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The Mediating Effect of Organizational Commitment on the Relationship between Job Stress and Employee Engagement

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the mediating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between job stress and employee engagement among public-school teachers in the Division of Davao Del Sur. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from teacher-respondents through validated instruments. The findings revealed very high levels of job stress, organizational commitment, and employee engagement among respondents. However, no significant relationships were found between job stress and employee engagement, job stress and organizational commitment, and organizational commitment and employee engagement. Additionally, organizational commitment showed no mediating effect on the relationship between job stress and employee engagement. These results suggest the need for further exploration of teacher well-being and its impact on organizational outcomes. The study contributes to the understanding of teacher dynamics in public schools and underscores the importance of theoretical frameworks like the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory to provide insights into these complex relationships.

INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement is a significant challenge globally, particularly in educational settings. It displays workers' mental and emotional bond with their jobs and company. Low levels of engagement are a persistent issue that negatively impacts job satisfaction, employee well-being, and overall performance. Disengaged employees often experience decreased motivation, burnout, and diminished productivity, leading to higher turnover rates and a decline in organizational effectiveness. Research from 2019 onwards has contributed valuable insights into the complexity of this issue, emphasizing the need for ongoing exploration and practical interventions to address disengagement and enhance overall workplace dynamics (Gibbon & Lorenz, 2023; Sudibjo & Riantini, 2022; Zhang *et al.*, 2021).

Moreover, employee performance, dedication, competitive advantage, and other organizational outputs are all significantly influenced by engagement (Rameshkumar, 2019). According to Adekoya (2019), employee engagement is a factor that contributes favorably to employee productivity, which in turn contributes positively to organizational performance. Work-life integration policies are an important component of a successful employee engagement strategy, and improved organizational effectiveness is a natural consequence of implementing such policies. Work-life balance policies that are forward-thinking and accommodating can help employees be more productive, dedicated, and committed. This, in turn, leads to improved employee engagement, which, in the long run, is beneficial to the firm in terms of its overall efficiency (Yadav *et al.*, 2022).

In addition, research findings have shown a correlation between job stress and employee engagement, indicating that stressed workers exhibit lower work engagement (Miranda *et al.*, 2020). In conclusion, because job stress results in poor performance and low employee engagement, it significantly impacts employees' involvement in organizational activities. (Ayebare, 2021). Improved working conditions are strongly associated with reduced job stress and higher employee engagement, while increased job stress is moderately linked to lower employee engagement (Namato, 2022).

In contrast, job stress has significantly affected organizational commitment (Lee *et al.*, 2022). Specifically, it negatively impacts organizational commitment through role-related and interpersonal issues but positively influences it through supportive organizational structures and compensation systems. Supporting this, Saadeh and Suifan (2020) revealed a serious adverse consequence of work-related stress on organizational commitment. Similarly, Gede *et al.* (2023) reported that job stress has a negative and significant effect on organizational commitment, with a correlation value of -0.199 and a significance level of 0.004 ($p < 0.05$).

Research findings consistently highlight the strong connection between employee engagement and organizational commitment. For instance, studies by Narmatha and Amutha (2023) confirm a significant positive relationship. Similarly, Rameshkumar (2019) underscores that employee engagement is closely linked to emotional and moral commitment, while its influence on practical continuance commitment remains negligible. Furthermore, as demonstrated by Tarmizi and Anggian

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(2022), organizational commitment and engagement significantly enhance employee performance, emphasizing their critical role in driving organizational success.

On the other hand, a significant research gap in this study is the lack of focus on public school teachers in Davao del Sur, a unique demographic group within the educational sector. While studies like Wang *et al.* (2020) highlight the crucial role of organizational commitment in enhancing employee engagement, these insights are often drawn from non-educational or generalized settings, failing to capture the nuanced experiences of teachers. Similarly, Balbes and Quines (2022) emphasize the link between teacher well-being, job satisfaction, and student outcomes. However, there is a scarcity of research exploring these dynamics within public education in Davao del Sur. This study is urgent and necessary as it addresses these unexamined interactions, providing localized insights to improve teacher well-being and engagement, which are directly tied to better student outcomes. By focusing on this region, the research fills a critical void and offers tailored strategies to address the specific challenges teachers face in this locale.

Research Objectives

The main goal of the research is to find out the mediating effect of organization on the relationship between job stress and employee engagement among public elementary school teachers in the Department of Education, Division of Davao del Sur.

The investigation responded to the following objectives:

To measure the level of job stress in terms of:

1. conflict at work,
2. employment opportunities,
3. general health,
4. how you feel about yourself,
5. general job information,
6. job requirements, and
7. mental demands.

To measure the level of employee engagement in terms of:

1. intellectual engagement,
2. social engagement, and
3. affective engagement.

To measure the level of organizational commitment among public school elementary teachers.

To measure the significant relationship between:

1. job stress and employee engagement,
2. job stress and organizational commitment, and
3. organizational commitment and employee engagement.

To find out the mediating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between job stress and employee engagement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents topics based on themes. It includes studies from books, journals, articles, and other trusted sources taken from academic papers and research. These

references are used to explain each part of the study in more detail. Using these sources helps provide a clearer understanding and more information about the topic being studied.

Job Stress

Job stress is a multifaceted construct encompassing various dimensions that significantly influence employees' well-being and organizational outcomes. Conflict at work, for instance, is a key dimension that arises from strained interpersonal relationships or disputes over roles and responsibilities, leading to emotional exhaustion and decreased morale (Abdelmoteleb, 2019). Additionally, employment opportunities, or the perceived availability of better career options, influence job stress levels, particularly when employees feel trapped in roles with limited growth or mobility (Wang *et al.*, 2020). These stressors underscore the importance of fostering supportive workplace environments to mitigate conflict and enhance perceptions of career progression.

