Does Basic Work Needs Satisfaction Mediate between Psychological Empowerment and Career Commitment of Teachers?

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Abstract

This study investigated the mediating effects of the satisfaction of basic work psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) on the relationship between psychological empowerment and career commitment among teachers. Two hundred and twelve (212) teachers randomly sampled from 24 secondary schools in Ijebu North Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria participated in the study. Data were collected using three validated instruments and analysed using the parallel mediation process of the multiple mediation macros (Hayes, 2013) on SPSS 21.0 with bootstrapping set at 1,000. Findings revealed that psychological empowerment had significant total (c = .183; p < .05) and direct (c' = .092; p < .01) effects on teachers' career commitment. Keeping other mediators constant, there were significant indirect effects of autonomy (Coeff = .161; p < .05) and competence (Coeff = .445; p < .001) but no significant indirect effect of relatedness (Coeff = .019; p > .05) on the relationship between psychological empowerment and teachers' career commitment. Psychological empowerment therefore has significant total and direct effects on career commitment. It also has significant indirect effect on career commitment through the mediating roles of autonomy and competence but not through relatedness. Implications of the study along with suggestions for practice and research were highlighted.

Keywords: *Basic Work Psychological Needs Satisfaction; Career Commitment; Mediating Effects; Psychological Empowerment*

1. Introduction

Entrance into the teaching profession over the years in Nigeria has been mostly by chance and not by choice. This is observable when candidates for admission into University programmes failed to meet the cut-off point for their preferred courses and were asked to go for education as an option. It is expected therefore that career commitment of teachers would be a mixture of the positive and the negative. Also, when government fails to provide the necessary enabling environment for appropriate, adequate and meaning teaching and learning, it is expected that career commitment would be lowered. Again, in the event that salaries and emoluments are not paid, teachers may tend to find other means of survival rather than being committed to their career.

The concept of commitment within the organisational context has been severally noted. Such a derivation like organisational commitment which has gained much prominence in theory, research and practice has been observed (Akinbode & Fagbohungbe, 2012; Akinyemi, 2014; Erdheim, Wang, & Zickar, 2006; Hassan, Hassan, & Mabekoje, 2008; Majekodunmi, 2013; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991; 1997; Morrow, 2011; Morrow, McElroy, & Scheibe, 2012; Mowday, Porter, & Steer, 1982; Ng, Butts, Vandenberg, DeJoy, & Wilson, 2006; Ng & Feldman, 2008; 2011; Ogunjinmi, Onadeko, Ladebo, & Ogunjinmi, 2014). Other variants like professional commitment (Bogler & Somech, 2004; Chiang, Lee, Chu, Han, & Hsiao, 2016; Kong *et al.*, 2016; Nesje, 2016; Perry, Hunter, & Currall, 2016), occupational commitment (Chang, Chi, & Miao. 2007; Gwyn, 2011; Klassen & Chiu, 2011; Nägele & Neuenschwander, 2014; Weng & McElroy; 2012), job commitment (Farrell & Rusbult, 1981; Kontos & Riessen, 1993), and career commitment (Duffy, Dik, & Steger, 2011; Fu, 2011; Fu & Chen, 2015; Niu, 2010; Orkibi, 2010; 2016; Wang, Chiang, & Lee, 2014) have been

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noted and studied. However, career commitment has not been given much attention as organisational commitment has enjoyed.

Career commitment has been defined in several ways. Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) thought career commitment to be people's motivation to work towards personal advancement in their profession. However, Colarelli and Bishop (1990) expressed career commitment in terms of the development of personal career goals, the attachment to, identification with, and involvement in those goals. They noted that career commitment entail self-generated goals and devotion to one's own career. To Goulet and Singh (2002), career commitment is the extent to which employees identify with and values their profession or vocation and the amount of time and effort spent acquiring relevant knowledge. Drawing from the works of Blau (1985), Greenhaus (1971), Hall (1971) and London (1983), Carson and Bedeian (1994) suggest an alternative multidimensional idea of career commitment which comprise of three dimensions: career identity, career planning and career resilience. Career identity involves the establishing a close emotional association with one's career, while career planning determines one's developmental needs and setting career goals, and career resilience deals with resisting career disruption in the face of adversity (Lydon & Zanna, 1990).

