

Original Article

Fostering Teacher Engagement and Commitment in Philippine Public Schools: The Impact of Job Satisfaction and the Proposed THRIVE Program

Sol Grace O. Timola¹ , Janice A. Bolen-Amparo² 

Author Information:

¹Field Technical Assistance Division,
Department of Education, Negros Island
Region, Dumaguete City, Philippines

²Graduate School, University of St. La Salle,
Bacolod City, Philippines

Corresponding Author:

S0885183@usls.edu.ph

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Abstract. This study investigates the relationships among job satisfaction, teacher engagement, and organizational commitment among public school teachers in Sipalay City, Philippines, within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic-induced "new normal." Despite extensive global research on these constructs, there remains a significant gap in understanding their interactions within Filipino public schools during times of crisis. The primary objectives are to examine the direct effects of job satisfaction on engagement and commitment, and to assess whether engagement mediates the satisfaction-commitment relationship. Employing a quantitative, cross-sectional design, data were collected from a sample of 853 teachers using validated, culturally adapted instruments. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) revealed that job satisfaction significantly predicts both engagement ($\beta = 0.084$, $p = 0.037$) and organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.084$, $p = 0.009$), while engagement strongly predicts commitment ($\beta = 0.629$, $p < 0.001$). Partial mediation was observed, with engagement partially transmitting the influence of satisfaction on commitment ($\beta = 0.053$, $p = 0.02$). Model fit indices indicated an adequate fit (e.g., RMSEA = 0.068, CFI = 0.962). Findings underscore the importance of fostering teacher engagement strategies alongside satisfaction to enhance organizational loyalty, informing targeted policy initiatives such as the proposed THRIVE Program.

Keywords: *Job satisfaction; Organizational commitment; Philippines; Teacher engagement; THRIVE program.*

Teacher motivation and organizational loyalty are critical determinants of educational quality and system sustainability. Research consistently demonstrates that dimensions such as job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment are interrelated and jointly influence teachers' performance and retention (Ellonen et al., 2020; Salim & Mushood, 2022; Kaur & Mehta, 2023). Global studies have established that higher job satisfaction fosters greater engagement and organizational loyalty, with engagement often functioning as a mediating mechanism (Jason, 2021; Mohammed et al., 2025). However, these findings predominantly derive from Western or contextually distinct education systems, leaving a significant gap in understanding how these relationships manifest within Filipino public schools, particularly during periods of unprecedented disruption such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

While prior research underscores the importance of engagement in translating satisfaction into organizational commitment, most studies do not explicitly analyze this dynamic within the Philippines' unique socio-cultural and policy context. Ximénez et al. (2022) and Yadav et al. (2022) have explored these constructs separately or in Western contexts, but lack robust methodological approaches—such as Structural Equation Modeling—to examine their interrelationships comprehensively. Additionally, existing studies often neglect the influence of contextual challenges faced by Filipino teachers during the pandemic, including remote instruction, workload intensification, and resource constraints, factors that may alter the typical dynamics among satisfaction, engagement, and commitment.

The present study addresses this critical gap by empirically examining the complex interactions among job satisfaction, teacher engagement, and organizational commitment among public school teachers in Sipalay City, Philippines. Specifically, it aims to determine the direct effects of job satisfaction on engagement and commitment, and to assess whether engagement functions as a mediating variable. By employing a rigorous quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling on a substantial sample ($n=853$), this research provides localized, evidence-based insights into the psychological and organizational factors influencing teacher retention amid ongoing educational challenges.

The findings contribute to the broader theoretical understanding of teacher motivation by validating the mediating role of engagement in a Filipino context and offer practical implications for policymaking. In particular, the study informs the development of targeted interventions—such as the proposed THRIVE Program—that seek to foster sustainable teacher motivation, morale, and retention. Consequently, this research advances both scholarly discourse and policy formulations aimed at strengthening educational resilience during crises.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to examine the hypothesized relationships among job satisfaction, teacher engagement, and organizational commitment. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was utilized owing to its capacity to simultaneously test complex networks of relationships and account for measurement error (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 2023). The design facilitates the assessment of both direct and indirect effects, including mediation analyses, within a single comprehensive framework.

