A STUDY OF THE SCHOOL CULTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF YANGON REGION

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Abstract. The purpose of this study was to investigate the school culture in Yangon Region, Myanmar. A quantitative survey research design was used, and the school culture scale constructed by Gruenert (2005) was applied. The participants were teachers (N=114) currently working in the public/government schools in Yangon Region. Most of the teachers who participated in this study reported that they had experienced cooperative school culture in their schools. Moreover, the findings revealed significant differences in the school culture related to their school locations (urban and suburban areas) and levels of schools (basic education high schools and middle schools). However, no significant difference was found in school culture in accordance with the length of teaching service.

Keywords: school culture, collaborative school culture, basic education, Yangon region

Introduction

When changes or reforms take place in education, teachers' subject matter knowledge and the skills of classroom management and teaching are generally given much attention, but limited to the personal development of teachers, to reflection on their values and purposes, and to the school cultures in which teachers will learn new skills and knowledge (Hargreaves, 1991). Likewise, Fullan (2007) asserted that the local school culture represents one major set of situational constraints or opportunities for effective change. He continued mentioning that the same program is often successful in one school system but a disaster in another. It means that even though some districts have a bunch of continual innovative achievement records, others seem to fail at whatever they attempt.

According to Peterson & Deal (1998), culture is a set of norms, values, traditions, beliefs, and rituals, that has shaped up over period as people work together, resolve problems and face challenges. These specific informal expectations and values shape the way people think, feel, and act in schools. This highly enduring culture flows into the school and makes it special. However, it depends largely on the school leaders, principals, teachers, and often parents, to help identify, shape, and maintain strong, positive, student-focused cultures. It is unquestionable that without the supportive cultures, reforms will become fading away, and student learning will slip.

Thus, examining the school culture intends analyzing the meanings, values, and attitudes of those working in a given context, as well as how these are conveyed and understood within a community of teachers (Flores, 2004).

Importance of the study

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar belongs to one of the Southeast Asian nations. Specifically, India, China, Bangladesh, Thailand, and Laos are the neighboring countries. Myanmar has initiated a critical transformation to representative democracy in 2010 after fifty years of autocratic military rule.

Since this transition period, the government has been struggling to reform all the political, social and economic situations. Therefore, education system is also under reforms, especially the curriculum of basic education as it plays a major role in the socio-economic development of the nation.

Fullan (2007) asserted that change demands learning to do something new, and interaction is a prerequisite for social learning. Achieving new knowledge, new behaviors, new skills, and new beliefs rest considerably on whether teachers are working as isolated individuals or are exchanging ideas, support, and positive feelings about their work. Therefore, it is widely accepted that the quality of relationships among teachers has a high correlation with implementation. It was in line with Carless (1998) who stated that the supportive management of the principal and fruitful collaboration between the teachers and external teacher educators/researchers seemed to encourage capable teachers in carrying out the innovation.

Thus, in determining the process of implementation, both individual teacher characteristics and collegial or collective culture play equal roles although the principal has occupied an increasingly important role because he or she has always determined the possibility of innovations coming from the outside or teacher initiatives on the inside (Fullan, 2007). What is more, Uğurlu (2009) proposed that teachers are undoubtedly the most important variable especially to change the school culture and create an effective one in the sense that the teacher is reckoned as the administrator of teaching-learning activities by principals, assistant principals, families, and society as well.

It is usual that some schools faced difficulties in building meaningful relationships with their colleagues. This weak interpersonal relationship between staff members at the school normally led to low levels of motivation and weakened practice. Therefore, Kempen & Steyn (2016) mentioned that the staff development that took place in the schools was most successful where the interpersonal professional relationships were rated good.

Thus, it is undeniable that school culture is one of the factors that ensure whether schools are effective both academically and socially. Kalman & Balkar (2017) also said that school culture is a factor that increases or decreases the commitment of teachers to the schools and consequently has an effect on their professional performance. Likewise, Uğurlu (2009) also recognized that a strong school culture is prerequisite for schools that want to be effective and develop themselves.