On the other hand, general health and self-perception are also crucial indicators of job stress. Stress directly impacts employees' physical health, manifesting as fatigue, sleep disturbances, and chronic illnesses, diminishing productivity and overall quality of life (Queirós *et al.*, 2020). Meanwhile, self-perception, or how employees evaluate their competence and value within the organization, can be negatively affected by excessive workloads or inadequate feedback, further heightening stress levels (Graca *et al.*, 2020). Addressing these factors involves implementing wellness programs and offering constructive feedback to boost employee confidence and resilience.

Lastly, job requirements and mental demands represent significant sources of job stress, particularly in roles characterized by high workloads and cognitive strain. Excessive job demands, such as unrealistic deadlines and multitasking, lead to burnout and inefficacy (Wang *et al.*, 2020). Mental demands requiring sustained attention and problem-solving also contribute to mental fatigue, reducing overall performance and engagement (Yang *et al.*, 2021). These pressures affect individual productivity and hinder team dynamics and overall organizational effectiveness. Therefore, prioritizing strategies like workload redistribution, flexible work policies, and mental health programs is essential to fostering a resilient and productive workforce.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is pivotal in driving individual performance and organizational success. It pertains to the degree of passion, dedication, and emotional connection an individual demonstrates toward their job. Engaged employees exceed expectations, contributing more effectively to their organization's goals. As a result, this heightened engagement leads to improved job performance, greater job satisfaction, and more substantial organizational commitment, as employees

feel more connected to their roles and the organization's broader mission (Byrne, 2022). When employees are engaged, their enthusiasm and dedication translate into higher productivity and better overall outcomes for the organization.

In addition, intellectual engagement refers to employees' mental absorption, curiosity, and critical thinking in their work. Highly engaged employees innovate and solve problems, improving processes and task completion. This engagement fosters a sense of purpose and accomplishment, motivating continuous learning and adaptability. In today's evolving work environment, intellectual engagement enhances individual performance and strengthens organizational growth and innovation (Nwachukwu & Osa-Izeko, 2022).

Furthermore, social engagement is a vital dimension that emphasizes employees' emotional connection to colleagues and the organizational culture. Employees with strong social engagement align with company values and collaborate effectively with peers. This strong connection greatly improves relationships and builds a supportive environment that further drives organizational success. Affective engagement reflects employees' emotional investment in their roles through positive energy and commitment, linking to higher job satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, and improved retention. These three dimensions collectively drive innovation, enhance resilience, and ensure long-term organizational success. Together, intellectual, social, and affective engagement enhance employee behavior and performance, ultimately benefiting both individuals and organizations (Luo *et al.*, 2020; Valenzuela-Peñuñuri *et al.*, 2024).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is a crucial factor influencing employees' behavior, loyalty, and overall performance. It encompasses several dimensions, including normative commitment, affective commitment, and continuance commitment. Normative commitment refers to employees' perceived obligation to remain with their organization, often rooted in values, moral duty, or a sense of responsibility. High normative commitment workers think sticking with the company is important; it is the "right thing to do," guided by their ethical principles and loyalty toward their employer. This form of commitment ensures that employees stay not only because of external factors but also due to internalized values aligned with organizational goals (Dahmardeh & Nastiezaie, 2019; Khosravani *et al.*, 2020; Bashir & Gani, 2020; Mustafa *et al.*, 2020).

Further, affective commitment is driven by emotional attachment, influencing employees' decision to stay with their organization. It stems from a genuine connection to the workplace, aligning personal values with company goals. Employees with strong affective commitment show high enthusiasm, engagement, and willingness to contribute beyond their duties. This emotional bond fosters collaboration, strengthens teamwork, and

enhances workplace cohesion. Committed employees align their goals with organizational objectives, leading to better performance and dedication. Organizations can cultivate affective commitment through inclusion, trust, and mutual respect (Dahmardeh & Nastiezaie, 2019; Pergamino & Yuayan, 2021).

Continuance commitment arises from the perceived costs of leaving an organization, including financial loss and job uncertainty. Employees with high continuance commitment stay not out of loyalty but due to the risks of leaving. This commitment keeps employees in their roles even when unsatisfied, ensuring workforce stability and reducing turnover. While it does not stem from passion, it helps maintain operational consistency. Organizations should address its underlying factors to create a more supportive and fulfilling work environment (Menes & Haguisan III, 2020; Oberes & Tan, 2022; Putra *et al.*, 2019).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study delved into 2,660 public school elementary teachers sourced from DepEd Region XI, Department of Education, Division of Davao del Sur. These educators, from Teacher 1 to Master Teachers, are pivotal educational figures entrusted with shaping young minds and delivering quality learning experiences. Utilizing the Raosoft Calculator, a sample size of 336 respondents was determined, ensuring adequate representation. Employing the Stratified Random Sampling Technique by Simkus (2022), the study achieved proportional representation across districts or strata. This meticulous approach facilitated a comprehensive examination of job stress, employee engagement, and organizational commitment among elementary school teachers, contributing to a robust and diverse dataset for analysis.