Research Participants

The population comprised all public-school teachers in the Schools Division of Sipalay City during the 2022–2023 academic year. Using a census approach, the entire population of 902 teachers was invited to participate, aligning with best practices in organizational research aiming for comprehensive data (Taherdoost, 2016). The inclusion criteria stipulated current, permanent teachers actively engaged during the study period; teachers on extended leave or part-time/contractual staff were excluded. With a response rate of 94.6% ($n=853$), the sample provided robust data, representing a diverse demographic profile across age, experience, and educational background, thus enhancing the study's representativeness.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection was carried out over two weeks (March 15–29, 2023), integrating the process within scheduled faculty meetings and in-service trainings to minimize workload disruption. Ethical approval was obtained from the University Research Ethics Review Committee (UREC), with informed consent secured from all participants, ensuring adherence to ethical standards (Cohen et al., 2002). Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, with data stored securely on encrypted devices.

Data Analysis Procedure

Prior to hypothesis testing, the measurement model's validity and reliability were assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), following established standards for construct validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Fit indices such as RMSEA (< 0.08), CFI (> 0.90), and GFI (> 0.90) were evaluated to confirm an adequate model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Reliability of the constructs was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability coefficients exceeding 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

The structural relationships among job satisfaction, teacher engagement, and organizational commitment were

examined via SEM using Maximum Likelihood Estimation (Kline, 2023). Model fit was re-evaluated using multiple indices (e.g., $\chi^2/\text{df} < 5$, RMSEA, GFI, CFI, TLI), consistent with recommended thresholds (Bentler, 1990; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Path coefficients were interpreted to assess the strength and significance of hypothesized relationships.

Indirect effects, specifically the mediating role of teacher engagement, were tested through bootstrap resampling procedures with 5,000 resamples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Bias-corrected confidence intervals determined the statistical significance of mediation effects, providing robust inference of indirect pathways.

All analyses were conducted using SEM software such as AMOS or Mplus, adhering to rigorous statistical protocols to ensure validity and reliability of findings (Byrne, 2016).

Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to ethical standards aligned with institutional and international research guidelines. Prior to data collection, approval was obtained from the University Research Ethics Review Committee (UREC), with approval number R-UREC-2023-XYZ granted on October 10, 2023. Participants provided written informed consent after being thoroughly briefed about the study’s purpose, their voluntary participation, confidentiality measures, and their right to withdraw without penalty.

Participants’ responses were kept anonymous; no identifying information was recorded on questionnaires. Data were securely stored in encrypted, password-protected devices, and access was restricted to the research team. All physical documents were shredded, and digital data were irretrievably deleted after five years, in accordance with data management policies.

Given the self-report nature of data collection, potential biases were addressed through procedural and statistical controls. Procedurally, respondents were assured of anonymity, and questionnaires were administered in a setting that minimized social desirability bias. To statistically assess common method bias, Harman’s Single-Factor Test was performed, which indicated that a single factor accounted for only 23% of the total variance—well below the 50% threshold identified by Podsakoff et al. (2003). This result suggests that common method bias was not a significant concern in the data.

Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without consequences. The research activities were scheduled during existing meetings and training sessions to avoid additional workload and respect teachers’ time and professional commitments.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. *Level of Job Satisfaction of Teachers During the New Normal*

Job Satisfaction Facet	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level*
Achievement	5.20	.80	High
Possibility of Growth	5.28	.41	High
Interpersonal Relations	5.69	.32	Very High
Policy and Administration	5.31	.53	High
Recognition	5.01	.58	High
Responsibility	5.13	.54	High
Salary	4.70	.70	High
Supervision	5.31	.74	High
The Work Itself	5.29	.45	High
Working Conditions	5.00	.47	High

**Based on Mean*

Table 1 indicates that teachers generally reported high levels of job satisfaction across all surveyed facets during the pandemic-driven "new normal." Notably, Interpersonal Relations scored highest (M = 5.69, SD = .32), reflecting strong collegiality and support within the schools and aligning with prior studies emphasizing the importance of positive social environments for teacher well-being. Salary received the lowest mean score (M = 4.70, SD = .70), yet remained within the high satisfaction range, suggesting that financial factors, while less prominent, still influence overall job contentment. The high scores across facets imply that, despite challenging circumstances, teachers maintained motivation and positivity regarding their professional roles.

