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PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT AND PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS IN PANABO SOUTH DISTRICT 2

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between professional commitment and pedagogical competence among elementary teachers in Panabo South District 2. It assessed professional commitment in terms of affective, continuance, and normative commitment and pedagogical competence in terms of planning and preparation, classroom environment, and instruction. A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was employed. The respondents were 62 public elementary teachers handling Grades 4, 5, and 6, selected through total enumeration, with at least three years of teaching experience. Data were collected using validated Likert-scale questionnaires adapted from Meyer and Allen (1991) and Danielson (2007). Weighted mean, standard deviation, Pearson product-moment correlation, and multiple regression were used at the .05 level of significance. The respondents demonstrated high professional commitment (M = 3.69, SD = 0.36), with continuance commitment obtaining the highest mean (M = 3.80). Their pedagogical competence was also high (M = 3.71, SD = 0.24), with planning and preparation rated highest (M = 3.82). Professional commitment was positively and significantly related to pedagogical competence (r = .734, p < .001). The regression model was significant, F = 24.648, p < .001, and explained 56.0% of the variance in pedagogical competence. Continuance (β = .506, p < .001) and normative commitment (β = .237, p = .026) were significant predictors, whereas affective commitment was not (β = .127, p = .354). The findings point to the value of sustained professional learning, collaborative practice, mentoring, and supportive school leadership in strengthening teachers' instructional competence.

KEYWORDS: *Elementary Teachers, Pedagogical Competence, Professional Commitment*

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Its Setting

Professional commitment and pedagogical competence are important dimensions of effective teaching. Professional commitment reflects teachers' emotional attachment to, perceived need for, and moral obligation toward their profession. Pedagogical competence concerns the knowledge and skills needed to plan instruction, establish a supportive classroom environment, and facilitate learning. In elementary education, these qualities are particularly relevant because teachers guide learners' foundational academic, social, and emotional development.

Teachers work in settings shaped by workload, resource availability, institutional support, class size, and changing instructional expectations. International literature describes how inadequate resources, limited autonomy, administrative demands, and insufficient professional recognition can affect teachers' motivation and instructional practice (Bodzin et al., 2020; Macdonald & Glover, 2021; Tsuchiya & Kodama, 2020). Philippine studies likewise identify challenges involving instructional materials, professional development, and additional school responsibilities (Daga, 2021; Taboada et al., 2023; Ronquillo, 2023).

In Panabo South District 2, teachers work within varied school conditions, including limitations in technological infrastructure, internet connectivity, instructional resources, and opportunities for continuing professional development (Ortega & Libutaque, 2023; Pasilan & Cuyos, 2023). These conditions may shape both teachers' commitment to their work and their ability to plan and deliver effective instruction. Understanding how the two constructs are related can help school leaders identify areas for professional support.

Professional commitment is commonly described through affective, continuance, and normative dimensions (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Affective commitment refers to emotional attachment to the profession; continuance commitment concerns the perceived costs of leaving; and normative commitment reflects a sense of obligation to remain. Pedagogical competence in this study is represented by planning and preparation, classroom environment, and instruction, drawing on Danielson's (2007) framework.

Although commitment and teaching competence have been examined in broader educational settings, context-specific evidence involving elementary teachers in Panabo South District 2 remains limited. The present study addressed this need by describing the levels

of both variables, determining their relationship, and identifying which dimensions of professional commitment predict pedagogical competence.

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the relationship between professional commitment and pedagogical competence of elementary teachers in Panabo South District 2. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of professional commitment in terms of affective, continuance, and normative commitment?
2. What is the level of pedagogical competence in terms of planning and preparation, classroom environment, and instruction?
3. Is there a significant relationship between professional commitment and pedagogical competence?
4. Which domains of professional commitment significantly influence pedagogical competence?

Hypotheses

At the .05 level of significance, the study tested the null hypotheses that (1) professional commitment is not significantly related to pedagogical competence and (2) none of the domains of professional commitment significantly predicts pedagogical competence.

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to determine the levels of professional commitment and pedagogical competence, examine the relationship between the two variables, and identify the professional commitment domains that significantly predict pedagogical competence.

Significance of the Study

The findings may help elementary teachers reflect on their professional dedication and instructional practices. School heads may use the results when planning mentoring, coaching, collaborative learning, and recognition activities. Learners may benefit indirectly when teachers strengthen lesson preparation, classroom management, and instructional delivery. Future researchers may use the findings as a local reference for examining teacher commitment and competence alongside other school and personal factors.

Scope and Limitations

The study covered 62 public elementary teachers from Panabo South District 2 who handled Grades 4, 5, or 6 and had at least three years of teaching experience during School Year 2025–2026. Total enumeration was used. The study focused on affective, continuance, and normative commitment and on planning and preparation, classroom environment, and instruction. Data came from self-reported questionnaire responses; classroom observations and interviews were not conducted. The findings are therefore limited to the participants and setting and should not be generalized beyond similar contexts without further study.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The study was anchored in Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of commitment, which explains commitment through affective attachment, continuance considerations, and normative obligation. Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory supports the view that teachers develop professional behaviors and skills through observation, modeling, and interaction with colleagues. Shulman's (1986) perspective on pedagogical content knowledge emphasizes the integration of subject knowledge and pedagogy in effective instruction. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural perspective also highlights the role of social interaction and collaboration in learning. These perspectives informed the examination of professional commitment as a predictor of pedagogical competence.