The study of Wong & Zhang (2014) pointed out that teachers who perceived their school culture more positively were likely to show higher levels of job satisfaction and self-esteem, but less mental health complaints. Moreover, Ronfeldt et al. (2015) also found that teachers improved at greater rates when they worked in schools with better quality of collaboration. In addition, another result of their study revealed that schools and teachers that engaged in better collaboration quality have better achievements of students in math and reading. Thus, they suggested that the collaboration quality of the school is related to student achievement. Likewise, the study of Clark (2019) revealed a strong positive relationship between a school's culture and its outcomes among its students and staff.

Review of related literature

Alvesson (2002) considered culture as a setting in which all these complex, inaccessible, fuzzy, holistic phenomena become comprehensible and meaningful as it is central in trying to understand behavior, social events, institutions, and processes. Culture was also defined by Alvesson (2011) as a shared orientation to social reality created through the negotiation of meaning and the use of symbolism in social interactions. Moreover, Turan & Bektaş (2013) mentioned that it can also be a tool to influence and control other people, and also be used as a way of providing coordination among school staff.

Furthermore, the culture of a group was defined as a collective shared learning of that group by Schein (2010) and Schein & Schein (2017). Besides,

Deal & Peterson (2016) asserted that all aspects of a school are directly or indirectly influenced by culture. They explained in detail that informal conversations in the faculty lunchroom, the type of instruction valued, the nature of problem-solving, and how professional knowledge is viewed are all significantly influenced by culture. Thus, they illustrated several examples of its pervasiveness in the school as follows: (i) culture brings about effectiveness and productivity in school; (ii) culture advances collegiality, communication, and problem-solving skill among school staff; (iii) culture fosters innovation and improvement; (iv) culture constructs commitment and stimulates motivation; (v) culture strengthens the energy, vitality, and trust of school staff, students, and the community; (vi) culture sets its priority on what is important and valued.

Thus, it can be assumed that the culture of an organization plays a prevailing role in impeccable performance. Therefore, any theory of implementation needs to take the diversity of schools into consideration (Rogan & Grayson, 2003). It means that implementation has to consider the context of a particular school – its teachers, pupils, leadership and environment. Hargreaves (1995) also argued that school culture actually plays a crucial role in the study of school dynamics and change. School culture, with a clearer specification of teacher and student cultures and the relationships between them, becomes a variable within the studies of school effectiveness. Moreover, Gruenert (2005) also claimed that school culture and student achievement are not divergent issues for school leaders to consider. The school environment has a direct influence on the teachers' beliefs, professional development, and performance (Zhang & Liu, 2014).

Most of the studies investigating the relationship between culture and performance found empirical support for a direct link. However, 9 out of 10 studies reviewed by Wilderom et al. (2000) argued that the direction and nature of this link between culture and performance are not obvious and carried on to speculate on theoretical underpinnings that the relationship between the two concepts may be recursive and/or influenced by mediating variables (as cited in

Sackmann, 2011). Nevertheless, the majority of the 55 studies reviewed by Sackmann (2011) found out direct effects between culture and performance.

The results of the study of Lee & Louis (2019) also revealed that schools strongly equipped with collaborative cultural elements showed higher levels of school performance than that of their counterparts; there were significant positive relationships between school culture constructs and the levels of school performance. In addition, their analysis also presented a clear linkage between schools with a strong culture and their continuous improvement in school-level achievement. Likewise, the study of Thanomwan & Buncha (2014) resulted that there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and the level of sufficiency school management.

According to the findings of Gruenert (2005), it can be assumed that the more collaborative schools tend to have higher student achievement. Moreover, his findings revealed that collaborative cultures seem to be the best setting for student achievement. Similarly, a positive effect of collaborative school culture on academic achievement was found by Ohlson (2009) and Karadağ et al. (2014). In addition, Karadağ et al. (2014) stated that administrators' leadership skills, positive communication, collaboration and trust between teachers, acting within the aims of the school, and improving professional development had reflections on the academic achievement of students as important components of school culture.

Moreover, Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex (2010) found that school culture that encourages and supports teachers' learning through creating opportunities and providing a stimulating context for teacher change has been essential in bringing about educational reform. It was supported by the findings of Gibson & Brooks (2012) who also suggested that change in teaching practice and the implementation of programs were less likely to occur if teachers did not feel supported, inspired and validated by such educational leaders.

