

Original Article

Commitment of Seasoned Private School Teachers to Service: A Basis for Institutional Retention Strategies

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Abstract. Private educational institutions seeking to enhance employee commitment and retention must understand how private school teachers' organizational commitment relates to their demographic characteristics. This mixed-methods study used questionnaires to collect quantitative data on teachers' commitment and demographic profiles (age, gender, position, years of service, civil status, and educational background). Quantitative results were analyzed through descriptive statistics and inferential tests (t-tests and ANOVA) to examine group differences. Semi-structured interviews provided qualitative data, which were thematically analyzed to add contextual depth. Findings highlighted high affective commitment, reflecting teachers' emotional attachment to their schools. Demographic factors—particularly age, marital status, and educational attainment—significantly influenced commitment levels. Qualitative results reinforced these patterns, revealing strong emotional bonds, shared purpose, supportive work environments, and appreciation for inclusive leadership as key motivators. Overall, both demographic and institutional factors play critical roles in fostering long-term commitment. Aligning leadership practices, workload, and professional development with teachers' life stages and academic goals can support sustained commitment and retention in private basic education institutions in the Philippines.

Keywords: Davao del Sur; Organizational management; Private school; Retention strategies; Seasoned teachers.

Private education plays an important role in the overall educational system, and teachers' commitment significantly affects the quality of learning and school performance. In private schools, teacher loyalty and long-term service are essential to ensure stable instruction and continuous improvement. However, many private school administrators face difficulties in retaining experienced teachers, which affects school effectiveness and student outcomes. Teachers are widely recognized as the most valuable resource in the education sector, and their commitment is closely linked to teaching quality and institutional success. The significance of teacher commitment is widely acknowledged, with job satisfaction being recognized as a fundamental component. According to Burmansah et al. (2019), teachers who experience contentment and fulfillment are more inclined to remain committed to their educational endeavors. The Department of Education highlights that "highly competent and committed officials, teaching and non-teaching personnel" are vital components in providing quality basic education (DepEd Order 009, series of 2021). It underscores the importance of teacher commitment for achieving improved learning outcomes and educational excellence. Education also serves as a key driver of national development, making teacher commitment an important concern not only for schools but for society as

a whole.

Despite its importance, teacher commitment is challenged by high rates of attrition worldwide. Studies have shown that in countries such as the United States, England, and parts of East Asia, up to half of newly hired teachers leave the profession within their first five years (Sutcher et al., 2016; See et al., 2020). These findings highlight a global issue: teachers struggle to sustain long-term commitment, underscoring the need for effective strategies to support and retain them. Challenges are also evident in private schools across Southeast Asia. In Pakistan, private school teachers experience overwork and limited rights, which negatively affect their motivation and commitment (Syed, 2021). Similarly, in Indonesia, unequal treatment between public and private school teachers has been identified as a significant issue, with studies stressing the need for government support and fair policies to strengthen teacher commitment and improve the education system (Muti'ah et al., 2023). These studies show that working conditions and institutional support strongly influence teacher commitment in private schools.

In the Philippine context, private school teachers have been found to demonstrate dedication and passion for teaching, particularly when they work in a positive work environment that promotes freedom, student support, and participation in decision-making (Maisog, 2023). However, financial challenges remain a serious concern. Low salaries and limited financial stability in private schools have been identified as reasons why committed teachers may leave for better opportunities (Deloso & Bongcac, 2020). These findings suggest that commitment may exist, but structural and economic factors threaten its sustainability. Although various studies have investigated teacher commitment in both global and local settings, experiential research on private school teachers remains limited. The existing literature, in particular, indicates inadequate use of demographic variables, a lack of geographical and context-specific analyses, and insufficient emphasis on seasoned teachers, exposing significant gaps that require further research.

The core of this study is an established theoretical framework that serves as a guiding principle for research on the complex aspects of seasoned private school teachers' commitment to service. In this study, the analysis focuses on private school teachers' commitment to service. To provide a solid foundation for this research, A Model of Organizational Commitment with Three Elements proposed by Meyer and Allen in 1997, as adopted by the research of Onukwu et al (2020), will serve as an effective academic basis for investigating the three types of commitment— affective, continuance, and normative commitment exhibited by private school teachers. In this theory, three varieties of Meyer and Allen (1997) employment dedication in an organization. According to this paradigm, affective commitment is a worker's sentimental investment, affiliation, and involvement in the organization. In contrast, continuance commitment knows the topic and psychological costs of remaining or parting. The values and principles held by a worker in the institution, and holding the ethical view that remaining employed is proper, are the normative components.