Moreover, the inclusion criteria for respondents involved those permanent elementary school teachers within the specified division. In contrast, exclusion criteria may have encompassed teachers on leave or those not directly engaged in teaching roles outside the Division of Davao del Sur. The study locale, Davao del Sur, was chosen due to its relevance to the study's focus on employee engagement among teachers. With its diverse educational landscape and varying socio-cultural contexts, Davao del Sur presents an ideal setting to explore the mediating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between job stress and employee engagement within the elementary school teaching community. Its geographic description, encompassing both urban and rural areas, offers a rich tapestry of educational environments, justifying its selection as a representative locale for the study's focus on employee engagement among teachers in public elementary schools.

In addition, a modified survey questionnaire is employed as an instrument in the study. It has three sections: job stress as the independent variable, employee engagement as the dependent variable, and organizational commitment as the mediating variable. The first section is a revised

version of the employee engagement questionnaire in terms of intellectual engagement, social engagement, and affective engagement taken from the ISA Engagement Scale of Soane *et al.* (2012); the second section is a modified questionnaire on job stress by NIOSH Generic with indicators such as conflict at work, employment opportunities, general health, general job information, how do you feel about yourself, job requirements, and mental demands; and the third section is the modified questionnaire of organizational commitment with indicators such as normative commitment, affective commitment, and continuance commitment taken from Organizational Commitment Questionnaire of Mowday *et al.* (1979).

Additionally, the survey questionnaires used a 5-point Likert scale for respondents to assess their agreement with statements regarding employee engagement, job stress, and organizational commitment. To interpret the responses, the following criteria were employed: mean values ranging from 4.20 to 5.00 indicated a very high level, suggesting consistent observations; means between 3.40 and 4.19 denoted a high level, signifying frequent observations; means falling within 2.40 and 3.39 signified a moderate level, suggesting occasional observations; while means ranging from 1.80 to 2.39 suggested a low level, indicating rare observations. Lastly, means between 1.00 and 1.79 indicated a very low level, signifying no observations. Moreover, the scoring of actual questionnaires was answered with a score of 5, meaning Strongly Agree; 4, indicating Agree; 3, denoting Oftentimes; 2, representing Disagree; and 1, indicating Strongly Disagree.

Following the rigorous validation by experts in the field, with a mean score of 4.27 interpreted as very good, the questionnaire underwent testing with a sample size of 40 respondents. Job stress received a Cronbach Alpha of .91, interpreted as excellent, while employee engagement and organizational commitment received Cronbach Alpha results of .90 and .90, respectively, which were also interpreted as excellent. This pivotal phase involved a pilot study, commonly considered a feasibility study, designed as a small-scale preliminary assessment that preceded the primary research endeavor. The primary goal of this pilot study, as outlined by Simkus (2022), lay in scrutinizing the research design's feasibility and refining its structure. This initial exploration ensured the questionnaire aligned seamlessly with the study's objectives, allowing for necessary adjustments or improvements. By conducting this preliminary investigation, the research team could validate the questionnaire's efficacy, addressing any potential shortcomings or ambiguities before initiating the comprehensive research, thereby fortifying the study's foundation and enhancing its credibility.

Furthermore, a quantitative-correlational non-experimental design was used in this study. Specifically, the Pearson r Correlation Coefficient was used to examine the connections between job stress and employee engagement, job stress and organizational commitment,

and employee engagement. The degree of association between two or more variables was assessed and adjusted using a descriptive, non-experimental correlational methodology. The measure of the correlation coefficient (r or R) provided information on the closeness of these variables (Senthilnathan, 2019). Moreover, the significance level had to be more than .05 for H_0 and H_a to be approved. Indeed, hypothesis testing determined whether the relationships were likely strong or weak (Creswell, 2012).

Henceforth, the author also noted that three different regression analyses were conducted: X was used as the predictor variable of M ; M was used as the predictor variable of Y ; and X acted as a predictor variable of Y . Thus, X and M were predictors of Y in a mediating study. Moreover, an independent and dependent variable was paired with a third hypothetical variable, a mediator variable. This variable was also called mediating, intermediary, or intervening (Hayes, 2009). Thus, the study's issues were handled in several different ways. The theoretical foundations of job stress, employee engagement, and organizational commitment were utilized in this study.

Thus, the three factors were investigated through mediation testing. Specifically, it examined how well the predictor and mediator variables worked together and how well the mediator variables worked with the standards-based. The idea behind a basic mediation model was that the relationship between a predictor factor and a result could be broken down into its parts, each of which might be described by the influence of a different third factor. After considering the mediator's impact, the causal link between the explanatory variable and the result was no longer statistically significant, indicating that the relationship was fully mediated. To what extent the mediator took into account but not all of the relationships between the independent and dependent factors was discussed as partial mediation. The extent to which an event was mediated was known as the indirect effect (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

In the same manner, mediation testing offers a detailed examination of how different variables interact within research frameworks. It allows researchers to understand how predictor variables and mediator variables work together and how they collectively influence outcomes. The process involves breaking down the relationship between a predictor factor and a result into distinct parts influenced by different third factors. When considering the mediator's impact, it becomes possible to ascertain whether the connection between the explanatory variable and the result is fully mediated, indicating that the mediator explains the entire relationship. Alternatively, partial mediation is known as partial mediation when the mediator considers some but not all of the relationships between independent and dependent factors. Calculating indirect effects helps quantify the extent to which the mediator influences the overall relationship dynamics, providing researchers with a comprehensive approach to understanding causal pathways and improving their analyses.

Corollary to this, the following statistical procedures were used to provide supplementary detailed examination and evaluation of the data: Mean was operated to describe the level of the three variables used in this mediating study. Besides, the Pearson r correlation coefficient was run to find a substantial relationship between job stress and employee engagement, job stress and organizational commitment, and organizational commitment and employee engagement. However, path analysis was utilized to prove that organizational commitment moderated the connection between job stress and employee engagement and to support the results further. Decomposing a total or zero-order correlation between two variables into one direct effect and one or more indirect effects is possible statistically through path analysis (Wooldredge, 2021).