Employees with high career commitment therefore are expected to show such characteristics that would enhance career success (Kidd & Green, 2006), subjective career success as in career satisfaction, and objective career success as in salary level (Poon, 2004; career satisfaction through self-efficacy (Ballout, 2009) as well as learning motivation and learning transfer (Cheng & Ho, 2011). Literature has established relationships between career commitment and such variables like students' professional identity (Orkibi, 2010), self-efficacy (Niu, 2010), calling (Duffy, Dik, & Steger, 2011), satisfaction with nature of work and contingency rewards (Schudrich *et al.*, 2012), career satisfaction (Day & Allen, 2004; Goulet & Singh, 2002), career success (Jones & Withmore, 1995; Poon, 2004), job involvement (Blau, 1989). Lee, Carswell, and Allen (2000) contend that the higher the job satisfaction of an employee, the higher the tendency for career commitment. Also, when the level of organisational commitment is high, there is the tendency for career commitment to be high (Cohen, 1996; Lee, Carswell, & Allen, 2000; Morrow & McElroy, 1986).

Specifically, career commitment has been shown to be influenced by intern anxiety and internships outcomes (Wang *et al.*, 2014), career satisfaction (Fu, 2011; Fu & Chen, 2015), professional self-efficacy, threat of professional obsolescence and career investment (Fu, 2011), employees' clear perception of their role (Kalkavan & Katrinli, 2014), and career satisfaction (Aryee & Debah, 1993; Myrtle, Chen, Lui, & Fahey, 2011). In all, research on career commitment of teachers has not been relegated. Several studies (Adeyemo & Aremu, 1999; Adio & Popoola, 2010; Arogundade, Arogundade, & Oladapo, 2014; Smith, Conley, & You, 2015; Tamir & deKramer, 2011; You & Conley, 2015) have been conducted on career commitment on teachers. This emphasizes the importance of the concept to the entire school organisation in general and teachers in particular.

As far back as 1988, the practice of empowering subordinate is a principal component of managerial and organisational effectiveness (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Much has been written on empowerment in different levels vis-à-vis individual/psychological; sociological, and management/organisational. More broadly, however, empowerment explains the ability of management to create a working environment that shapes an individual's perception of his/her work role in a way that motivates work behaviour (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). This includes (i) worker's perception of the meaning of their job on them; (ii) their sense of competence in the job; (iii) how much self-determination they believe they have in the job; and (iv) low much impart they believe they have in their job (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

The focus of this study however, is psychological empowerment that is designed to produce a psychological state within which teachers feel more in charge of their own work (Wan, 2005). Psychological empowerment has been described in several studies as individual subjective feelings of competence, responsibility and greater control over one's life (Bracht, 1999; Rissel, 1994; Wallerstein, 1992; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). To be psychologically empowered therefore means that the individual moves towards autonomy, and is explained as being able to decide personal plans (Tengland, 2007). Psychological empowerment is a motivational construct. This is built around teachers' individual subjective experience of being empowered. Spreitzer (1995) defines employees empowerment as intrinsic task motivation manifested in a set of four cognitions (meaning, competence, self determination and impact) reflecting an individual's orientation to his or her work role. Whereas meaning is the worth of work goals or purposes judged by an individual's insight relative to his or her own personal assignment or expectations, self-determination is an individual's sense of having choice in instigating and regulating actions. Competence refers to self-efficacy specific to work; that is, the individual's capacity to carry out work activities with necessary skills and knowledge. Impact on the other hand is the extent to which a person can manipulate strategic, administrative or operating outcomes at work.

Psychological empowerment has been found to be related to such organisational variables as work satisfaction (Brown & Peterson, 1994; Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959; Liden, Wayne, &

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Sparrowe, 2000; Niehoff, Enz, & Grover, 1990), organisational commitment (Eisenberg, Fasolo, & Daris-La Mantro, 1990; Kanter, 1983; Kraimer, Seibert, & Liden, 1999; Liden *et al.*, 2000), and job performance (Ashforth, 1989; Lawler, 1992; Liden *et al.*, 2000). Psychological empowerment also predicts job satisfaction and productivity (Patah *et al.*, 2009; Spreitzer, 1995) and commitment (Malik, Chugtai, Iqbal, & Ramzan, 2013). Teacher empowerment is a vital dimension of the school's organization. This has been defined as empowering teachers to participate in group decisions and to have real decision making roles in the school community (Leiberman, 1989).