This study is distinctive in that it focuses on the personal experiences of seasoned private school teachers using a mixed-methods approach that supports quantitative and qualitative findings. As a member of a private educational institution, the researcher aims to investigate the underlying reasons why some teachers choose to stay with the organization and use these insights to innovate evidence-based policy and the development of institutional teacher retention programs. Additionally, this study aims to examine the level of commitment among private school teachers in the Division of Davao del Sur, considering their demographic profiles, sources of commitment, and long-term service experiences, using a triangulation design. The findings of this study are significant as they can provide school administrators and policymakers with localized evidence to improve teacher retention strategies, strengthen teacher support systems, and enhance the overall quality of private education in the region.

Methodology

Research Design

This research used a mixed-methods design; the quantitative component involved numerical measurement and statistical analysis to test hypotheses and investigate correlations between variables. In contrast, qualitative research used non-numerical data collection to comprehend better lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). Mixed-methods research combined numerical data and contextual narrative insights to create a more comprehensive knowledge of study challenges (Tashakkori et al., 2020). This methodological study integrated information from both components to provide a comprehensive picture of teacher commitment to service in the private school context of the Division of Davao del Sur. This integration could entail combining

quantitative survey data with qualitative insights to better understand the factors that influence commitment.

Research Locale

The Davao del Sur Division was the site of the research. Located in Davao del Sur, the towns of Bansalan, Hagonoy, Kiblawan, Magsaysay, Malalag, Matanao, Padada, Santa Cruz, and Sulop were included in the division. It is essential to note that the study excluded Digos City because it is a component city within the province, with its own division office. The choice of the Division of Davao del Sur as the research site for this study was influenced by a combination of practical factors and the researcher's personal knowledge of the educational context in the area. Additionally, for the study on seasoned private school teachers, the researcher selected 54 teachers with at least 10 years of experience to ensure diversity across academic fields and locales. Participants have worked in private schools and hold bachelor's degrees in education. These teachers must be available for interviews and give honest, complete answers. To capture a variety of educational situations, the researcher included teachers from large, small, religious, and secular private schools. Furthermore, the researcher's extensive knowledge and familiarity with the specific details and challenges inherent in the educational landscape of Davao del Sur enhanced the depth and sophistication of the examination of the commitment dynamics observed among faculty at private educational institutions in this area. Furthermore, this research was carried out between January and March 2024.

Participants and Sampling Technique

Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method in which respondents are selected based on predefined criteria and a predetermined sample size (Prieto et al., 2017). For the quantitative phase, participants were carefully selected from 54 private school teachers in the Division of Davao del Sur who were full-time educators, with at least 10 years of continuous service in their current institution. Who voluntarily agreed to participate in the research, with variation in age, gender, position, years in service, civil status, and educational background across their respective institutions; these selection standards were employed to ensure that the survey component involved individuals with substantial professional experience and expertise in the field of education. In the qualitative phase, the researcher specifically identified 10 teachers recognized for their long-standing service and noteworthy contributions within private schools in the Davao del Sur Division, enabling the inclusion of highly experienced educators with extensive knowledge and insight; their rich opinions, lived experiences, and sources of commitment served as the central focus of the study, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of the factors influencing long-term commitment within the unique context of private education in the Davao del Sur Division.

Research Instrument

Quantitative data were obtained through the administration of standardized questionnaires consisting of closed-ended questions and rating scales designed to assess demographic characteristics and levels of commitment among private school teachers; specifically, Allen and Meyer's (1996) organizational commitment questionnaire was utilized, which had been adopted to assess educators' commitment in the study of Sutiyaatno et al. (2022). The survey instrument underwent a reliability analysis, yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.805, indicating strong internal consistency and consistent assessment of the construct under study. Furthermore, quantitative data were analyzed using correlation analysis, enabling the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the demographic profiles and commitment levels of the survey participants. Qualitative data, on the other hand, were gathered through semi-structured interviews with private school teachers, which allowed the researcher to explore in depth the participants' personal experiences, practices, and sources of commitment to service within a private school setting; these interviews were conducted through informal discourse, audio-recorded with consent, and subsequently transcribed. Concurrently, the qualitative data derived from the interviews were subjected to thematic analysis to examine enduring service experiences and the underlying factors influencing commitment among the 10 teachers selected for this study.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data gathering followed a series of systematic procedures to ensure ethical compliance and research rigor. Prior to data collection, authorization to conduct the study was secured from the Institute of Graduate and Professional Education, followed by approval from the College President and the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) of Davao del Sur. Afterward, copies of the SDS endorsement letter were furnished to private school directors and principals. The researcher then contacted selected participants to request permission for participation, obtained informed consent prior to interviews, and ensured that all research instruments were carefully reviewed and