In June 2023, the data gathering process started with formal requests sent to education authorities in Davao del Sur, seeking approval. After receiving the endorsement, consent letters and surveys were delivered to school heads, ensuring clarity and voluntary participation. Face-to-face questionnaire distribution followed, allowing direct interaction with teachers. Upon completion, meticulous questionnaires were scrutinized for accuracy before entering data into Excel and maintaining detailed records. Systematic tabulation and validation checks were then carried out to ensure organization and integrity before potential analysis, reflecting a thorough and ethical approach from permissions to data management.

Upon obtaining approval, the researcher duplicated the survey questionnaires to distribute to the chosen respondents. Once distributed, the retrieval process was expected to take about one week. Subsequently, the collected data were tabulated and imported into SPSS, applying AMOS for data analysis and interpretation. The use of survey questionnaires aligned with the survey research design, a non-experimental study design in which participants fill out a survey or questionnaire to describe a person or group. The application of AMOS for data analysis and interpretation reflected advanced statistical methods. AMOS is commonly used for structural equation modeling, which is suitable for analyzing complex relationships between variables, such as those in a mediating study.

Moreover, this study received compliance and approval from the University of Mindanao Ethics Research Committee (UMERC) under Protocol Identifier: UMER-2023-147. The UMER guidelines served as a guiding framework, ensuring strict adherence to ethical considerations and alignment with established standards. Central to this process was securing informed consent, respecting participants' autonomy, and guaranteeing that they fully understood and voluntarily agreed to participate. Privacy and confidentiality were prioritized,

acknowledging the sensitivity of the data collected. Participation remained entirely voluntary and free from any form of coercion. All procedures were executed with care.

Additionally, UMER's directives comprehensively address plagiarism, conflicts of interest, and the proper acquisition of research permissions. The framework ensures that participants benefit from their involvement, reinforcing ethical research practices and promoting a culture of trust. It also manages technological concerns, such as robust data security measures, to protect sensitive information throughout the study. Proper authorship is credited, with the research adviser appropriately recognized as a secondary author. Moreover, the guidelines emphasize fairness, transparency, and accountability in all research activities. By upholding these ethical standards, UMER fosters responsible research conduct, ensuring credibility, integrity, and the overall quality of academic contributions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The information gathered from the respondents on job stress, employee engagement, and organizational commitment is provided, examined, and interpreted in this part by the previously mentioned study goals. The order of discussions on the mentioned topic is as follows: level of job stress; level of employee engagement; level of organizational commitment; correlations between job stress and employee engagement; correlations between job stress and organizational commitment; correlation between organizational commitment and employee engagement; and on the mediating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between job stress and employee engagement.

Job Stress

Table 1 displays the level of job stress among participants, as measured by various indicators. The investigation found that the overall level of job stress was very high, with a mean score of 4.67 (SD= .08), indicating minimal variability in responses across participants. Among the specific indicators, job requirements received the highest mean score of 4.74 (SD = .09), highlighting that employees perceive their work tasks as excessively demanding. In contrast, conflict at work had the lowest mean score of 4.58 (SD = .12), suggesting that while interpersonal issues were present, they were less impactful than other stress factors. The relatively low standard deviations for all indicators (ranging from .08 to .25) suggest a consistent agreement among participants regarding the high-stress levels they experience. These findings reject the null hypothesis, which posits no significant level of job stress among participants.

Table 1: Summary Table on the Level of Job Stress

| Indicators | SD | Mean | Descriptive Level |
|--------------------------|------|------|-------------------|
| Conflict at Work | 0.12 | 4.58 | Very High |
| Employment Opportunities | 0.25 | 4.63 | Very High |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| General Health | 0.10 | 4.67 | Very High |
| How Do You Feel About Yourself | 0.08 | 4.71 | Very High |
| General Job Information | 0.09 | 4.68 | Very High |
| Job Requirements | 0.09 | 4.74 | Very High |
| Mental Demands | 0.11 | 4.71 | Very High |
| Overall | 0.08 | 4.67 | Very High |

Given these findings, organizations must prioritize interventions addressing job stress through strategies like workload management and employee support programs. High scores for job requirements highlight the need to set realistic expectations and ensure fair task distribution to prevent burnout and improve satisfaction. Though slightly less significant, addressing workplace conflict requires fostering communication and implementing conflict resolution mechanisms. Open dialogue and training can reduce tensions and create a harmonious work environment. These actions alleviate stressors and enhance long-term well-being, allowing employees to focus on tasks and boosting overall performance and productivity.

Furthermore, these results align with the research of Wang *et al.* (2020), which emphasized the significant impact of job stress on mental health and job satisfaction. Specifically, their findings demonstrated that high stress disrupts the reciprocal obligations in employee-employer relationships, diminishing engagement and satisfaction. The current study corroborates these insights in this context, reinforcing that addressing workplace stress is essential for cultivating a more supportive and productive work environment. By linking the descriptive findings to empirical evidence, this discussion highlights the universal and pressing nature of workplace stress management (Agyapong *et al.*, 2022; Arbia *et al.*, 2023;

Catana, 2019; Ehsan & Ali, 2019; Greenier *et al.*, 2021; Räsänen *et al.*, 2020; Ravesteijn *et al.*, 2018; Trigueros *et al.*, 2020; Viertiö *et al.*, 2021; Yunarti *et al.*, 2020).