The conceptual model treated professional commitment—affective, continuance, and normative commitment—as the independent variable and pedagogical competence—planning and preparation, classroom environment, and instruction—as the dependent variable.

CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational design. The descriptive component determined the levels of professional commitment and pedagogical competence, while the correlational component examined the direction and strength of their association. The design did not involve manipulation of the variables.

Respondents and Sampling

The respondents were 62 elementary teachers from public schools in Panabo South District 2. Total enumeration was applied because the qualified population was manageable. Participants were required to be currently teaching in elementary schools, assigned to Grades 4, 5, or 6, and to have at least three years of teaching experience.

Research Instruments

Data were gathered through structured, close-ended questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale. The professional commitment instrument was adapted from Meyer and Allen (1991) and contained five items for each of the three dimensions: affective, continuance,

and normative commitment. The pedagogical competence instrument was adapted from Danielson (2007) and contained five items each for planning and preparation, classroom environment, and instruction.

Experts evaluated the instruments for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the constructs. The reported expert mean ratings were 4.05 for professional commitment and 4.18 for pedagogical competence, both interpreted as very good. Pilot testing with 30 elementary teachers who were not part of the study yielded Cronbach's alpha values of .882 and .887, respectively. The manuscript also reports an overall reliability coefficient of .891.

Data-Gathering Procedure and Ethics

After securing the required approvals, the researcher coordinated with school principals and focal persons in Panabo South District 2. Validated questionnaires were administered from February 10 to 12, 2026, either through paper-and-pencil or electronic forms, depending on available resources and respondent preference. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, voluntary participation, confidentiality safeguards, and right to withdraw without penalty. Responses were organized, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Statistical Treatment

Weighted mean and standard deviation described the levels and variability of responses. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient determined the direction, strength, and statistical significance of the relationship between professional commitment and pedagogical competence. Multiple regression analysis identified the dimensions of professional commitment that significantly predicted pedagogical competence. Tests were evaluated at the .05 level of significance.

CHAPTER 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are presented according to the study's research questions. Descriptive statistics summarize the respondents' ratings, followed by correlation and regression results.

Level of Professional Commitment

The respondents demonstrated a high level of professional commitment (M = 3.69, SD = 0.36). Continuance commitment obtained the highest mean (M = 3.80, SD = 0.43), followed by normative commitment (M = 3.65, SD = 0.37) and affective commitment (M = 3.62, SD = 0.45). The result indicates that respondents generally perceived themselves as committed to remaining in the profession, fulfilling professional responsibilities, and maintaining an emotional connection to teaching.

Dimension	Mean	SD	Description
Affective commitment	3.62	0.45	High
Continuance commitment	3.80	0.43	High
Normative commitment	3.65	0.37	High
Overall professional commitment	3.69	0.36	High

The comparatively higher continuance commitment suggests that accumulated experience, professional investments, and the perceived costs of leaving may contribute to teachers' decision to remain in the profession. Normative commitment reflects a sense of duty toward learners and the school, while affective commitment represents emotional attachment and professional identification. The pattern supports the multidimensional view of commitment described by Meyer and Allen (1991).

Level of Pedagogical Competence

Pedagogical competence was rated high (M = 3.71, SD = 0.24). Planning and preparation received the highest mean (M = 3.82, SD = 0.26), followed by instruction (M = 3.76, SD = 0.47) and classroom environment (M = 3.56, SD = 0.39). The findings suggest that respondents generally reported strong lesson preparation and instructional practices. Classroom environment, although still rated high, obtained the lowest mean and may warrant continued attention, particularly in classroom behavior management and inclusive participation.

Dimension	Mean	SD	Description
Planning and preparation	3.82	0.26	High
Classroom environment	3.56	0.39	High
Instruction	3.76	0.47	High
Overall pedagogical competence	3.71	0.24	High

The item-level results identified timely feedback (M = 4.23) as a very highly rated instructional practice. By comparison, using strategies responsive to diverse learning needs received a moderate rating (M = 3.00), as did effective classroom behavior management (M = 3.24). These areas may be considered in designing professional learning activities. The findings are consistent with literature emphasizing lesson preparation, differentiated instruction, formative assessment, and classroom management as components of effective pedagogy (Danielson, 2007; Khan & Malik, 2023; Prudente et al., 2024).

Relationship between Professional Commitment and Pedagogical Competence

The overall correlation between professional commitment and pedagogical competence was positive and statistically significant ($r = .734$, $p < .001$). This indicates that higher reported professional commitment was associated with higher reported pedagogical competence among the respondents. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship was rejected.