evaluated by knowledgeable individuals before implementation. For the quantitative phase, a well-designed and validated questionnaire was distributed to 54 highly committed private school educators with at least 10 years of service across various institutions in Davao del Sur, serving as a statistical instrument for descriptive analysis and correlation of key variables related to demographic characteristics and commitment levels. In the qualitative phase, the researcher prepared semi-structured interview guides, validated by three experts who were mixed-methods research specialists with extensive teaching experience; clearly explained the study's objectives, problems, and benefits to prospective participants; and provided consent letters prior to participation. Ten purposively selected teachers with long-term service in private schools participated in face-to-face, in-depth interviews, selected for their willingness to share their experiences and motivations for sustained commitment. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured by using coded names, and participants were informed that all data would be used solely for research purposes. All interviews were audio-recorded with permission, transcribed into MS Word, and prepared for further analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

In the data analysis phase of the study, the researcher conducted a systematic examination of the collected data to address the research objectives. After validation, the dataset was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics relevant to the research objectives. Measures of central tendency and variability were used to describe the reported commitment levels of private school teachers. In contrast, inferential procedures such as t-tests and ANOVA were used to investigate differences and correlations among variables. The study's interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations were based on the evaluation results. In parallel, qualitative data obtained from teacher interviews were analyzed using a thematic approach that involved transcribing the interviews, coding responses, and identifying recurring themes and patterns, thereby providing greater context and depth to the quantitative results by capturing detailed insights into the factors influencing teacher commitment. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings enabled a more comprehensive interpretation of the data by linking survey outcomes with participant narratives, and the mixed-method approach ultimately illuminated the complexities of teachers' dedication to their work in the private school setting of the Division of Davao del Sur.

Ethical Considerations

The importance of ethical considerations in this study cannot be overstated. To safeguard the welfare and rights of all participants, the researcher strictly adhered to established ethical standards. Permission was obtained from all selected private school teachers prior to conducting interviews or collecting data, after they were fully informed about the nature and purpose of the research. This process of obtaining informed consent emphasized that participation was voluntary and that participants could withdraw at any time without any consequences. Confidentiality procedures were strictly enforced to protect participants' identities and responses, with all data securely stored and accessible only to the researcher. All collected data were protected through secure storage and restricted access, and participants were assigned pseudonyms to further preserve anonymity. The researcher also provided participants with interview transcripts or summaries for validation and feedback, allowing them to verify the accuracy and completeness of their contributions through member checking. In addition, confirmability was emphasized through the transparent management of potential researcher bias through peer debriefing sessions and careful documentation of an audit trail. The researcher actively engaged in discussions with peers or colleagues to assess and address possible biases that could arise during the research process. Altogether, these measures helped ensure that the research findings were interpreted objectively, credibly, and fairly.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of the demographics of seasoned private school teachers. The results showed that 40-49-year-olds (21%) comprised the largest share of these teachers, followed by 32-39-year-olds and 60-year-olds and above (21%). In addition, the statistics showed that 28% were male and 72% were female. In terms of duties, 50% were simply teachers, while 28% were academic support staff.

The demographic profile of seasoned private school teachers in this study indicates a highly experienced and stable workforce, with most having served for 20 years or more (48%), followed by 10-15 years (40%) and 16-20 years (13%). The majority of teachers were married (70%), suggesting a preference for stable, long-term employment, and most held at least a college degree: 48% earned a bachelor's degree, 44% a master's degree, and 7% a doctorate. A larger proportion of teachers fell within the 40-49 age range, reflecting a mature cohort that contributes stability to the educational environment. At the same time, the presence of both mid-career and older

educators supports instructional planning and mentoring.

Table 1. *Demographic Profile of Seasoned Private School Teachers*

| Demographic Variable | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Age | | |
| 32-39 | 11 | 21.00 |
| 40-49 | 23 | 43.00 |
| 50-59 | 9 | 17.00 |
| 60 years and above | 11 | 21.00 |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 15 | 28.00 |
| Female | 39 | 72.00 |
| Position | | |
| Teacher | 27 | 50.00 |
| Academic Coordinator | 8 | 15.00 |
| Principal | 4 | 7.00 |
| Others (Academic Support Staff) | 15 | 28.00 |
| Years of Service | | |
| 10-15 years | 21 | 40.00 |
| 16-20 years | 7 | 13.00 |
| 20 years and above | 26 | 48.00 |
| Civil Status | | |
| Single | 12 | 22.00 |
| Married | 38 | 70.00 |
| Widowed | 4 | 7.00 |
| Educational Background | | |
| Bachelor's Degree | 26 | 48.00 |
| Master's Degree | 24 | 44.00 |
| Doctorate Degree | 4 | 7.00 |

