

The Romantic Fit between Organisational Support and Teachers' Job Commitment in Private Secondary Schools in Uganda.

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ABSTRACT

Guided by the Person-Environment-Fit perspective of Vancouver and Schmitt (1991) that explicates individual and external factors, this study investigated the contribution of organisational support to job commitment of teachers in Private secondary schools in Kampala capital city authority (KCCA), Uganda. Census sampling design was used to select teachers from each of the 15 secondary schools. This action ensured equitable representation of teachers and schools. By means of a correlational survey design, data was collected using self-administered-questionnaires from 240 teachers. It was analyzed by means of descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation test and regression analytical tests. Results indicated that teacher job commitment was significantly related to organisational support ($r=.54^{**}$, $p<.01$). However, affective commitment ($r=.45^{**}$, $p<.01$) and normative commitment ($r=.61^{**}$, $p<.01$) had higher correlation coefficients. Organisational support enhanced ($\beta =0.542$, $p < 0.05$) teacher job commitment. So in line with person-environment fit theory, for private secondary schools to enhance job commitment of their teachers, they need to provide sound care, mentorship and professional guidance that enable teachers to reciprocally adhere to their jobs and be motivated to commit effort on assessing and understanding the needs of learners. Hence, private secondary schools should have effective mechanisms to solidify affective and normative commitment, as well as improve continuance commitment, personal attributes that are relevant to teachers' job performance. A model of teacher job commitment development appropriate for working conditions of private secondary schools in Uganda should be researched.

Keywords: Organisational Support, Administrative Support, Job Commitment, Private Secondary Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Employee Job Commitment has been an important factor in the success of private educational institutions since the 1900s, after realising the need to improve their human capital index as a means to achieve competitive advantage. In the 1940s, private schools in the USA, started to adopt employee commitment strategies from corporate organisations after their effectiveness was perceived in terms of the quality of instruction and graduates they produced (Ye et al., 2023). From that time, private secondary schools in other parts of the world started committing resources to employee commitment to ensure they have an efficient workforce so that they could be capable of attracting high enrollments, expand their infrastructure and attract donor support (Yue, 2023). Consequently several perspectives of employee commitment that applied to the effectiveness of private secondary schools came to the fore and strategies for promoting it became paramount (Mekolle, 2024).

Job commitment of a teacher has been defined using various view points. Hanna et al. (2020), described it globally, as devotion, allegiance and engagement that teachers have towards their profession, students, school and community. But Akar (2018), defined it from the inner person perspective as normative, affective and continuance commitment. Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment an employee has towards

his/her career and job tasks (Türk & Korkmaz, 2022). Continuance commitment is a teachers' dedication to profession due to the cost of quitting, whereas normative commitment pertains to an employee's feeling of obligation to remain within the profession (Meyer et al., 2019).

Strategies to enhance Job commitment of teachers have often concentrated on both personal and external influences, though, the external influence is still very dominant (Maki, 2023). Purwanto (2021) studied Job commitment among teachers and concluded that it resulted from school leadership. But Purwanto et al. (2021) perceived support services provided to teachers by the school leadership and parents as being a key determinant of Teachers' job commitment. Ansley et al. (2019), on the other analysed several factors that are related to the job commitment of teachers and concluded conducive working environments to be of paramount importance.

However, Vancouver and Schmitt (1991) are credited for having initiated a perception of employee job commitment that involved both personal and external factors called, the Person-Environment-Fit (PET) theory. They asserted that work conditions of an institution act as the "Environment" that enables employees to either fit or mismatch with their jobs (Kristof-Brown & Jansen, 2007). According to Ostroff and Schulte (2007), "The Fit" happens when the inner values of employees such as job satisfaction and commitment focuses become "romantically" compatible with those of the profession, leading them to apply their values and talents to enable them achieve performance goals as required by the profession.

Despite other countries in the world and some parts of Africa registering successes in promoting teachers job commitment on the above perspectives, in Uganda teacher job commitment is still a challenge as shown by frequent absenteeism, lack of preparation, minimal engagement with students and lack of professional development (Asamani et al., 2020). Though the government implemented policies to provide better working conditions for teachers (Mwesigwa, 2021), organised teacher trainings and applied selective salary increment to improve teacher dedication, the effort teachers put into their profession is still low (Ludigo et al., 2023). Deborah (2024) recently found that more than 50% of teachers demands in private secondary schools in urban areas of the country, are still unfulfilled in their work; and about 74% in Kampala city would not have chosen to be teachers again if they could start their careers again, and 57% preferred to leave the teaching profession within a year. This state of affairs brought into question the appropriateness and effectiveness of strategies being applied to enhance job commitment of teachers in private secondary schools in Kampala capital city Authority and Uganda in general. So guided by the Person-Environment-Fit perspective of Vancouver and Schmitt (1991) that explicates that individual and external factors affect employee job commitment, this paper examines the role of organisational support in job commitment of teachers in private secondary schools in Kampala Capital city Authority.