Commitment dimension	Planning & preparation r (p)	Classroom environment r (p)	Instruction r (p)	Overall competence r (p)
Affective	0.042 (.745)	0.547 (<.001)	0.477 (<.001)	0.623 (<.001)
Continuance	0.198 (.123)	0.493 (<.001)	0.558 (<.001)	0.704 (<.001)
Normative	0.196 (.128)	0.357 (.004)	0.405 (.001)	0.529 (<.001)
Overall commitment	0.166 (.196)	0.556 (<.001)	0.570 (<.001)	0.734 (<.001)

The correlations show that the dimensions of commitment were significantly associated with classroom environment, instruction, and overall pedagogical competence. However, none of the three commitment dimensions had a statistically significant relationship with planning and preparation at the .05 level. This distinction suggests that commitment may be more closely reflected in classroom interaction and instructional engagement than in reported planning practices in this sample. The results are compatible with perspectives that emphasize collaboration, professional learning, and supportive relationships in teachers' development (Bandura, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978; Nguyen & Tran, 2022).

Predictive Influence of Professional Commitment

The multiple regression model was statistically significant, $F = 24.648$, $p < .001$, with $R = .749$ and $R^2 = .560$. The three dimensions of professional commitment collectively explained 56.0% of the variance in pedagogical competence. Continuance commitment was the strongest significant predictor ($B = 0.278$, $\beta = .506$, $t = 3.654$, $p < .001$), followed by normative commitment ($B = 0.152$, $\beta = .237$, $t = 2.288$, $p = .026$). Affective commitment was not a significant predictor ($B = 0.067$, $\beta = .127$, $t = 0.935$, $p = .354$).

Predictor	B	Standardized β	t	p
Constant	1.859	—	8.104	<.001
Affective commitment	0.067	0.127	0.935	.354
Continuance commitment	0.278	0.506	3.654	<.001
Normative commitment	0.152	0.237	2.288	.026
Model statistics	R = .749	$R^2 = .560$	F = 24.648	p < .001

The results indicate that continuance and normative commitment made unique contributions to the prediction of pedagogical competence when the other dimensions were considered. The finding for continuance commitment may reflect the value of accumulated professional experience and investment in teaching. Normative commitment may reflect teachers' sense of responsibility to learners and the school. Affective commitment, while rated high descriptively and correlated with overall competence, did not make a statistically significant unique contribution in the regression model. This distinction is important: a bivariate association does not necessarily mean that a variable remains a significant predictor when related dimensions are entered together.

The findings may be interpreted in light of professional learning and social learning perspectives. Teachers' participation in mentoring, collaborative planning, and reflective practice can provide opportunities to translate professional dedication into instructional skills (Bandura, 1977; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Vygotsky, 1978). School leaders may therefore support both commitment and competence through structured professional development and supportive working conditions.

CHAPTER 4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study examined the relationship between professional commitment and pedagogical competence among 62 elementary teachers in Panabo South District 2. A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was used. Data were collected through validated questionnaires adapted from Meyer and Allen (1991) and Danielson (2007), and analyzed using weighted mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression.

1. Professional commitment was high ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.36$). Continuance commitment had the highest mean ($M = 3.80$), followed by normative commitment ($M = 3.65$) and affective commitment ($M = 3.62$).
2. Pedagogical competence was high ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 0.24$). Planning and preparation obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.82$), followed by instruction ($M = 3.76$) and classroom environment ($M = 3.56$).
3. Professional commitment had a significant positive relationship with pedagogical competence ($r = .734$, $p < .001$). Its dimensions were significantly related to classroom environment, instruction, and overall competence, but not to planning and preparation.
4. The regression model was significant ($F = 24.648$, $p < .001$) and explained 56.0% of the variance in pedagogical competence. Continuance and normative commitment were significant predictors; affective commitment was not.

Conclusions

The elementary teachers who participated in the study demonstrated high professional commitment and high pedagogical competence. Their strongest commitment dimension was continuance commitment, while planning and preparation was the strongest pedagogical competence dimension. Professional commitment was positively associated with pedagogical competence, indicating that teachers who reported stronger commitment also tended to report stronger teaching competence. In the regression model, continuance and normative commitment significantly predicted pedagogical competence, whereas affective commitment did not make a significant unique contribution. The results support the importance of professional stability, responsibility, and opportunities to translate commitment into practice.

Recommendations

Elementary teachers are encouraged to sustain professional learning through reflective practice, peer collaboration, and participation in relevant training. They may give particular attention to strategies for responding to diverse learner needs and strengthening classroom behavior management, which received comparatively lower item ratings.

School heads may provide mentoring and coaching, promote professional learning communities, and recognize teachers' contributions. Professional development plans may include differentiated instruction, classroom management, formative assessment, and collaborative lesson planning. Administrators may also review workload and support structures so that teachers' sense of obligation is accompanied by adequate opportunities and resources for effective teaching.

District supervisors and program coordinators may use the findings when designing capacity-building activities for elementary teachers in Panabo South District 2. Future researchers may replicate the study with larger samples and other districts, include classroom observations or interviews, and examine additional factors such as leadership, school climate, workload, and availability of instructional resources.

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