The workforce was predominantly female (72%), aligning with prior studies showing that teaching is largely female-dominated (Bakri, 2023; Yacob et al., 2023) and that males may be less inclined to pursue the profession (Alyaha & Mbogo, 2017). Half of the respondents were primarily involved in instruction. At the same time, a significant portion (28%) served in academic support roles, underscoring the importance of a strong support system in fostering collaboration, resilience, and long-term commitment. The high proportion of veteran teachers reflects strong dedication and a steady teaching environment, which has been associated with better student outcomes under experienced educators (Ingersoll et al., 2021). Moreover, the prevalence of teachers with higher educational qualifications supports evidence that well-qualified teachers contribute more effectively to student achievement (Liu, 2021), while self-efficacy is influenced by both educational attainment and job experience (Abun et al., 2021).

Level of Commitment of Seasoned Private School Teachers to Service

The dedication of private-school educators is illustrated in Table 2. Affective commitment is the strongest of the three forms of commitment studied, exhibiting a mean score of 4.28 on average and a slight standard deviation of 0.45. This suggests a strong emotional connection and association with the school. Normative commitment, which is associated with a feeling of duty to remain in school, is the second highest, with a standard deviation of 0.53 and a mean score of 3.76. This indicates an average level of commitment, but with slightly greater variance among respondents than affective commitment.

Table 2. *Level of Commitment of Seasoned Private School Teachers (N=54)*

| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Affective Commitment | 4.28 | 0.45 |
| Continuance Commitment | 3.69 | 0.76 |
| Normative Commitment | 3.76 | 0.53 |
| Overall Mean | 3.91 | 0.45 |

The quantitative assessment of teacher commitment indicates that seasoned private school educators demonstrate strong overall commitment to their institutions, with affective commitment emerging as the most prominent dimension. High affective commitment reflects a deep emotional attachment to the institution. It may lead to positive outcomes, including increased engagement, stronger community ties, reduced turnover, and greater

willingness to expend additional effort in support of school activities and student achievement. Normative commitment also yielded a relatively high mean score, suggesting that many teachers feel a sense of moral obligation or loyalty to remain in their current institution, likely influenced by personal values, cultural expectations, or professional ethics, thereby supporting staff stability despite some variability in responses. In contrast, continuance commitment recorded the lowest mean score (3.69) and the highest standard deviation (0.76), indicating that while some teachers remain due to perceived costs of leaving—such as loss of job security, established relationships, or limited alternatives—others do not view these factors as strong motivators. This variation suggests a potential vulnerability in relying solely on necessity-based commitment. These findings are consistent with previous studies, which likewise identified affective commitment as the strongest dimension of institutional commitment, followed by continuance and normative commitment (Gök & Özçetin, 2021), and confirmed that teachers tend to express stronger feelings of belonging to their institutions compared to other forms of organizational commitment (Bancoro, 2023a).

Relationship Between the Demographic Profile and the Level of Commitment

The relationship between the demographic profile of seasoned private school teachers in relation to age, sex, position, years of service, civil status, and educational background, and the level of commitment is illustrated in Table 2. The findings revealed a variety of trends in the association between demographic variables and commitment among private school teachers. Age was found to be substantially related to teacher commitment ($F = 3.42$, $p = .003$), indicating that commitment varies across age groups. This suggests that as educators age, differences emerge in how strongly they identify with and participate in their professional responsibilities. In support of this finding, Gökyer (2018) reported that as individuals grow older, their commitment to academic growth and to colleagues tends to increase, and teachers generally become more devoted to their institution's growth over time. Moreover, Ibrahim and Aljneibi (2022a) found that age is an important factor in investigating organizational commitment, with a small but significant influence on commitment. In addition, civil status was significantly related to teachers' dedication to their professional responsibilities ($F = 3.37$, $p = .042$), suggesting that marital circumstances may influence this dedication, possibly reflecting differences in personal priorities, stability, or support systems across civil status categories. These findings align with those of Oselumese et al. (2016), who reported that marital status can influence the work performance of secondary school educators.