Teachers' empowerment has been severally studied (Bogler & Somech, 2004; Ghaemi & Sabokrouh, 2014; Kimwarey, Chirure, & Omondi, 2014; Lie & Nie, 2014). In fact teacher's empowerment has been found to be related to organisational citizenship behaviour (Aksel, Serinkan, Kiziloglu, & Aksoy, 2013; Cheasakul & Varma, 2016), organisational commitment (Hamid, Nordin, Adnan, & Sirun, 2013) and teacher self-efficacy (Veisi, Azizifar, Gowhary, & Jamalinesari, 2015). Several studies have indicated positive relationships between psychological empowerment and commitment. However, more of the researches have been on organisational commitment (Ambad & Bahron, 2012; Choong, Wong, & Lau, 2011; Khanna & Gupta, 2016; Malik *et al.*, 2013) than career commitment specifically.

In most educational reforms, the role of teachers has been found to be played down (Wan, 2005). For teachers to be truly empowered, they need a supporting environment in which they are cared for, not isolated, and are given opportunities to participate regularly in decision making that affects them as teachers (Peters & Austin, 1985). When teachers participate in decision making, commitment, willingness, and dedication to work become very strong.

Central to the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is the concept of basic psychological needs that are assumed to the innate and universal. According to the theory, the needs must be uninterruptedly satisfied for individuals to develop and function in healthy or optimal ways (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Within the SDT, basic psychological needs are defined as the nutrients needed by humans to fulfil their potentials and maintain their growth, integrity and health (Van de Broeck, Vansteenkiste, DeWitte, & Lens, 2008). Basic psychological needs are determined as: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. These are intrinsic psychological needs. The need for autonomy refers to one's willpower, and desire to act freely in accordance with one's own interests and values. The need for relatedness implies one's need to interact, connect to and care for other people. The need for competence is one's having a sense of effectiveness while doing something (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). In all, autonomy, belongingness and competence lead to positive feelings especially when we accomplish, produce or succeed at something, experience a close relationship with another person, and become autonomous and self-regulating (Sheldon & Schüler, 2011). The satisfaction of basic needs have been observed to engender work engagement (Silman, 2004), employee wellbeing (Lynch, Plant, & Ryan, 2005), job satisfaction (Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993) and job performance (Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004). Specifically, satisfaction of basic needs have been employed within the work setting.

Mediation analysis is a statistical method employed in the explanation of the phenomena wherein some antecedent independent variables transmit their effects on the consequent dependent variable through an intervening mediating variable. The model can be simple (with one mediator) or multiple with more than one mediator. Even in multiple mediation, is it parallel or serial (Hayes, 2013). Literature exists in the investigation of multiple mediation models, especially of the parallel nature. For example, models involving two mediators (Calogero & Jot, 2011; Lee *et al.*, 2007), three mediators (Duffy, Allen, & Dik, 2011; Reid & Palomores, 2009), four mediators (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; Lecheler, de Vreese, & Slouthuus, 2011) as well as five mediators (Brandt & Reyna, 2010; Zadeh, Farnia, & Ungerleider, 2010) have been investigated. In some cases, six mediators (Barnhofer & Chittka, 2010; Gonzales, Reynolds, & Skewes, 2011) and even seven mediators (Anagnostopoulos, Slater, & Fitzsimmons, 2010; Hsu *et al.*, 2012) have been examined.

Studies have established the mediating role of work basic psychological needs satisfaction between the transformational behaviours of a coach and athlete training behaviours (Smith *et al.*, 2012). Also, basic needs satisfaction mediates the effect of social context on outcomes such as well-being and performance (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs mediates the relationship between job autonomy, manager support for autonomy and job heuristic with the autonomous motivation types (Hewett, 2000). Specifically, autonomy has been found to mediate between context and intrinsic and integrated motivation (Reeve & Deci, 1996). Also, competence has been observed to mediate in the relationship between context and identified motivation (Reeve & Deci, 1996).