Employee Engagement

Table 2 shows the level of employee engagement among public elementary school employees in Davao del Sur. The study found that the overall level of employee engagement was very high, with an average mean of 4.68 (SD= .18), indicating moderate consistency in participants' responses. Among the specific indicators, affective engagement recorded the highest mean of 4.71 (SD = .27), reflecting employees' strong emotional connection to their roles. While still very high, social engagement had the lowest mean of 4.62 (SD = .36), showing slightly more significant variability in interpersonal interactions. Based on these findings, the null hypothesis, which posits no significant level of employee engagement among participants, is rejected. Notably, the high levels of employee engagement suggest that employees are highly motivated and connected to their work environment. The highest mean productivity and organizational loyalty. Meanwhile, the relatively lower score in social engagement, while still high, suggests that there may be opportunities to strengthen teamwork and collaborative efforts through strategic initiatives like enhanced communication frameworks or structured team activities.

Table 2: Summary Table on Level of Employee Engagement

| Indicators | SD | Mean | Descriptive Level |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Intellectual Engagement | 0.26 | 4.69 | Very High |
| Social Engagement | 0.36 | 4.62 | Very High |
| Affective Engagement | 0.27 | 4.71 | Very High |
| Overall | 0.18 | 4.68 | Very High |

Thus, these research outcomes align with the discoveries of Rai *et al.* (2020), who emphasized the critical role of affective engagement in boosting overall performance and employee retention. Their study revealed that emotional and cognitive engagements strongly predict workplace success. The current findings align with this perspective, reinforcing the importance of fostering emotional and social dimensions of employee engagement to sustain high levels of organizational performance (Daqar & Smoudy, 2019; Gapor & Doctor, 2020; Khusanova *et al.*, 2021).

Organizational Commitment

The organizational commitment of public elementary

school teachers in the Davao del Sur Division is displayed in Table 3. The results of the inquiry exposed that the overall level of organizational commitment among participants was very high, with an average score of 4.61 (SD= .07), indicating a high level of agreement among participants' responses. Among the specific indicators, normative commitment achieved the highest mean of 4.64 (SD = .13), reflecting employees' strong sense of obligation and loyalty toward their organization. Conversely, continuance commitment registered the lowest mean of 4.59 (SD = .13), suggesting that while employees recognize the costs of leaving their roles, this factor is slightly less significant than their sense of duty

Table 3: Summary Table on Level of Organizational Commitment

| Indicators | SD | Mean | Descriptive Level |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Affective Commitment | 0.15 | 4.60 | Very High |
| Continuance Commitment | 0.13 | 4.59 | Very High |
| Normative Commitment | 0.13 | 4.64 | Very High |
| Overall | 0.07 | 4.61 | Very High |

and emotional attachment. These findings led to the decision to reject the null hypothesis, which posited no significant level of organizational commitment among participants.

Moreover, these results underscore the employees' profound sense of belonging and responsibility to their organization. The high score in normative commitment suggests that organizational culture fosters a strong ethical and moral alignment among employees, reinforcing their dedication. Meanwhile, the slightly lower score in continuance commitment could imply that while employees recognize the practical reasons to remain with their organization, their engagement is driven more by intrinsic values and emotional ties.

These findings align with recent studies, such as those by Sollano and Quines (2022), which emphasize the multidimensional nature of organizational commitment. Their research highlights that normative commitment, often driven by ethical considerations and cultural influences, predicts long-term employee retention and satisfaction. The current study's results provide empirical support for this framework, illustrating how fostering normative and affective commitment can lead to a robust and motivated workforce.

Correlations between Job Stress and Employee Engagement

The overall correlation between job stress and employee engagement was weak and non-significant, with an r-value of .08, as shown in Table 4. Among the indicators, employment opportunities had the highest positive correlation with overall employee engagement at .12, followed by conflict at work at .10, indicating weak but statistically significant relationships. General job information showed a weaker positive association with an r-value of .07. Job requirements and mental demands displayed negligible correlations, both at .02. On the other hand, general health and how individuals feel about themselves demonstrated weak negative relationships, with r values of -.03 and -.01, respectively. These findings led to the decision not to reject the null hypothesis, as the relationships between job stress indicators and employee engagement were not consistently strong or significant.

Given these findings, the results imply that high job stress, mainly stemming from demanding workloads and stringent job requirements, significantly reduces employees' energy, dedication, and focus on their tasks. Conversely, while impactful, interpersonal conflicts appear to exert a less pronounced effect on overall engagement

Table 4: Significance on the Relationship between Job Stress and Employee Engagement

| Job Stress | Employee Engagement | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| | Intellectual Engagement | Social Engagement | Affective Engagement | Overall |
| Conflict at Work | .067*(.167) | .032*(.510) | .087*(.070) | .096* (.046) |
| Employment Opportunities | .038*(.433) | .062*(.195) | .114*(.017) | .116* (.016) |
| General Health | -.028*(.566) | -.079*(.099) | .070*(.145) | -.032* (.505) |
| How Do You Feel About Yourself | .029* (.554) | -.006*(.895) | -.043*(.367) | -.011* (.819) |
| General Job Information | -.006*(.902) | .044*(.364) | .097* (.044) | .074* (.124) |
| Job Requirements | .065*(.178) | -.046*(.338) | -.021* (.658) | -.010* (.831) |
| Mental Demands | .040*(.408) | .001*(.986) | -.002* (.971) | .019* (.695) |
| Overall | .049*(.314) | .019*(.695) | .094* (.051) | .082* (.088) |

*Significant at 0.05 significance level

than structural stressors. These findings underscore the critical need for organizations to implement stress management strategies, such as workload adjustments and employee support programs, to enhance workforce morale and productivity.