Table 3. Relationship Between the Demographic Profile and the Level of Commitment

| Indicator | Statistics | <i>p</i> - value | Decision on H_0 | Interpretation |
|------------------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Age | $F = 3.42$ | .003 | Reject | Significant |
| Sex | $t = 0.89$ | .376 | Failed to Reject | Not Significant |
| Position | $F = 1.43$ | .291 | Failed to Reject | Not Significant |
| Years of Service | $F = 0.39$ | .677 | Failed to Reject | Not Significant |
| Civil Status | $F = 3.37$ | .042 | Reject | Significant |
| Educational Background | $F = 3.57$ | .020 | Reject | Significant |

Similarly, educational background was significantly related to commitment ($F = 3.57$, $p = .020$), indicating that academic preparation contributes to differences in commitment levels. This shows that teachers with different educational backgrounds may exhibit diverse levels of commitment and attention to their professional responsibilities. On the contrary, Shah et al. (2020) found no correlation between teachers' organizational commitment and their academic or professional qualifications. Furthermore, Gyeltshen (2021) found no relationship between teachers' level of organizational commitment and educational qualifications. Despite the variances between the current study's findings and those of prior studies, these discrepancies can be explained by differences in location and the number of people surveyed.

In contrast, sex ($t = 0.89$, $p = .376$), position held ($F = 1.43$, $p = .291$), and years of service ($F = 0.39$, $p = .677$) did not yield significant results, indicating that these variables do not distinguish among teachers' commitment levels. The results agreed with Moses et al. (2016), who found no relationship between gender and teachers' commitment levels. This may suggest that teachers, regardless of gender, were equally committed to their jobs, the school, and their students. In relation to the position held, the finding implies that whether teachers serve in rank-and-file roles or in leadership positions, their level of commitment and involvement with their professional responsibilities is quite similar. Similarly, Türk and Korkmaz (2022) noted that teachers' commitment levels vary by branch, level of duty, and seniority, though they generally approach their work with the same professional standards. This suggests that, across different roles, maintaining consistent professional expectations in their teaching practices underscores the role of professional responsibilities in shaping commitment.

Moreover, lastly, based on the findings, teachers demonstrate comparable levels of commitment regardless of their length of service in the school. The current study's findings show that educators have similar levels of organizational commitment regardless of their years of service. These findings contradict those of Ibrahim and Aljneibi (2022b), who found that commitment increases with experience, seniority, and length of employment, suggesting that longevity fosters stronger institutional ties and loyalty. Similarly, Bancoro (2023b) found that longer service tenure is associated with greater organizational commitment. The disparity could be related to variations in institutional environment, group characteristics, or organizational practices, which could mitigate the effect of tenure on commitment in the current study. Overall, the findings show that certain demographic variables—specifically age, civil status, and educational attainment—influence teachers' professional commitment in private school settings.

Long-Term Service Experiences of Seasoned Private School Teachers

Loyalty to the Institution

The transcripts included a significant theme that captured the essence of teacher dedication, school loyalty, and student commitment. Through their experiences, the researcher gained insight into the delicate balance between the institution's commitment to education that empowers its students and its deep dedication to shaping their students' lives. This essential theme includes alumni connections, dedication to students, trust, and inclusivity.

Participant 1 said, *"I am really loyal here because I consider this a stepping stone; I love the school."*

Additionally, Participant 2 expresses this loyalty through a more profound alumni connection in addition to career prospects: *"I am also an alumnus here, one of the alumni here... I am here... there is just one point in me that seems to be difficult for me to leave."*

Establishing on these viewpoints, Participant 10, adds a further dimension of loyalty that transcends institutional ties and involves a teacher's personal commitment to their students: *"I found it satisfying to be with them... I am loyal to the school... I give more importance to the loyalty towards my students."*

Participant 7 shows a mutually beneficial relationship, highlighting the school's confidence in them despite their lack of conventional credentials: *"I am very glad and happy teaching children...even though I am not a LET passer, but still, the school has trust in me."*

The narratives of seasoned private school teachers reveal a complex, multifaceted dedication that intertwines professional goals, personal histories, interpersonal relationships, and institutional trust. Teachers, such as Participant 1, view the school not only as a workplace but also as a platform for personal growth and a source of emotional attachment, reflecting both individual aspirations and organizational loyalty. Alumni relationships, as noted by Participant 2, strengthen this devotion through a shared history, while Participant 10 emphasizes the centrality of teacher-student interactions, highlighting a caring commitment to student development. Similarly, Participant 7 demonstrates how institutional trust fosters a sense of belonging and gratitude, reinforcing long-term loyalty. These experiences collectively illustrate that emotional engagement, shared purpose, and common identity underpin the dedication of long-serving teachers in private schools. Personal fulfillment also plays a key role in sustaining teacher commitment. Many educators find satisfaction in guiding students' growth and sharing their passion for their subjects (Sumipo, 2020). Research indicates that teachers remain loyal when opportunities for professional growth exist and when they feel supported in their development (Lertpanyawiwat et al., 2022). A strong emotional attachment to both the institution and its students, combined with confidence and support from the school—even in the absence of formal qualifications—fosters a profound sense of belonging and commitment. Together, these factors have significant implications for teacher retention and overall morale in private school settings, underscoring the importance of nurturing supportive, growth-oriented, and trust-based educational environments.