In all, no literature could be located to have investigated the mediating role of work basic psychological needs satisfaction on psychological empowerment and career commitment of teachers. The concern of this study is to determine the mediating role of basic work needs satisfaction on teachers' psychological empowerment and career commitment. A multiple parallel mediational role model (Figure 1) was therefore built on the proposition that psychological empowerment would influence career commitment of teachers directly as well as indirectly through the dimensions of basic work psychological needs. Hence, it was hypothesized that the satisfaction of autonomy, relatedness, competence

as basic work psychological needs would mediate the relationship between psychological empowerment and career commitment of teachers.
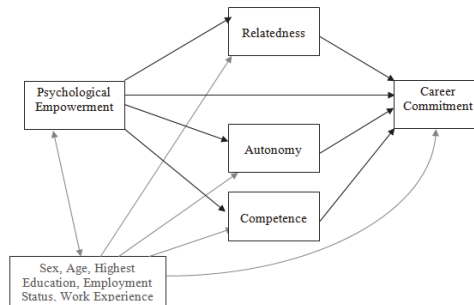

Figure 1: Conceptual model for the study

2. Method

2.1 Design

A survey research design was adopted for this study. The dependent variable of the study was career commitment; the independent variable was psychological empowerment while the mediating variables are the work psychological needs satisfaction dimensions of autonomy, competence and relatedness.

2.2 Participants

Two hundred and twelve teachers were sampled from 24 out of the existing 36 secondary (Junior and Senior) schools in Ijebu North Local Government Area of Ogun State. The teachers were selected through a stratified random sampling process. The local government area was divided into the two political zones with 12 schools selected randomly from each zone. From each of the schools, teachers who gave expressed verbal consent to participate in the study were surveyed. A total of 240 questionnaire protocols were distributed out of which 212 returned and usable protocols were used for analysis. A return rate of 88.33% was recorded. The study sample consisted of 58 (27.4%) male and 154 (72.6%) female teachers within the age bracket of below 35 to above 55 years.

2.3 Measures

2.3.1 Psychological Empowerment Instrument.

Psychological empowerment was accessed using the Psychological Empowerment Instrument designed by Spreitzer (1985) to measure psychological empowerment based on Thomas and Velthouse's (1990) four-dimensional definition to meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. This is a 12-item self-report scale (three items per sub scale) anchored on a 7-point Likert Scale ranging from *very strongly disagree* = 1 to *very strongly agree* = 7.

Sample items include for meaning "The work I do is meaningful"; for competence "I have mastered the skills necessary to do my job"; for self-determination "I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work"; and for impact "I have a great deal of control over what happens in my department". Criterion-related validity reveals that subscale scores were significantly but moderately related to career intentions and organizational commitment. Internal consistency ranges from .62 to .74 for the total scale and from .79 to .85 for the subscales. Higher score indicates higher perception of empowerment.

2.3.2 Career Commitment Measure.

Career commitment was measured using a three-dimensional, 12-item self-report scale; Career Commitment Measure developed by Carson and Bedeian (1994). The scale was designed to assess three components of career: career resilience, career identity, and career planning. Example items on the scale are; for career resilience (5 items: e.g. Given

the problems I encounter in this line of work/career field, I sometimes wonder if I get enough out of it); for career identity (4 items e.g. This line of work/career has a great deal of personal meaning to me); and for career planning (3 items e.g. I do not have a strategy for achieving my goals in this line of work/career field). The scale is measured along a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. Reliability coefficients for the three factors ranged from 0.79 to 0.85 (Carson & Bedeian, 1994).

2.3.3 Basic Needs Satisfaction at Work Scale.

Basic work needs satisfaction was assessed using the Basic Needs Satisfaction at Work Scale; a 21-item questionnaire developed by Deci *et al.* (2001) to assess the extent to which employees experience satisfaction of their three intrinsic needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence on their job. There were 6 items for competence, 8 items for relatedness, and 7 items for autonomy, to which participants responded on 7-point, Likert-type scales ranging from 1 = *not at all true* to 7 = *very true*. Sample items are as follows: for autonomy, "I feel pressured at work"; for relatedness, "There are not many people at work that I am close to"; and for competence, "I do not feel very competent when I am at work".

The Cronbach's alpha ranging from .83 to .89 has been reported for the total need-satisfaction and for the autonomy .62 to .79; relatedness .57 to .84, and competence .73 to .81 subscales. Intrinsic need satisfaction have been reported to be positively correlated with work performance ratings and with psychological adjustment (Baard *et al.*, 2000). The Basic Need Satisfaction at Work Scale has been used most often (Deci *et al.*, 2001; Ilardi *et al.*, 1993; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992).