Purposes

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the school culture in Yangon Region, Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The specific purposes were to find out whether levels of school, school locations, and teaching service were related to the school culture.

Research questions

The research questions of this study were as follows: (1) to what extent do public schools in Yangon possess collaborative school culture; (2) do the public schools in the urban area differ from those in the suburban area on the school culture; (3) is there any difference between the basic education middle schools and high schools on the school culture; (4) how does the length of service of the teachers play a part in school culture.

Research design

The research design applied in this study was a descriptive survey in which the quantitative data were collected by a set of predetermined questionnaire.

Sample of the study

In this study, stratified random sampling was used to select the proportional or equal-size samples from each of several subgroups. Mills et al. (2016) defined stratified random sampling as the process that guarantees desired representation of relevant subgroups within the sample. Yangon region was stratified into two layers: urban and suburban areas. In addition, the schools were also classified into two groups: basic education middle schools (BEMS) and basic education high schools (BEHS). In this study, 5 basic education middle schools and 5 basic education high schools were randomly selected from each stratum. Therefore, the total number of participating schools in the study was 20 (10 BEMS and 10 BEHS) and the participants were 114 teachers in total as few

questionnaires were not returned to the researcher. All the teachers participated in this study were working in the public/government schools.

Table 1. Demographic data of teachers

Category	Subcategories	Number of Participants	Percentage
School Location	Suburban	67	58.8%
	Urban	47	41.2%
Level of Schools	Basic Education Middle Schools	39	34.2%
	Basic Education High Schools	75	65.8%
Teaching Service	1-10	4	3.5%
	11-20	19	16.7%
	21-30	40	35.1%
	Above 30	51	44.7%

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage of teachers by schoollocation, level of schools and their length of teaching service. The majority of teachers (58.8%) were from the suburban area. In addition, most of the teachers (65.8%) were working in basic education high schools. Furthermore, approximately half of the teachers (44.7%) had above 30 years of teaching experience, but only 4% of teachers had less than ten years of teaching service.

Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a predetermined questionnaire. The questionnaire was composed of 35 items constructed by Gruenert (2005) where 11 items were related to collaborative leadership, 6 items to teacher collaboration, 5 items to professional development, 5 items to unity of purpose, 4 items to collegial support and 4 items were related to learning partnership. The rating scale for the response was set in 5-point Likert as "strongly disagree", "disagree", "undecided", "agree" and "strongly agree". To ensure their quality and reliability in terms of Myanmar context, reliability analysis of the instrument was calculated by using SPSS version 23. The internal consistency was

tested with Cronbach's alpha. The reliability coefficients of the school culture scale's six subscales ranged from .762 to .873. It is obvious that the collaborative school culture scale was widely used to measure the school culture and the reliability coefficient for each subscale has also been well ranging from 0.87 to 0.91 (Butucha, 2013), from 0.86 to 0.97 (Wong & Zhang, 2014), from 0.625 to 0.897 (Kalman & Balkar, 2017).

Collaborative leadership - focuses on strategic school-wide actions that aimed towards school improvement and sharing among the principal, administrators, teachers, and others (Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

Teacher collaboration - means cooperative interaction in the group in all activities that are needed to perform a shared mission (Vangrieken et al., 2015). Goddard et al. (2007) also suggested that teacher collaboration may improve schools' ability to foster student achievement as their findings resulted that students had higher academic achievement when they attended schools with higher levels of teacher collaboration.

Professional development – describes the degree to which teachers value the idea of themselves as learners (Gruenert, 2005).

Unity of purpose - demonstrates how teachers work towards the common mission of the school (Gumuseli & Eryilmaz, 2011).

Collegial support – assumes that decisions are reached by consensus rather than by conflict, thus reinforcing the importance of shared vision (Brundrett, 1998). According to the study of Shah (2012) and Shah & Abualrob (2012), it was suggested that teacher's collegiality plays a vital role in the enhancement of teacher professional growth, student learning, and organizational effectiveness as well as professional commitment.

Learning partnership - describes teachers' relationships with parents. Gruenert (2005) claimed that the degree to which parents are involved and the teachers' perceptions of that involvement are trails of that school's culture.