Compensation Satisfaction

Despite a salary gap relative to other institutions, many teachers were satisfied with their work, underscoring their commitment to serving students and fulfilling their responsibilities as educators. This essential theme encompasses financial well-being and self-efficacy, prudent financial management, prioritizing job fulfillment over salary, and a love of the teaching profession. Participant 3 begins by showing a fundamental satisfaction: *"I*

feel contented because I have that capacity to manage the small amount being given to me."

This sense of contentment is supported by Participant 4, who, after overcoming financial difficulties, stated: "*...live according to your means.*"

Participant 9 elaborates on this idea by stating that: "*Salary does not matter, sir, as long as you know how to budget, you can be satisfied with what you have, you must know how to budget.*"

At last, Participant 10 captures this point of view by expressing: "*I am not after the number... For as long as I am satisfied with what I am doing, and I love what I am doing.*"

The experiences of seasoned private school teachers indicate that their sense of fulfillment is primarily driven by personal efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and a passion for teaching, rather than by financial rewards. Participants reported satisfaction from managing finances effectively, living within their means, and deriving joy from the work itself, despite modest salaries. For instance, Participant 3 highlighted self-reliance despite low wages; Participant 4 emphasized resilience and adaptation; Participant 9 stressed budgeting over income; and Participant 10 expressed immense job satisfaction from the intrinsic pleasure of teaching. Collectively, these perspectives illustrate a highly dedicated and accomplished teaching workforce in the private education sector, motivated by personal growth, mastery of skills, and professional passion.

These findings align with broader research indicating that while financial stability and competitive salaries contribute to teacher satisfaction, affective commitment extends beyond monetary considerations. In the Division of Palawan, teachers earning moderate salaries expressed satisfaction with timely wages and development opportunities but dissatisfaction with administrative burdens (Viray et al., 2022). Similarly, Neupane (2022) recommends that school administrators provide competitive pay, timely payment, and advancement opportunities to maintain teacher satisfaction and retention. Overall, the in-depth accounts suggest that private school teachers' dedication is primarily rooted in personal fulfillment and intrinsic enthusiasm for their profession, reflecting a strong emotional attachment to their roles and the broader educational mission of their institutions.

Adaptability and Resourcefulness in Teaching

The participants demonstrated remarkable adaptability in their teaching methods, enabling them to adjust their pedagogical approaches to meet learners' individual needs. They employ a range of techniques to connect with learners and foster deeper understanding, including traditional lectures and experiential learning activities. This essential theme encompasses the use of technology, creative problem-solving, resource recycling, acceptance of change, and innovative material management.

Participant 4 promotes resourcefulness, highlighting the utilization of one's own devices to enhance learning: "*I use my laptop because during my classes, I let my students see what they want to see... Be resourceful.*"

Participant 3 echoes this theme of innovation, pointing out the importance of transforming teaching methods: "*So being a teacher, you have to be creative.*"

Participant 5 demonstrates feasible creativity through turning available assets into teaching materials: "*I really use PPT, and if there is no manila paper or whatever, I collect used coupon bonds and modules, recycle them, and that is what I use to print their materials.*"

This hands-on technique aligns with Participant 9's feedback regarding the constant evolution of classrooms, which require adaptability: "*Every year there are changes in the school.*"

Finally, Participant 10 emphasizes the essentiality of the educator's creativity in bringing technology into academe, stating: "*When it comes to materials, especially with technology...creativity of the teacher on how we are going to utilize.*"

The responses of experienced private school teachers highlight a consistent theme of resourcefulness and flexibility in their teaching approaches. Participants emphasized the importance of creativity in addressing the evolving demands of education. For example, Participant 4 used personal technology to enhance the learning

environment, while Participant 3 emphasized creativity as essential for adapting to changing educational needs. Participant 5 demonstrated ingenuity by repurposing discarded materials to create instructional aids, illustrating adaptability under resource constraints, and Participant 9 underscored the necessity of adjusting to ongoing changes in the school setting. Participant 10 further emphasized the integration of technology with instructional materials as a measure of teacher competence, showing that effective teaching extends beyond subject knowledge to include innovative use of available resources. Together, these perspectives depict a teaching force that embraces challenges, adapts creatively, and is deeply committed to delivering high-quality education.