2.4 Procedure

The instruments were administered personally by the researcher to the participants in their various schools. Principals of the sampled schools were approached for permission to conduct of the study. Participants were met at their staff rooms and addressed on the purpose of the study. They were informed that responses would be kept classified and that data collected would be strictly used for the purpose of the research. The instruments were collected back immediately and later scored. The data obtained from the instruments were analysed using descriptive statistics of means, standard deviation, range as well as Pearson Product Moment Correlation and inferential statistics. The parallel mediation model of the multiple mediation on process macros (Hayes, 2013) on Multiple Regression Analysis to test the research hypothesis with bootstrapping set at 1,000.

3. Results

3.1 Preliminary Analysis

Initial analysis was conducted on the data to determine the range, mean, and standard deviation of the scores of the variables of the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was also conducted. Results are as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics including minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation of study variable

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Psychological Empowerment	212	22.00	84.00	65.613	13.673
Autonomy	212	15.00	47.00	32.693	6.556
Competence	212	16.00	42.00	33.269	6.291
Relatedness	212	22.00	56.00	40.797	6.511
Career Commitment	212	12.00	60.00	43.033	7.572

Table 2: Correlations coefficients of the bivariate relationships among study variables

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Psychological Empowerment	-				
2 Autonomy	.344***	-			
3 Competence	.339***	.334***	-		
4 Relatedness	.342***	.423***	.450***	-	
5 Career Commitment	.331***	.302***	.455***	.273***	-

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$

The results in Table 2 indicated that there are highly significant positive relationships among the study variables. Career commitment correlated with psychological empowerment, autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Also psychological empowerment was significantly related to autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy, competence, and relatedness as dimensions of work psychological needs satisfaction were found to be significantly and positively correlated.

Table 3: Independent t-test statistics of differences in psychological empowerment, autonomy, competence, relatedness and career commitment by sex

	Male (n = 58)		Female (n = 154)		
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Statistics
Psychological Empowerment	67.466	12.891	64.916	13.933	$t_{(210)} = 1.212$; $p = .227$
Autonomy	33.207	6.293	32.500	6.662	$t_{(210)} = .699$; $p = .485$
Competence	33.862	6.062	33.046	6.380	$t_{(210)} = .842$; $p = .401$
Relatedness	41.035	6.161	40.708	6.655	$t_{(210)} = .325$; $p = .746$
Career Commitment	42.569	7.153	43.208	7.740	$t_{(210)} = -.547$; $p = .585$

The results in Table 3 revealed that there are no significant differences between male and female participants' level of psychological empowerment, autonomy, competence, relatedness and career commitment. Generally, the p-values are greater than .05

3.2 Multiple Mediation Analysis

Results of data analysis are presented in Table 4

Table 4: Regression Coefficients, Standard Errors, and Model Summary Information for the Parallel Mediation of Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness between Psychological Empowerment on Career Commitment of Teachers

	Antecedent	Consequent											
		M_1(Autonomy)			M_2 (Competence)			M_3(Relatedness)			Y (Career Commitment)		
		Coeff	SE	p	Coeff	SE	p	Coeff	SE	p	Coeff	SE	p
X	Psychological Empowerment	a_1 .165	.031	<.001	a_2 .157	.030	<.001	a_3 .162	.031	<.001	c' .092	.037	.014
M_1	Autonomy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	b_1 .161	.081	.049
M_2	Competence	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	b_2 .445	.085	<.001
M_3	Relatedness	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	b_3 -.019	.085	.822
	Constant	i_{m1} 22.283	3.300	<.001	i_{m2} 28.043	3.182	<.001	i_{m3} 34.150	3.287	<.001	i_Y 15.136	4.626	<.001
		$R^2 = .157$			$R^2 = .149$			$R^2 = .152$			$R^2 = .278$		
		$F_{(6,205)} = 6.382$; $p < .001$			$F_{(6,205)} = 6.382$; $p < .001$			$F_{(6,205)} = 6.382$; $p < .001$			$F_{(6,205)} = 6.382$; $p < .001$		

$^*p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$

The results in Table 4 revealed that when sex, age, highest educational level, employment status, and work experience were kept constant, there was an evidence of total effect of psychological empowerment on career commitment of teachers ($c = .185$; $p < .001$). There was also an evidence of direct effect of psychological empowerment on career commitment of teachers, independent of autonomy, competence, and relatedness ($c' = .092$; $p < .05$).

