Journal of Education and Educational Research
ISSN: 2957-9465 | Vol. 2, No. 1, 2023

A Study on the Turnover Intention of Substitute Teachers in H School from the Perspective of Psychological Contract.

Liang Zhu

Wenzhou Polytechnic Liang Zhu Zhejiang Wenzhou, China

Abstract: In addition to their regular teaching responsibilities, substitute teachers also have to manage their own self-promotion and handle complaints, which leads to a heavier workload compared to permanent teachers. This study focuses on 285 substitute teachers in School H, and utilizes the statistical analysis tool spss18.0 to demonstrate that the transactional, relational, and developmental dimensions of the substitute teachers' psychological contracts are significantly and negatively related to their intention to leave ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, multiple linear regression shows that the developmental dimension of the psychological contract has the greatest impact on the intention to leave. Finally, the paper provides recommendations for optimizing human resource management in private schools.

Keywords: Psychological contract; Propensity to leave; Substitute teachers.

1. Introduction

As the key players in knowledge-intensive enterprises, attracting, training, and retaining employees is critical to their development. However, the current macroeconomic climate, rapidly changing market environment, and increasing employee expectations have led to an unfavorable employment situation in the Chinese labor market. This is particularly true for knowledge-intensive private schools, where teacher turnover and job hopping are all too common. According to Hire.com's data report, the average turnover cycle for substitute teachers is 1.94 years. Therefore, effectively addressing employee turnover is a primary concern for ensuring the long-term, sustainable development of knowledge-intensive enterprises.

2. A survey of substitute teachers' psychological contracts and tendency to leave in School H

2.1. Research Tool

2.1.1. Basic situation questionnaire

This includes basic information on the gender, age, emotional status, education, and years of service of substitute teachers at School H.

2.1.2. Psychological Contract Inventory

The psychological contract scale, developed by Rousseau (1996) [1] and Li Yuan (2010) [2], was adapted to incorporate the unique characteristics of substitute teachers. The reliability and validity of the scale were tested, resulting in three dimensions: transactional, relational, and developmental, comprising a total of 18 items. Responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Specifically, the scale was scored from 1 to 5.

2.1.3. Turnover Propensity Scale

The Disposition to Leave Scale, originally designed by Thomas (1998) [3] and Mobley (1978) [4], was adapted to include the unique features of substitute teachers in private schools. The scale was tested for reliability and validity and consisted of six questions rated on a five-point Likert scale, where 1 represented "strongly disagree" and 5 represented "strongly agree."

2.2. Distribution and collection of questionnaires

By combining online and offline surveys, a total of 310 questionnaires were distributed across 6 campuses of School H in Zhejiang. The questionnaires were distributed anonymously, and 297 questionnaires were retrieved, of which 285 were valid, resulting in an effective recovery rate of 92%.

3. Analysis of survey results

3.1. Correlation analysis

This paragraph describes using Pearson correlation analysis to demonstrate the relationship between various dimensions of psychological contracts of substitute teachers and their turnover intention at School H, as shown in the table below.

Table 1. Correlation Analysis between Psychological Contract and Propensity to Leave

Transactional Dimension	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Two-Tailed Significance				
Relational Dimension	Pearson Correlation	.625**	1		
	Two-Tailed Significance	.000			
Developmental Dimensions	Pearson Correlation	.536**	.536**	1	
	Two-Tailed Significance	.000	.000		
Tendency to leave	Pearson Correlation	-.627**	-.616**	-.679**	1
	Two-Tailed Significance	.000	.000	.000	

** indicates significant correlation at the .01 level (two-sided)

The table above displays the correlation coefficients between the three dimensions of the psychological contract (i.e., transactional, relational, and developmental) and the propensity to leave, which are -0.627, -0.616, and -0.679,

respectively. These findings suggest that the psychological contract dimensions are significantly and negatively correlated with the propensity to leave ($p < 0.05$). In other words, as the strength of the psychological contract increases in each dimension, employees are less likely to have a propensity to leave.

3.2. Multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used to quantify the impact of the various dimensions of the psychological contract among substitute teachers at H school on their propensity to leave, as shown in the table below

Table 2. Results of regression method analysis of psychological contract and propensity to leave

Test results t-test						
Coefficients a						
		Non-standardized coefficient		Standard coefficient	T	Sig
		B	Standard Error	Trial Version		
3	(Constant)	6.636	.129		38.363	.000
	Developmental Dimensions	-.445	.039	-.382	-9.552	.000
	Transactional Dimension	-.367	.041	-.336	-7.257	.000
	Relational dimension	-.217	.042	-.202	-5.569	.000
a. Dependent variable: propensity to leave						

As indicated in the table above, the coefficient for the developmental dimension of the psychological contract was -0.445, the coefficient for the transactional dimension was -0.367, and the coefficient for the relational dimension was -0.217. These results suggest that, among the dimensions of the psychological contract, the developmental dimension had the greatest impact on substitute teachers' propensity to leave.