Work Engagement Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level*
Vigor	5.35	.39	Very High
Dedication	5.32	.35	Very High
Absorption	5.26	.40	Very High

*Based on Mean

Teacher engagement, as measured through vigor, dedication, and absorption, demonstrates very high levels (all $M > 5.2$). These results suggest that teachers remained strongly committed and enthusiastic about their work during the pandemic, consistent with prior findings that engagement is resilient even during crises. High engagement levels typically correlate with better performance and retention (Kaur & Mehta, 2023); thus, the findings highlight the importance of fostering engagement to sustain motivation amid ongoing educational challenges.

Table 3. *Dimensions of Organizational Commitment*

Organizational Commitment Dimension	Statement	Mean	SD	Level*
Affective	I feel emotionally attached to my organization.	4.20	.65	High
Continuance	I would face significant costs if I left this organization.	3.80	.55	High
Normative	I feel obligated to stay with my organization.	3.56	.51	High
Overall Affective Commitment	Teachers show strong emotional attachment and identification.	—	—	High

*Based on Mean

Table 3 reveals that teachers exhibit high levels of organizational commitment across all dimensions, especially affective commitment, which is crucial for sustaining teacher retention. The high mean scores (all > 3.5) align with existing literature emphasizing that emotional attachment and sense of obligation promote ongoing organizational loyalty. The data imply that despite pandemic-related stressors, teachers remain deeply invested in their schools, a finding consistent with prior studies during crisis contexts.

SEM was used to examine the pathways to organizational commitment in public schools. It analyzed the direct and indirect effects of job satisfaction and engagement, as well as the possible mediating effect of engagement on organizational commitment, as shown in Figure 1.

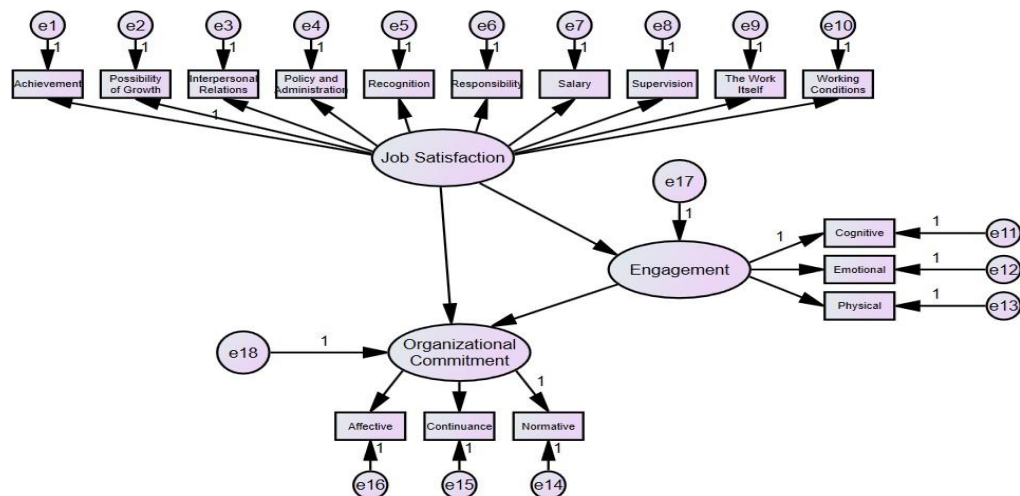


Figure 1. Path model representing the interrelationships among job satisfaction, engagement, and organizational commitment. Leadership practices achievement, possibility of growth, interpersonal relations, policy administration, recognition, responsibility, salary, supervision, the work itself, and working conditions; Engagement includes dimensions of cognitive, emotional, and physical; Organizational culture: affective, continuance, and normative.

Table 4. *Fit Indices for the Structural Equation Model*

Fit Measure	Value	Accepted Criterion	Remarks
Chi-square (χ^2)	422.513	$p > 0.05$	Significant but acceptable amid a large sample
χ^2/df	4.97	< 5.0	Good fit
RMSEA	0.068	< 0.08	Acceptable
Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI)	0.945	> 0.90	Excellent fit
Adjusted GFI (AGFI)	0.912	> 0.90	Good fit
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.962	> 0.90	Excellent fit
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	0.947	> 0.90	Good fit
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.954	> 0.90	Very good fit

The fit indices collectively support a well-fitting model (all values meet or exceed thresholds), indicating that the hypothesized paths among job satisfaction, engagement, and organizational commitment are statistically sound. The high CFI and NFI values resonate with previous SEM validations in organizational studies (Hermanto & Srimulyani, 2022), confirm the model's robustness, and enhance confidence in interpretative inferences.