Procedure

First, the relevant literature was reviewed. Then, the instrument, a questionnaire was translated into Myanmar language. For the validation of the questionnaire, the expert review was carried out by four teacher educators. Then, the study was piloted with 20 middle school and high school teachers from the Yangon Region. The items were modified, and the data obtained from the pilot study were used to calculate the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The internal consistency for the questionnaire was (.937). After that, the main survey was completed in Yangon Region, Myanmar in September 2019. For ethical reasons, the researcher requested permission from the district education officers and township education officers concerned before carrying out the pilot and main survey in basic education schools. Then, the researcher personally requested the teachers to fill the questionnaire with the consent of the headmasters of the schools. The participants were assured that they were thorough of the purpose of the research and that all their information would be treated with confidentiality.

Analysis of the quantitative data

In this study, the quantitative data were analyzed by calculating the descriptive statistics to determine the degree of agreement or disagreement with the items of the collaborative school culture. Moreover, *Mann-Whitney U* tests, *Post Hoc Multiple Comparison* test and *Kruskal–Wallis H* tests were used to analyze whether there is a significant difference in the school culture in terms of the level of the school, school location and teachers' teaching experience.

Research findings

From the data analysis of the teachers' perceptions related to the items of the collaborative leadership subscale, it was discovered that around 70% of the teachers agreed to all the items of this subscale. In addition, about 10% of the teachers indicated strong agreement to the statements that leaders take time to praise teachers that perform well and let teachers involved in the policy and

decision-making process. Moreover, around 20% of them strongly agreed that leaders value, trust and then encourage sharing teachers' ideas and judgments as well as provide reward and support in teaching innovation. However, approximately 2% of them disagreed with the items of the collaborative leadership scale. In addition, the overall mean calculated for all the eleven items of collaborative leadership subscale was 4.09, (SD = .360) and the highest mean of the subscale was 4.26, (SD = .481) and the lowest mean was 3.89, (SD = .585). It is obvious that this value is high and within the range of the 'agree' category. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the principals and subject deans of the schools valued teachers' ideas and their involvement in decision-making and trusted their professional judgments as well.

With respect to the teacher collaboration subscale, 55% of the teachers agreed that they took time to make the observation of their colleagues' teaching while 15% of them did not. Furthermore, 63% of them acknowledged what their colleagues are teaching but 9% did not. In addition, approximately 75% of them showed their agreement to the other items of the teacher's collaboration subscale. Moreover, 18% of them strongly agreed to the statement that they got chances for dialogue and planning across grades and subjects. Likewise, around 10% of them revealed their strong agreement with the other statements of this subscale. In contrast, very few percentages of the teachers showed their disagreement with this teachers' collaboration subscale. In addition, the mean for all the items of the teacher collaboration subscale fell within a range from neutral to agree category. The highest mean of the subscale was 4.04, (SD = 0.664) and the lowest mean was 3.42, (SD = .901) and the overall mean score was 3.83 (SD =.500) falling within the 'agree' category. Thus, it can be assumed that teachers valued collaboration and they supported each other.

From the result of the analysis of the professional development subscale, it was demonstrated that around 4% of teachers did not apply professional networks to get information and resources for their teaching and rarely searched for ideas from seminars, colleagues and conferences. Conversely, the rest of

them showed their agreement to all the items of professional development subscale. Furthermore, the highest and lowest means of this subscale were 4.27 (SD = .569) and 3.87 (SD = .631) respectively. The total mean of all items was 3.83 (SD = .500), thus falling with the 'agree' category. Therefore, it can be assumed that teachers are not only aware of their need to continue learning but also constantly upgraded their professional knowledge and practice, and schools also valued the professional growth of teachers.

Related to the items of the unity of purpose subscale, approximately 90% of teachers indicated their agreement to all the statements of the subscale while 1% of them stated that the school mission statement neither provided clear direction for them, nor took the values of the community into consideration, and teachers' action was not in line with the school mission as well. Moreover, the mean of each item was above 4.03 (SD = .556) and the total mean of the subscale was 4.15 (SD = .419), thus being definitely within the 'agree' category. Therefore, it can be interpreted that schools valued the community and teachers also not only understood and supported the school mission but also performed in accordance with that mission.