4. Recommendations

4.1. Promote career planning

New substitute teachers are often keen to clarify their future career development plans, as they are typically young and lack social experience. Private schools should prioritize the career development needs of new employees and develop a corresponding career management plan. For most substitute teachers, having a clear and structured career plan is not only essential, but it is also important to have access to career advancement opportunities that align with their career goals. Therefore, schools should provide substitute teachers with a fair and adequate space for career advancement, especially for those who perform well. Additionally, the promotion mechanism should be transparent, fair, and open to increase substitute teachers' job satisfaction and reduce their likelihood of leaving.

4.2. Create a good working atmosphere

knowledge workers, face various pressures in their daily work. Therefore, creating a positive work atmosphere, such as providing comfortable leisure areas and establishing a warm office environment, can help substitute teachers take a break from their daily workload and gain spiritual comfort, thereby reducing their dissatisfaction with their work. In addition to improving facilities and infrastructure, it is also essential to appropriately reduce substitute teachers' workloads. High workloads do not always lead to increased productivity, but can instead result in lower motivation and eventually lead to substitute teachers leaving their jobs [5]. Therefore, private schools should prioritize building a comfortable and warm working environment, and proactively assist substitute teachers in reducing their workload to improve their work efficiency and maintain a healthy transactional psychological contract.

4.3. Implementation of psychological contract dynamic management

4.3.1. Management of the construction phase of the psychological contract

The construction of a psychological contract between a teacher and the school begins during the recruitment process, where the training institution and the teacher candidate communicate with each other to establish a foundation for the construction of the psychological contract. Therefore, it is important for the school to clearly communicate the salary and promotion mechanism offered during the recruitment process. As the content of the psychological contract is subjective, there may be misunderstandings between the recruiter and the candidate, so it is crucial for the management of the private school to communicate regularly with the new teacher after they have joined the school to avoid dissatisfaction and negative attitudes due to any misunderstandings of the psychological contract.

4.3.2. The management of the adjustment phase of the psychological contract

The psychological contract is not a static property, and its content will change with the external environment and the individual's growth. Therefore, for the management of private schools, it is necessary to maintain active interaction and communication with substitute teachers to understand the changes in their psychology after they join the school, and to discuss the content of the psychological contract with them, seek common ground, and actively listen to their opinions. In addition, the school can also create a psychological contract file for each substitute teacher, and regularly record their psychological changes at different stages after joining the school, so as to facilitate dynamic adjustment by the management team, improve the job satisfaction of substitute teachers, and reduce their willingness to leave.

4.3.3. Management of the Implementation Stage of the Psychological Contract

The initial psychological contract is established during the recruitment stage, but if substitute teachers find that their salary, benefits, and career plans are significantly different from the promises made by the recruiter, the psychological contract between the two parties may be broken, leading to a greater likelihood of the substitute teachers leaving [6]. To avoid this, schools should assign someone to assess the degree to which the new teacher's psychological expectations are met when they join the school. If there is a significant gap between the actual situation and the substitute teacher's psychological expectations, the school management should focus on this and proactively communicate with the teacher to identify the root causes and promptly come up with solutions to reduce the gap between the teacher's expectations and the reality. This will help to decrease the teacher's willingness to leave and maintain the effectiveness of the psychological contract.

Acknowledgment

We thank Merry. This work was supported in part by a grant from H School.

References

[1] Rousseau, DM & Tijoriwala. Perceived Legitimacy & Unilateral Contract Changes: It Takes a Good Reason to Change a Psychological Contract. Symposium at the SIOP Meetings, San Diago, 1996, April:29.

[2] Thomas.Consequences of the Psychological Contract for the Employment Relationship:A Large Scale Survey[J].Journal of Management Studies,2000(37):903-925.

[3] Mobley Linkages Relationshipbetween job satisfaction employeeturnover[J].Journal AppliedPsychology, 1977, 62:237-240

[4] Li Yuan, Sun Jianmin. Psychological contract in employment relationship: Cognitive differences in "organizational responsibility" from the perspectives of both organization and employees[J]. Management World, 2010(11): 66-85.

[5] Ran Xingping. Exploring the relationship between psychological contract and job performance of knowledge workers [J]. Human Resource Management, 2017(04).

[6] Chen Yang, Liu Pingqing. A study on the destruction of core employees' psychological contract and turnover intention in state-owned holding insurance companies[J]. Insurance Research, 2018(10): 65-74.