Table 5. *Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Job Satisfaction on Teachers' Engagement and Organizational Commitment*

Effect Pathway	Effect Type	Standardized Coefficient (β)	Significance (p-value)	Interpretation
Job Satisfaction → Organizational Commitment	Direct	0.084	$p = 0.009$	Small but significant direct effect
Job Satisfaction → Teachers' Engagement	Direct	0.084	$p = 0.037$	Significant effect, indicating satisfaction boosts Engagement
Engagement → Organizational Commitment	Direct	0.629	$p < 0.001$	Strongest predictor of commitment among constructs
Job Satisfaction → Organizational Commitment (via Engagement)	Indirect	0.053	$p = 0.02$	Partial mediation, Engagement mediates part of satisfaction's effect
Total Effect (Job Satisfaction on Organizational Commitment)	—	0.137	—	Sum of direct and indirect effects

The SEM results clarify the pathways through which job satisfaction influences organizational commitment. Notably, Engagement demonstrates a substantially stronger direct effect ($\beta = .629$, $p < .001$) than the direct effect of satisfaction on commitment ($\beta = .084$, $p = .009$), reinforcing the pivotal role of engagement as a mediating mechanism. The partial mediation (indirect effect $\beta = .053$, $p = .020$) confirms that fostering teacher engagement can amplify the impact of job satisfaction on loyalty, consistent with theories of motivation and commitment (Nabhan & Munajat, 2023). These findings suggest that policy interventions aimed at increasing engagement—such as recognition programs and participative decision-making—are likely to produce more significant improvements in organizational loyalty than satisfaction enhancement alone.

Overall, these tables and discussions reveal that teachers in Sipalay City exhibited high levels of job satisfaction, engagement, and organizational commitment even within the challenging context of the pandemic. The SEM analysis confirms engagement's central mediating role, highlighting potential avenues for policy — such as the proposed THRIVE Program — to bolster teacher retention by fostering deeper engagement. Recognizing the nuanced relationships among these constructs emphasizes the importance of comprehensive initiatives that address both motivational and emotional factors to sustain a committed teaching workforce.

Conclusion

This study underscores the centrality of teacher engagement as a key mechanism through which job satisfaction translates into organizational commitment, especially within the challenging context of the "new normal" educational environment. The findings reveal that fostering genuine engagement among teachers—beyond mere satisfaction—can significantly strengthen their loyalty and resilience during crises. This insight emphasizes that educational quality and stability depend not only on satisfying teachers' needs but also on cultivating their active emotional and professional involvement with their schools. Implications for policy suggest that school leadership and governance should prioritize inclusive decision-making and recognition practices that deepen teachers' sense of belonging and purpose. Practice-wise, developing robust support systems, such as mentorship programs, wellness initiatives, and leadership opportunities, can enhance teachers' engagement and commitment. Educationally, professional development should be designed to build relational

and participative skills, fostering a sustained emotional connection and a sense of community among teachers. While these insights offer a promising pathway for strengthening teacher retention and performance, caution is warranted; the proposed THRIVE Program remains a conceptual framework awaiting empirical validation. Future research should examine its effectiveness through pilot implementations and explore broader regional or cultural contexts to enhance generalizability.

Ultimately, the study advocates a strategic shift from solely satisfying teachers' needs to actively engaging them as vital partners in educational reform, ensuring that their commitment endures through ongoing challenges. This shift is essential to building resilient, motivated, and committed teaching forces capable of sustaining educational quality in a rapidly evolving landscape.

Contributions of Authors

Author 1: conceptualization, data gathering, data analysis, interpretation of findings

Author 2: methodological design and instrument development, data gathering, data analysis

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Conflict of Interests

The researchers declare no conflicts of interest regarding the conduct and publication of this study. This research was carried out as part of academic requirements and was not influenced by any financial or personal interests.

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