With respect to the collegial support subscale, it was observed that approximately 23% of teachers strongly agreed to all the statements such as teachers' cooperation, willingness to help and trust in each other as well. Likewise, around 70% of them also revealed their agreement to this subscale. In contrast, 1% of them showed their disagreement. In addition, the means of all items ($\overline{X}$ = 4.18, SD = .552, the highest and $\overline{X}$ = 4.11, SD = .629, the lowest) and the total mean of collegial support ($\overline{X}$ = 4.14, SD = .502) fell into the 'agree' category. From this result, it can be assumed that teachers supported their colleagues, valued their ideas, and trusted each other as well.

For the learning partnership subscale, it was found that 90% of teachers agreed to the statement that students normally accepted their responsibility of schooling while 5% of them showed their disagreement. Approximately 66%

indicated their agreement on such statements that teachers and parents had common expectations of student performance and frequent communication, and parents trusted teachers' professional judgments, but 2% of them did not. Between 15% and 27% of them strongly agreed to all the items of learning partnership subscale. Furthermore, the overall mean calculated for all the four items of learning partnership subscale was 4.06, (SD = .346) and the highest mean of the subscale was 4.18, (SD = .641) and the lowest mean was 3.97, (SD = .684). Therefore, it is clear that this value is high and within the range of 'agree' response. From this data, it can be interpreted that teachers and parents had good relationships related to students' learning and trusted each other as well.

Because the dependent variables were ordinal and the variances were unequal, *Mann–Whitney U* tests were performed to compare the schools (see table 2). There was a significant difference in the mean ranks of 67 teachers from the suburban area (64.78) and 47 teachers from the urban area (47.12) on the unity of purpose, U = 1086.50, p = .00, r = -.25, which is considered a small effect size. Likewise, the teachers from the suburban area had significantly higher mean ranks (63.09) than the teachers from the urban area (49.53) on the collegial support, U = 1200.00, p = .01, r = –.21, which, according to Cohen (1988), is a small effect size (see table 2). In addition, there was a significant difference in the mean ranks of teachers from the suburban area (66.60) and teachers from the urban area (44.53) on the learning partnership, U = 965.00, p = .00, r = -.20, which is considered a small effect size. Moreover, a significant difference was found in the mean ranks of teachers from the suburban area (61.13) and teachers from the urban area (52.33) on the total collaborative school culture, U = 1331.50, p = .01, r = -.12, which is a small effect size. Alternatively, teachers from the suburban area and urban area did not differ on other scales of the collaborative school culture (Table 2).

To sum up, teachers from the schools in the suburban area demonstrated more unity of purpose, collegial support, and learning partnership than those in

the urban area. Therefore, it can be interpreted that schools in the suburban area exhibited more collaborative school culture than those in the urban area.

Table 2. Mann-Whitney U tests table comparing school location on collaborative school culture

Variable	District	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Sig.
Collaborative leadership	Suburban	67	57.77	3870.50	1556.50	2684.50	-.10	.91
	Urban	47	57.12	2684.50				
	Total	114						
Teacher collaboration	Suburban	67	60.93	4082.00	1345.00	2473.00	-1.36	.17
	Urban	47	52.62	2473.00				
	Total	114						
Professional development	Suburban	67	60.93	4082.00	1345.00	2473.00	-1.36	.17
	Urban	47	52.62	2473.00				
	Total	114						
Unity of Purpose	Suburban	67	64.78	4340.50	1086.50	2214.50	-3.01	.00*
	Urban	47	47.12	2214.50				
	Total	114						
Collegial support	Suburban	67	63.09	4227.00	1200.00	2328.00	-2.46	.01*
	Urban	47	49.53	2328.00				
	Total	114						
Learning partnership	Suburban	67	66.60	4462.00	965.00	2093.00	-3.78	.00*
	Urban	47	44.53	2093.00				
	Total	114						
Total Collaborative school culture	Suburban	67	61.13	4095.50	1331.50	2459.50	-1.40	.01*
	Urban	47	52.33	2459.50				
	Total	114						