Results showed that there was a significant indirect effect of autonomy on psychological empowerment on career commitment of teachers when both competence and relatedness were kept constant (*Coeff* = .161; $p < .05$). This implies that teachers who differ in one unit of psychological empowerment are estimated to differ by .027 units in their reported level of career commitment as a result of the tendency for teachers under relatively more psychological empowerment top feel more autonomous which in turns would translate to grater career commitment.

Results also revealed that there was a significant indirect effect of competence on psychological empowerment on career commitment of teachers when both autonomy and relatedness were controlled (*Coeff* = .445; $p < .001$). This implies that teachers who differ in one unit of psychological empowerment are estimated to differ by .070 units in their reported level of career commitment as a result of the predisposition for teachers under comparatively more psychological empowerment top feel more competent which in turns would transform to grater career commitment.

Results however showed that there was no significant indirect effect of relatedness on psychological empowerment on career commitment of teachers when both autonomy and competence were kept constant (*Coeff* = -.019; *p* > .05). The implication being that teachers who differ in one unit of psychological empowerment are estimated to differ by -.003 units in their reported level of career commitment consequent upon inclination of teachers under rather more psychological empowerment not to feel more in relatedness which in turns could consequently not translate to grater career commitment. The statistical model for the study is presented in Figure 2.
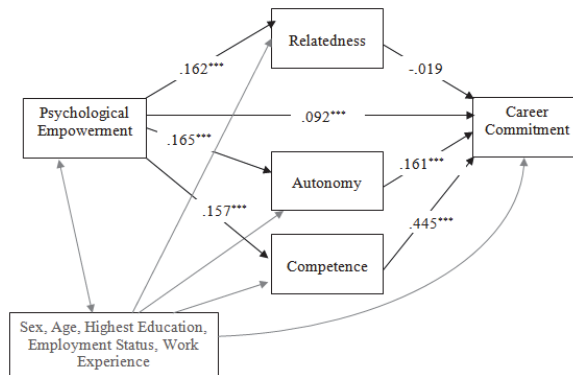

Figure 2: Statistical model for the study (*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001)

4.   Discussion

This study examined the mediating effects of work psychological needs satisfaction factors of; autonomy, competence, and relatedness on the relationship between teachers' psychological empowerment and career commitment.

First, preliminary analysis on the relationships among the study variables was conducted. Analyses showed that psychological empowerment has significant relationships with autonomy, competence and relatedness. Also, the relationships between career commitment and autonomy, relatedness, and competence were significant and positive.

It is not out of place to observe positive significant relationships among the study variables. These trends of relationships are expected, going by previous researches. Whereas no direct studies have been conducted on the relationship between psychological empowerment and career commitment, relationships have been found between psychological empowerment and organisational commitment (bin Abdullah, Almadhoun, & Ling, 2015; Choong *et al.,* 2011; Huang, Shi, Zhang, & Cheung, 2006; Joo & Shim, 2010).   Studies have also indicated the possibilities of significant relationship between psychological empowerment and basic needs satisfaction. For example, Quaglia, Marion, and McIntire (1991) noted that satisfied teachers have more positive attitudes toward students, higher self-efficacy, increased feelings of empowerment. Satisfying basic needs therefore makes individuals feel fully functional (Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2008). These feelings motivate people intrinsically to maintain this level of needs satisfaction by internalizing extant values and regulations in social contexts (Baard *et al.,* 2004). When organizations offer fulfilment to employees it would engender commitment (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009).

The mediation analysis revealed that there are total and direct effects of psychological empowerment on career commitment as well as indirect effects of psychological empowerment on career commitment through autonomy, competence but not through relatedness. The observed direct effect of psychological empowerment on career commitment as hypothesized in this study is spectacular. This finding supports and collaborates the idea that when employees are psychologically empowered, they have the feelings that propels them to be committed. Whereas this study investigated the effect of psychological empowerment on career commitment, it would be expected that not much studies have been conducted to specifically examine the effect of psychological empowerment on career commitment. Finding however emerged on the effects of psychological empowerment on commitment variables, especially organisational commitment. Available literature (e.g. Bogler & Somech, 2004; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Liu, Fellows & Chiu, 2006; Raub & Robert, 2007) tend to lend support to this ascertion and therefore supported by the findings of this study. Bogler and Somech (2004) had observed significant positive relationship between empowerment and teachers' organisational and professional commitment. Teachers' empowerment significantly correlated to their feelings of

commitment to the organization and their profession. In essence, the higher the feeling of psychological empowerment, the higher is the level of organizational commitment (Raub & Robert, 2007).