Moreover, the findings align with the Conservation of Resources theory, which explains that resource depletion caused by stress undermines an individual's capacity for engagement. Empirical studies, such as

Bakker and Demerouti (2020), also support these results by highlighting the detrimental impact of stressors on key engagement dimensions. Furthermore, Johnson *et al.* (2021) suggested that while minimal stress can motivate, the high-stress levels observed in this study overwhelmingly reduce engagement. These findings affirm the broader theoretical framework, emphasizing that managing job stress fosters employee engagement and well-being.

Correlations between Job Stress and Organizational Commitment

Table 5 illustrates the relationship between job stress and organizational commitment across various indicators. The overall correlation between job stress and organizational commitment was weak and non-significant, with an r-value of .01. Among the indicators, general health showed the highest positive correlation with affective commitment at .10, which was statistically significant, indicating that better general health could slightly enhance employees' emotional attachment to the organization. Conflict at work followed with an r-value of .03 for normative commitment, suggesting a minimal but non-significant relationship. Employment opportunities had a weak positive correlation of .03 with normative commitment. In contrast, general job information had an r-value of .01. Mental demands had an r-value of -.08. Lastly, job requirements showed a negligible r-value of -.01 for overall organizational commitment. They exhibited similarly weak and non-significant correlations across commitment dimensions. Based on these findings, job stress and organizational commitment do not significantly correlate, according to the null hypothesis, which is not rejected, as the relationships were predominantly weak and non-significant.

Building on this, the findings highlight critical implications for organizational management. The significant negative correlation underscores that elevated job stress erodes employees' loyalty and emotional connection, particularly when workloads become overwhelming. Conversely, the weaker correlation with continuance commitment suggests that stressors like conflicts do not strongly influence decisions driven by financial or logistical considerations. This dynamic implies that reducing job stress, especially by managing workloads and fostering healthy interpersonal relationships, could enhance employees' emotional ties and overall commitment to their organization.

Furthermore, these findings align with established theories and empirical research. For instance, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory emphasizes how high job demands deplete employees' resources, reducing their capacity to remain engaged and committed (Allen & Meyer, 1996). Empirical studies by Bakker *et al.* (2020) corroborate this, showing that excessive stress undermines affective commitment, a key driver of employee loyalty. By addressing stress-inducing factors, organizations can foster a supportive environment that mitigates stress and strengthens organizational commitment, promoting a more resilient and dedicated workforce (Wang *et al.*, 2020).

Table 5: Significance on the Relationship between Job Stress and Organizational Commitment

| Job Stress | Organizational Commitment | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| | Affective Commitment | Continuance Commitment | Normative Commitment | Overall |
| Conflict at Work | .018*(.710) | .002*(.973) | .031*(.520) | .030*(.530) |
| Employment Opportunities | .009*(.852) | .010*(.831) | .027*(.576) | .027*(.573) |
| General Health | .103*(.033) | .036*(.461) | -.048*(.315) | .063*(.191) |
| How Do You Feel About Yourself | .028*(.557) | .022*(.647) | -.071*(.140) | -.013*(.790) |
| General Job Information | -.013*(.793) | .001*(.979) | .040*(.404) | .015*(.753) |
| Job Requirements | .016*(.741) | .047*(.328) | -.083*(.086) | -.009*(.847) |
| Mental Demands | -.071*(.141) | .004*(.938) | -.064*(.187) | -.084*(.080) |
| Overall | .016*(.733) | .024*(.623) | -.019*(.689) | .013*(.792) |

*Significant at 0.05 significance level

Correlations between Organizational Commitment and Employee Engagement

Displayed in Table 6 confirmed the connection between organizational commitment and employee engagement, with the overall correlation being weak, as evidenced by an r-value of .03. Among the commitment dimensions, continuance commitment had the highest correlation with social engagement, with an r-value of .06, suggesting a minimal but positive connection. However, affective and normative commitments demonstrated weaker correlations, with r values of .03 and .04, respectively. These relationships were not statistically significant, indicating a limited association between organizational commitment and employee engagement. Therefore, based on these weak and non-significant correlations, the null hypothesis, which suggests no significant relationship between organizational commitment

and employee engagement, is not rejected, pointing to the fact that while slight correlations exist, they are not meaningful enough to be considered statistically significant.

Consequently, these results underline the importance of fostering a workplace environment that strengthens affective commitment. Employees who feel emotionally connected to their organization are likelier to exhibit higher dedication and involvement in their roles. Conversely, while continuance commitment contributes to engagement, its influence is weaker, indicating that retaining employees based solely on external factors like job security may not yield the desired levels of energy and enthusiasm. This differentiation suggests that organizations should prioritize initiatives that enhance emotional bonds, such as promoting a sense of belonging and aligning organizational goals with employee values.