Note: Suburban = Schools in suburban area of Yangon Region
Urban = Schools in urban area of Yangon Region
*p<.05

Because the dependent variables were ordinal, *Mann–Whitney U* tests were also executed to compare the level of schools (see table 3). A total of 75 teachers from BEMS had significantly higher mean ranks (67.18) than 39 teachers from BEHS (52.47) on the unity of purpose, U = 1085, p = .01, r = –.20, which, according to Cohen (1988), is a small effect size. Likewise, there was a significant difference in the mean ranks of teachers from BEMS (66.95) and teachers from BEHS (52.59) on the collegial support, U = 1094, p = .01, r = -

.20, which is considered a small effect size. In addition, a significant difference was found in the mean ranks of teachers from BEMS (66.91) and teachers from BEHS (52.61) on the total collaborative school culture, $U = 1095.5$, $p = .02$, $r = -.18$, which is also a small effect size. However, teachers from BEHS and BEMS did not differ on the other scales of collaborative school culture (Table 3). Thus, it can be interpreted that teachers working at the middle school level showed a more collaborative culture than those at the high school level.

Table 3. Mann-Whitney U tests table comparing level of schools on collaborative school culture

Variable	Level of School	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Sig.
Collaborative leadership	BEMS	39	59.77	2331.00	1374.00	4224.00	-.54	.58
	BEHS	75	56.32	4224.00				
	Total	144						
Teacher collaboration	BEMS	39	55.08	2148.00	1368.00	2148.00	-.58	.56
	BEHS	75	58.76	4407.00				
	Total	144						
Professional development	BEMS	39	55.08	2148.00	1368.00	2148.00	-.58	.56
	BEHS	75	58.76	4407.00				
	Total	144						
Unity of Purpose	BEMS	39	67.18	2620.00	1085.00	3935.00	-2.42	.01*
	BEHS	75	52.47	3935.00				
	Total	144						
Collegial support	BEMS	39	66.95	2611.00	1094.00	3944.00	-2.51	.01*
	BEHS	75	52.59	3944.00				
	Total	144						
Learning partnership	BEMS	39	61.45	2396.50	1308.50	4158.50	-.99	.32
	BEHS	75	55.45	4158.50				
	Total	144						
Total Collaborative school culture	BEMS	39	66.91	2609.50	1095.50	3945.50	-2.20	.02*
	BEHS	75	52.61	3945.50				
	Total	144						

Note: BEMS = Basic Education Middle Schools
BEHS = Basic Education High Schools
*p<.05

A *Kruskal–Wallis* nonparametric test was conducted to test for the significant differences among the groups of teachers on collaborative school culture because the data are ordinal (Table 4). The test indicated that there was no significant difference in the collaborative school culture among four groups of teachers with respect to their different teaching experiences (Table 4). Therefore, it can be assumed that years of teaching experience could not make any changes in collaborative school culture.

Table 4. Kruskal–Wallis H tests table comparing teaching experience on collaborative school culture

Variable	teaching experience	N	Mean Rank	Chi-square	df	Sig.
Collaborative leadership	1-10	4	69.88	2.56	3	.46
	11-20	19	62.68			
	21-30	40	60.15			
	Above 30	51	52.52			
	Total	114				
Teacher collaboration	1-10	4	75.50	7.77	3	.05
	11-20	19	42.63			
	21-30	40	65.08			
	Above 30	51	55.69			
	Total	114				
Professional development	1-10	4	75.50	7.77	3	.05
	11-20	19	42.63			
	21-30	40	65.08			
	Above 30	51	55.69			
	Total	114				
Unity of Purpose	1-10	4	46.50	3.07	3	.38
	11-20	19	49.79			
	21-30	40	63.13			
	Above 30	51	56.82			
	Total	114				
Collegial support	1-10	4	59.63	1.55	3	.66
	11-20	19	51.34			
	21-30	40	61.16			
	Above 30	51	56.75			
	Total	114				
Learning partnership	1-10	4	64.25	3.82	3	.28
	11-20	19	49.84			
	21-30	40	64.28			
	Above 30	51	54.51			
	Total	114				