Psychological empowerment also affects organizational commitment for senior and middle level managers in banking sector of Pakistan. The effect of psychological empowerment on organizational commitment for lower level managers was insignificant (Hashmi, Irshad, & Shafiq, 2013). Indirect effect of psychological empowerment on organizational commitment via mediating effect of job satisfaction have also been observed Hashemi, Nadi, Hosseini, Rezvanfar (2012). Psychological empowerment also predicts work engagement (Stander & Rothmann, 2010).

It is not amazing to observe that psychological empowerment has direct effects on work needs satisfaction of autonomy, competence and relatedness respectively. Empowering employees tend to produce the feeling of need satisfaction. According to self-determination theory, growth tendency must be viewed as a dynamic potential that requires proximal and distal conditions of nurturance (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Whereas psychological empowerment has a direct and total effect with a significant prediction of career commitment, the effects of psychological empowerment on career commitment were by competence and autonomy but not by relatedness. The findings of this study are however surprising but revealing, from one perspective, it would have been expected, judging by the findings of previous studies and correlation among variables as observed by this study, that all the factors of basic work psychological needs would mediate between psychological empowerment and career commitment. It is expected that the satisfaction of basic work psychological needs would enhance positive feelings. These positive feelings should reinforce the attainment of natural affiliation and attainment incentives (Sheldon & Schüler, 2011). SDT theory means that for goal pursuit and success, people's basic psychological needs should be satisfied. The concept of needs as noted by Deci and Ryan (2000) is related to the content of motivation which forms a basis for the energization and direction of action.

However, the indirect effect of psychological empowerment on career commitment through work needs satisfaction dimensions of autonomy and competence still points to the influence of the satisfaction of work psychological needs on career commitment. Such differential moderating effects have been observed by Shuhaimi and Marzuki (2015). In a study of the moderating effects of basic needs satisfaction at work on the relationships between burnout, work-family conflict and organizational commitment, it was observed that autonomy moderates the relationships between exhaustion and continuance commitment, and relatedness moderates the relationships between work-family conflict and continuance commitment.

The findings may have great implications on the concept of needs satisfaction in that it may not be in all case that needs satisfaction will lead to career commitment. By the findings of this study, if the sense of belongingness in a work environment is marred, no matter the empowerment of staff, the expected career commitment may not be achieved. Therefore in practice, administrators will have to look into the social interaction pattern and workers' sense of relatedness if any empowerment programme is to be implemented. However, there is a high relationship between psychological empowerment and relatedness but a low relationship between relatedness and career commitment (Table 1). The low correlation between relatedness and career commitment could have accounted for its insignificant mediating effect between psychological empowerment and career commitment. One may also have to see the findings of this study from the perspective of some extraneous variables interplaying the moderating effect of relatedness in the relationship between psychological empowerment and career commitment. Such variables could be identified and further investigated.

5. Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it was concluded that psychological empowerment has significant total and direct effects on career commitment. It also has significant indirect effect on career commitment through the mediating roles of autonomy and competence but not through relatedness.

6. Recommendations

The findings of this study have established the total and direct effects of psychological empowerment on career commitment. Hence, it would be recommended that for teachers to be committed to their career, psychological empowerment policies and programmes should be put in place. This could be in terms of participatory decision making, delegation of authority, and encouragement of initiatives.

Teacher sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness should also be encouraged as they mediate the

relationship between psychological empowerment and career commitment. Teachers should be able to take charge of some school responsibilities without much interference or influence from school authorities. In-service training and development programmes such as workshops, seminars and conferences that would enhance teachers' level of competence should be encouraged.

Further studies may examine factors that may influence the mediating role of relatedness in the relationship between psychological empowerment and career commitment. This study has taken both psychological empowerment and career commitment as one-dimensional, further analysis exploring the dimensions of the variables may be considered. This could be in the form of structural equation modeling.

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