Resourcefulness in teaching is not limited to creativity; it also manifests in observable outcomes in student performance and behavior, thereby demonstrating teachers' ability to respond effectively to educational challenges (Asiegbu & Okpala, 2019). Aguilar (2023) supports this notion, noting that teachers who deeply understand the curriculum can adapt their pedagogical strategies to meet diverse student needs, thereby fostering student success. Experienced private school educators apply these strategies to create dynamic, inclusive learning environments, demonstrating adaptability and dedication in practice. This creativity and adaptability reflect a strong affective commitment, where the goal of improving student learning experiences contributes to teachers' personal sense of accomplishment and strengthens students' emotional connection to the institution. By leveraging personal devices and recyclable materials to engage students, teachers demonstrate both ingenuity and commitment. The ongoing need for pedagogical innovation and flexibility underscores seasoned educators' determination to fulfill their roles effectively and contribute meaningfully to their educational community, reinforcing their dedication to both student success and institutional goals.

Sources of Commitment of Seasoned Private School Teachers

Community Family Spirit

Thematically, it highlighted participants' experiences, who developed a strong sense of belonging and camaraderie across different educational settings. This spirit represented a shared commitment to fellowship, encouragement, and mutual respect among coworkers, administrators, and students. This essential theme includes unity and inclusiveness, supportive relationships, a sense of belonging, and family-like treatment.

Participant 1 initiates this sense of solidarity, saying: *"It is like we are just one family here."*

This line of thought easily leads to Participant 2's encouraging statement that supports unity, stating, *"So, stay with us because you are a part of the family."*

It is further strengthened by Participant 5, who conveys the collaborative spirit among educators that: *"Teachers' unity, the openness of each, if one does not know, help the other."*

This sense of friendship is also experienced thoroughly by Participant 7, a long-standing member who highlights their essential position and sense of inclusion, as stated: *"We belong as one family, because I am a pioneer, and that is what I feel."*

Participant 9 affirms this group identity with a simple statement: *"They treat us as family."*

The participants' responses reveal a strong sense of community identity and collegial solidarity, which serves as a key source of commitment for experienced private school educators. Participant 1 emphasized the institution's familial culture, highlighting connections that extend beyond professional relationships. At the same time, Participant 2 underscored inclusion and bonding, reflecting teachers' respect and indispensable role in the school community. Participants 5 and 7 noted the collaborative nature of this educational 'family,' where mutual support and long-term emotional ties foster collective progress and help overcome knowledge gaps. Participant 9 further illustrated this by emphasizing treating staff as family members, evoking feelings of affection, acceptance, and devotion, all of which contribute to a supportive, united school culture that encourages long-term dedication.

These experiences underscore the importance of fostering a nurturing, inclusive environment, like a family, where individuals feel valued and accepted. This finding is consistent with Sutherin (2024), who stated that teachers prefer to remain in schools where they feel a sense of belonging, which in turn leads to organizational commitment. The participants' narratives indicate that a strong sense of belonging and shared purpose not only enhance job satisfaction but also reinforce consistent dedication to teaching responsibilities. Teachers'

organizational commitment is primarily grounded in affective commitment, characterized by emotional attachment, affiliation, and active participation within the school. The familial atmosphere described by interviewees strengthens these emotional ties, making teachers feel like integral members of a close-knit community. This connection enhances loyalty and dedication, as teachers are more motivated and determined to contribute constructively when they have a meaningful personal connection to both their profession and the school environment.

Supportive Work Environment

This theme highlighted the importance of friendship and support among coworkers in fostering a favorable work environment that enabled teachers to flourish and fulfill their professional responsibilities. This essential theme encompasses statements regarding respect for leadership and democratic leadership.

Participant 9 has confidence in the administration's actions, confirming that: *"Our admin, whatever their decision is, it should be upheld."*

In conjunction with this confidence, Participant 8 recognizes an inclusive management style, noting that: *"Their style of leadership, sir, is really different; they consulted us in every decision."*

This shared attitude is confirmed by Participant 4, who talks about the sense of support established by the leadership, claiming that: *"There is unity; no one will be left behind. The administrator will never leave."*

The statements of Participants 9, 8, and 4 highlight the profound trust and dedication that seasoned private school teachers have toward their school management, fostering a climate conducive to teacher loyalty. Participant 9 emphasized respect for administrative decisions perceived as fair and well-intentioned, while Participant 8 noted that inclusive, participatory leadership increases teachers' sense of agency and commitment to the school's goals. Participant 4 reinforced this view by describing administrative support and solidarity, illustrating a culture where teachers feel appreciated, safe, and part of a cohesive unit that collaboratively addresses challenges. Collectively, these experiences underscore how supportive management-employee interactions cultivate a loyal, devoted, and united teaching staff, reinforcing the value of experienced educators whose professional contributions are recognized and protected within the school community.