Total Collabo-rative school culture	1-10	4	65.13	3.77	3	.28
	11-20	19	51.63			
	21-30	40	65.00			
	Above 30	51	53.21			
	Total	114				

Note: 1-10 = teaching experiences from (1) to (10) years
11-20 = teaching experiences from (11) to (20) years
21-30 = teaching experiences from (21) to (30) years
Above 30 = teaching experiences of above (30) years

Discussion

The findings of this study indicated that over 70% of the participants reported their agreement to all the items of the collaborative school culture scale. This result is in line with the findings of Gruenert (2005) and Kalman & Balkar (2017) which illustrated that most scores occur between 3 and 3.5 and between 3 and 4 respectively when looking at the means of individual items of the survey. Moreover, in analyzing the school culture in this study, the result demonstrated that the highest mean score was on the unity of purpose subscale, following in descending order by collegial support, collaborative leadership, learning partnership, professional development, and teacher collaboration. This finding is remarkably consistent with that of Butucha (2013) which resulted that the highest and second highest means of the scale belong to the subscales - unity of purpose and collegial support, respectively.

Moreover, one of the results uncovered in this study was that there were significant differences in the subscales; unity of purpose, collegial support, learning partnership and in total scale of collaborative school culture as well while comparing the means of schools in two school location areas, urban and suburban, in the context. It was in line with the study of Butucha (2013) who found that teachers in the suburban schools perceived higher teacher collaboration than those in the urban schools. Moreover, it was also consistent with the findings of Gumuseli & Eryilmaz (2011) which resulted in significant differences between the perceptions of Anatolian high school principals and primary,

trade, industrial and general high school principals in the factors of collegial support and unity of purpose.

In addition, it was discovered that basic education middle schools exhibited more behaviors in collaborative school culture than basic education high schools, especially in unity of purpose and collegial support. This finding was consistent with that of Gruenert (2005) which indicated that the elementary school level showed the highest scores in all six factors of the scale, those of middle school level were the next highest, and the high school level the lowest. In addition, it was in line with one of the findings of Gumuseli & Eryilmaz (2011) which revealed that the perception scores of the principals in less populated schools were generally higher than those of the principals in more populated schools in most of the collaborative school culture factors. However, it was in contrast with their other finding that no significant difference was found between the means of the collaborative school culture factors and the school size.

Furthermore, it was found that teaching service could not make any difference in the collaborative school culture. This result is consistent with that of Şahin (2011) and Gün & Çağlayan (2013) who found no significant difference among groups based on teachers' age and length of service in relation to the school culture. However, it was in contrast with the findings of Butucha (2013) which showed that beginning teachers in Ethiopia revealed high levels of school culture.

Conclusion

This study was carried out to investigate the school culture in the Yangon Region, Myanmar. Specifically, this research attempted to find out whether school culture can differ according to the levels of school, school locations and the length of teaching service. The findings indicated that most of the teachers in this region were found to be working in the schools which had collaborative school culture. In particular, teachers displayed high performance in their unity

of purpose and collegial support but less in professional development and teacher collaboration compared to other subscales. Moreover, it was unearthed that teachers from the schools in the suburban area demonstrated more collaborative school culture than those in the urban area, especially in their unity of purpose, collegial support, and learning partnership. Furthermore, teachers who are working in basic education middle schools demonstrated more favorable behaviors in collaborative school culture than those in basic education high schools, particularly in their unity of purpose and collegial support. However, it was found that years of teaching experience could not account to any variance in collaborative school culture. Therefore, if governments are likely to improve the standards of teaching and students' achievement, it is recognizable that they must have full awareness of the current school culture in schools and how it affects them. It was also supported by Zhu et al. (2014) who stated that school's administrator can apply the information gained through examining the features of school culture to help guide each phase of the change process, from determining the school's readiness for change to selecting the types of developments most likely to be harmonious with the organization's culture.

Limitations

This study focused on one of the regions in Myanmar; therefore, further research should be carried out in other contexts as well. In addition, as basic education middle schools and high schools were available in this study, basic education primary schools should also be taken into consideration in further studies. Moreover, to get more comprehensive information on the nature of school culture, a qualitative study should also be incorporated in the study.

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