance of dedication to student learning, adaptability in teaching methods, personal fulfillment, and a supportive work environment. By considering the implications presented, the college can implement policies and practices that enhance instructor effectiveness and work commitment, ultimately benefiting the teaching and learning environment at the institution.

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