Table 6: Significance on the Relationship between Organizational Commitment and Employee Engagement

| Organizational Commitment | Employee Engagement | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| | Intellectual Engagement | Social Engagement | Affective Engagement | Overall |
| Affective Commitment | .049*(.304) | -.045* (.351) | .080* (.096) | .032* (.503) |
| Continuance Commitment | .107* (.026) | .031* (.524) | -.029* (.547) | .057* (.234) |
| Normative Commitment | .007 (.882) | -.105* (.029) | .053* (.273) | -.041*(.396) |
| Overall | .101* (.037) | -.074* (.124) | .070* (.145) | .032* (.502) |

*Significant at 0.05 significance level

Moreover, these findings align with both theoretical and empirical research. According to the Social Exchange Theory, workers show more extraordinary dedication and engagement in return for organizational support, a principle validated by the results. Additionally, studies like those by Ambarwati *et al.* (2024) and Jiatong *et al.* (2022) emphasized that affective commitment is a crucial driver of engagement across diverse workplace settings. By reinforcing the emotional and ethical dimensions of commitment, organizations can cultivate a workforce that is not only engaged but also intrinsically motivated to achieve organizational success.

Mediation Analysis of the Three Variables

The analysis involved a mediation analysis following the framework outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986), which consists of four steps. Thus, Table 5 presents the outcomes of the regression examination that explored the influence of job stress on employee engagement, with organizational commitment serving as a mediator. The direct path from job stress to employee engagement, denoted as path c, yielded a non-significant beta coefficient of .20 with a standard error of .12. This indicates that job stress has a weak and statistically insignificant effect on employee engagement.

Table 7: Regression analysis showing the influence of job stress on employee engagement as mediated by organizational commitment

| Step | Path | B | S.E. | β |
|------|------|------|------|--------------------|
| 1 | c | .196 | .115 | .082 ^{NS} |
| 2 | a | .013 | .048 | .013 ^{NS} |
| 3 | b | .075 | .116 | .031 ^{NS} |
| 4 | c' | .195 | .115 | .082 ^{NS} |

**p*<0.05

Moving to the following path, path a, which examines the effect of job stress on organizational commitment, showed a similarly non-significant result, with a beta coefficient of .01 and a standard error of .05. Path b, which evaluates the effect of organizational commitment on employee engagement, also presented a non-significant relationship, with a beta coefficient of .08 and a standard error of .12. Finally, the indirect effect, represented by path c prime, which accounts for organizational commitment as a mediator between job stress and employee engagement, returned a non-significant result with a beta coefficient of .20 and a standard error of .12. Collectively, these findings suggest that organizational commitment does not significantly mediate the relationship between job stress and employee engagement, as all paths tested failed to reach statistical significance. Therefore, the hypothesis that organizational commitment mediates the effect of job stress on employee engagement is not supported. Findings clearly indicate that job stress does not significantly influence employee engagement through organizational commitment. The regression analysis reveals that neither job stress nor commitment strongly impacts engagement in this context. This suggests that factors such as individual coping strategies, work

environment, or job satisfaction may play a more prominent role. It underscores the multifaceted nature of employee engagement, which likely depends on various influences beyond stress and commitment. Consequently, organizations might consider alternative strategies, such as enhancing work conditions or offering personalized support, to better foster long-term employee engagement. Results indicate that organizational commitment does not mediate the relationship between job stress and employee engagement among public teachers, implying that job stress directly affects commitment. This finding is consistent with earlier studies demonstrating that job stress negatively impacts organizational commitment. Moreover, job satisfaction and positive thinking moderate the effects of stress on commitment, while high job stress is linked to lower satisfaction. Additionally, organizational support can mediate these effects, alleviating the negative impacts of stress (Abdelmoteleb, 2019; Saadeh & Suifan, 2020; Wongsuwan *et al.*, 2023; Wang *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, the analysis in Figure 1 provides a comprehensive view of the mediating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between job stress and employee engagement. Results from the mediation analysis indicate that organizational

commitment does not significantly mediate this relationship. Expressly, the Sobel z-value of .24, with a p-value greater than .01, confirms that the mediation effect is not statistically significant. The total effect of job stress on employee engagement is minimal, as reflected in the unstandardized coefficient of .20, suggesting only a weak relationship. Furthermore, the indirect effect through organizational commitment is negligible at .01, with the ratio of the indirect to direct effect even more negligible at .00. These findings highlight that while organizational commitment plays a critical role in other workplace dynamics, it does not serve as a key mediator in this specific context. Addressing job stress requires direct interventions targeting stressors rather than relying on enhancing organizational commitment to improve employee engagement. In addition, the percentage of the total effect mediated by

organizational commitment is only .49 percent, indicating a minimal mediating role in the relationship between job stress and employee engagement. Based on these results, the null hypothesis—which states that organizational commitment does not mediate the relationship between job stress and employee engagement—is not rejected. This suggests that while organizational commitment may have some influence, it does not significantly account for changes in employee engagement resulting from job stress. The findings highlight the need to explore other potential mediators or moderating variables that could better explain the dynamics between job stress and employee engagement. Understanding these relationships further can provide valuable insights for improving workplace conditions, employee motivation, and overall job satisfaction.