These narratives demonstrate the critical role of administrative leadership in promoting staff cohesion and identity. By fostering participatory decision-making and recognizing teachers' achievements, administrators empower educators to perform their duties effectively. Ertürk (2021) emphasized that principals must collaborate with teachers to create a comfortable and supportive school environment, address concerns efficiently, and celebrate successes, thereby enhancing teachers' sense of belonging and professional security. The findings indicate that affective organizational factors strongly influence private school teachers' commitment. The collaborative and supportive leadership style of administrators encourages teachers to feel safe, appreciated, and actively involved in school decision-making. This environment strengthens affective commitment, as teachers develop emotional attachment and personal investment in the institution's objectives and overall well-being, fostering a dedicated and loyal teaching workforce.

Personal Commitment to Work

This theme emphasized the deep connection teachers have with their profession and their unyielding dedication to making a positive impact on their learners' lives. It focuses on the strength, tenacity, and self-discipline of teachers as they face difficulties and strive for greatness in their positions. This theme features emotional attachment, deep appreciation, and mission-driven work.

Participant 2 signifies this view, saying: *"I learn to love the school...School plays a very important part in my life."*

Likewise, Participant 1 reverberates this affection, declaring: *"I really love the school."*

In addition, Participant 6 illustrates a religious call to service: *"My promise, although I gave a resignation one time, the Lord never granted me to leave."*

This feeling of duty was connected to Participant 4's mission not only to educate but also to shape students' values,

emphasizing that *"It is the transforming of the mind of the youth."*

Finally, Participant 3 relates their personal commitment to the school's potential, stating: *"So, I have to stay with the school because the school was being looked up by me as the school that had let me grow as a person."*

Participants' remarks reveal that experienced private school teachers' commitment is rooted in deep emotional and professional connections that extend beyond transactional aspects of their work. Participant 2 emphasized a strong personal attachment to the school, viewing it as an irreplaceable and treasured institution. In contrast, Participant 1 echoed this emotional commitment through a long-standing engagement with the school. Participant 6 highlighted a spiritual dimension, suggesting that a sense of higher purpose or calling influences their decision to remain. In contrast, Participant 4 focused on transformational education, aiming to shape students' character and values. Participant 3 saw the school as a supportive environment for personal and professional growth. Collectively, these perspectives illustrate the multifaceted nature of teacher commitment, shaped by relationships, purpose, mission, and self-development, all of which foster long-term loyalty and dedication to the educational community.

This engagement reflects not only professional responsibility but also a deeper personal drive to improve oneself and to continuously support student growth. Shu (2022) notes that educators' engagement is a significant factor in teaching, influencing emotional involvement and active participation during instruction. The dedication of private school teachers is characterized by a combination of affective and normative commitment: Participant 1 demonstrates emotional commitment through affection for the school despite modest salaries, while Participant 6 exemplifies normative commitment by staying for a greater cause. These findings underscore that teachers' commitment in private schools is multidimensional, shaped by both personal and ethical motivations. Emotional attachment, a sense of purpose, and normative dedication intersect to sustain long-term engagement, demonstrating that professional loyalty in this context is as much about personal fulfillment and ethical responsibility as it is about institutional obligations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study found that age, marital status, and educational background significantly affect organizational commitment among private school teachers, indicating that commitment varies across demographic groups as teachers age, experience different personal circumstances, and attain higher educational qualifications. These findings highlight the need to account for demographic factors when evaluating teachers' professional engagement and commitment in private school settings. The qualitative findings support the quantitative results, revealing a deep emotional tie to the school, a shared sense of purpose and responsibility, and a supportive, collaborative work environment. Teachers' remarks about their love for their institution, collegial togetherness, and admiration for inclusive leadership support the statistical findings and underscore the key role of the work environment in building commitment. In light of these findings, private basic education institutions in the Philippines should take steps to increase organizational commitment by aligning leadership practices, teaching loads, and professional development with teachers' life stages, family responsibilities, and their educational goals. Embedding shared leadership, flexible role transitions, and values-based decision-making into daily school operations can foster long-term commitment beyond traditional retention strategies. Going forward, when formulating plans to assist and retain seasoned teachers, school administrators must take these levels of commitment into account.

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The authors independently conceived, designed, and wrote the study.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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