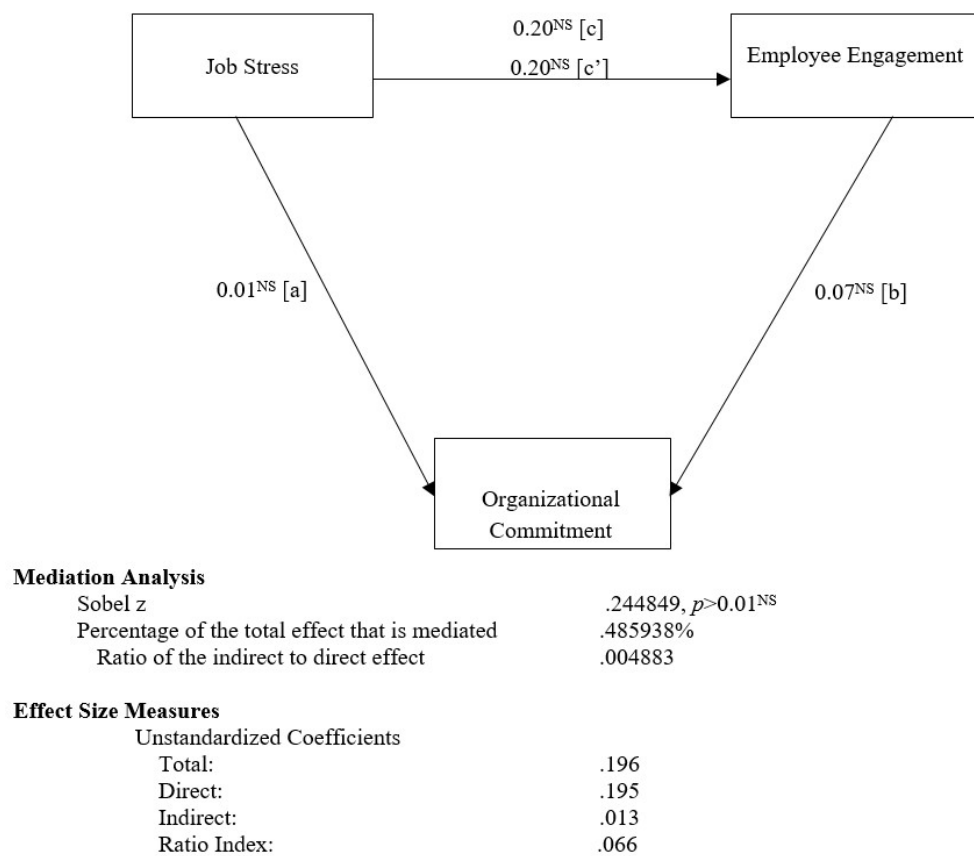


Figure 1: Medgraph showing the variables of the study

The findings suggest that job stress has a direct but weak effect on employee engagement, with organizational commitment playing a minimal mediating role. This implies that reducing job stress may be more effective than enhancing commitment in improving engagement. The low mediation percentage indicates that factors like job satisfaction, workplace culture, or leadership quality may be more influential. Organizations should explore alternative strategies, such as fostering a supportive work environment and offering stress-reduction programs, to mitigate stress's impact. These results highlight the need for a holistic approach to employee well-being beyond organizational commitment alone.

Moreover, the finding that organizational commitment does not mediate the relationship between job stress and employee engagement aligns with the insights of Suryanthini *et al.* (2020), who highlighted the nuanced dynamics of employee well-being and organizational behavior. This suggests that while job stress and employee engagement independently influence organizational commitment, they do not necessarily interact in ways that significantly alter commitment levels. Organizational commitment in this context may instead be shaped by other factors, such as organizational culture, leadership style, or individual employee values, which could play more pivotal roles in fostering commitment.

A positive organizational culture and supportive leadership reduce job stress and enhance engagement without necessarily impacting commitment. Individual differences in values, motivations, and coping strategies also shape responses to stress and engagement. These findings highlight the need to explore contextual factors influencing commitment. Organizations can strengthen commitment, boost performance, and promote well-being by improving workplace policies, leadership, and support systems. A deeper understanding of these factors allows for targeted interventions that foster job satisfaction and workforce resilience.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions are based on the study's findings. The evidence strongly supports the null hypotheses. The study discovered extremely high levels of organizational commitment, employee engagement, and job stress among the Davao del Sur Division public-school teachers. Notwithstanding these high levels, the study found no meaningful correlation between organizational commitment and employee engagement, job stress and employee engagement, or job stress and organizational commitment. Furthermore, the study discovered that organizational commitment does not mediate the association between job stress and employee engagement. Therefore, the null hypotheses are not rejected.

Corollary to this, based on the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, the findings align with its core tenet that individuals strive to preserve and accumulate resources to cope with stressors and sustain performance. The very high levels of job stress, organizational commitment, and employee engagement observed among public school teachers suggest that while resources like personal resilience or institutional support are available, they may not be fully optimized to mediate stress effects. This insight underscores the theory's emphasis on proactive resource management to maintain balance and mitigate stress-related impacts (Radford, 2024).

Based on the findings, specific recommendations are directed toward management and human resource entities. Upon analyzing the data, low ratings on items like "I do not feel emotionally attached to my organization," "I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization," and "There is bickering over who should do what job" highlight issues with emotional detachment and workplace conflict. To address these, policymakers should build a more supportive environment by incorporating team-building activities, professional development, and mentorship programs that encourage a stronger emotional connection to the organization.

For the DepEd Division of Davao del Sur, promoting work-life balance, recognizing teacher achievements, and encouraging active participation in decision-making can strengthen emotional attachment and job satisfaction. Additionally, structured conflict resolution methods and improved communication among colleagues can help

reduce stress and foster a positive team environment. Providing mentorship programs and professional development opportunities can further enhance teacher commitment and motivation. Future research could examine the influence of school culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal conflicts on teacher stress and retention. Understanding these factors will provide valuable insights into improving teacher performance, well-being, and long-term dedication to the education system.

Moreover, fostering a culture of support and engagement within schools is key to addressing these issues. Schools could implement regular feedback sessions where teachers feel comfortable sharing concerns and suggestions. This would allow for better communication and help teachers feel heard and valued. Furthermore, enhancing school administrators' leadership skills through professional development could equip them to manage conflicts better and support their staff, thus reducing stress and improving emotional attachment to the organization. These initiatives will contribute to creating a more cohesive and supportive working environment.

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