The paper provides evidence based answers to the following objectives: To

- i. Assess the status of organisational support and teachers' job commitment in private secondary schools in KCCA.
- ii. Assess the relationship between organisational support and teachers' job commitment in private secondary schools in KCCA.
- iii. Establish the contribution of organisational support to teachers' job commitment in private secondary schools in KCCA.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers's Job Commitment

Job commitment is sometimes perceived as Organisational commitment while Job commitment may be one of its indicators. Organisational commitment refers to the bond employees have with their organisations (Jindain & Gilitwala, 2024). Mekolle (2024) defines it as the feeling of connection, fitting-in and understanding the

goals of the organisation that an employee has. Thus, organisational commitment is the level of an employee's attachment to the institution as a whole. On the other hand Job Commitment is related to job involvement and is the extent to which a person participates in his work and profession (Türk & Korkmaz, 2022). It involves the person internalising the goodness and importance of working within and among people in the profession. This attribute causes workers to expend energy, do their best and enjoy their work (Ye, et al., 2023). The key indicators of Job Commitment are affective, normative and continuance commitment (Ahad et al., 2021).

Affective commitment is the workers' emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in profession. Such workers continue within the same profession because they love it. Affective commitment is often high in organizations that give employees opportunity of reaching knowledge and other resources in organization (Masoom, 2021), when they are treated fairly and justly (Stănescu & Romaşcanu, 2023); when they have adequate payment (Jindain & Gilitwala, 2024), when they have a supportive, facilitative, trustworthy and hearty leadership (Okojie et al., 2023). Continuance commitment on the other hand reflects the awareness of costs linked with leaving and the benefits related to staying in the profession (Atanda & Abikoye, 2023). On the other hand normative commitment reflects the thought of an obligation to stay in the current profession. Such employees feel that they're in debt and ought to adhere and remain within the profession (Ford et al., 2019).

Organisational Support And Teachers' Job Commitment

Organisational support pertains to both tangible and intangible elements of a supportive work environment (Ostroff & Shulte, 2007). It comprises of provision of work equipment and financial resources as well as a stimulating and uplifting work environment (Sharif et al., 2021). In a supportive work environment, employees feel liked, appreciated and valued leading to high levels of job fulfilment, increased devotion, pleasant feelings, and work engagement (Purwanto, 2021). Leadership support is a key element of organisational support in private schools. According to Khumalo (2019), Leadership support refers to the disposition of school leaders, especially the head teachers to offer passionate, crucial, and analytical support to teachers, with an emphasis on improving their emotions, by being compassionate, kind, and understanding. Supportive school leadership is perceived by teachers as being kind, helpful, dependable and cooperative (Mekolle, 2024). Teachers perceive supportive school leaders as those who frequently do small things to convey how their followers' effort is greatly valued (Ahad et al., 2021).

Hence appropriate Leadership support in secondary schools focuses on satisfying the needs and welfare of teachers while also establishing a pleasant environment for excelling in their profession (Masoom, 2021). Therefore organisational support as in school setting is assistance, resources, and services provided by the school administration to facilitate and enhance the devotion and dedication of teachers to their teaching key result areas.

Contribution of Organisational Support to Teachers' Job Commitment

Studies on teacher job commitment show that this attribute contributes not only to a teachers' professional growth, but also to the school's overall effectiveness and student outcomes. A study by Atanda (2023) revealed that Principals who fostered positive relationships with teachers created a supportive work environment, thus enhancing overall commitment to professional tasks among educators. The finding further revealed that the Principals' administrative support created positive ripple effect that ultimately benefited students alike. In a related study by Purwanto et al. (2021), it was established that school leaders who offered psychosocial support were able to sustain and enhance teachers' dedication to their roles. It was further revealed that teachers who felt that they were being cared for emotionally became empowered and thrived in being good researchers for their lessons. Maki (2023) also carried out research in government schools and found that school administrators who actively engage in supporting teachers' professional growth and aligning their practices with educational goals contributed to a more committed teaching staff. A study by Asamani et al (2020), conducted among public senior high school teachers, showed that teachers' dedication to their careers in the Ghanaian Berekum Municipality increased as long as headteachers applied effective leadership strategies. The study's conclusions showed that most head teachers of prosperous schools created a shared school vision

(communication) and encouraged a collaborative culture (planning). They divided leadership duties throughout the school and gave others the confidence to take charge. They also included a variety of stakeholders in the decision-making process for school improvement.

A study by Atanda (2023) done in Ogun State, Nigeria, in public secondary schools using a descriptive survey design, a significant relationship was found between teachers' commitment to their jobs and school support services. The administrative abilities of principals and teachers' devotion to their jobs were significantly correlated. Offering psychosocial support to teachers as part of their job commitment was one of the principal's administrative talents and a substantial relative addition to school support services. Thus, the study concluded that having good administrative support skills could help teachers become more committed to their jobs. Despite being revealing on the role of organisational support in teachers' job commitment most cited studies had a mixed context of government and private schools and were mainly from areas with operating conditions different from those of KCCA. This has created a need for a study to examine the status and influence of organisational support on job commitment of teachers in private secondary schools in Kampala Capital City Authority.

METHODS

Research paradigm, approach and design

The study used a positivist quantitative perspective where it assumed that reality on study variables existed and could be manipulated numerically, precisely and objectively using numerical data. This view-point enabled the researcher to quantitatively seek for explanation and relationship among the constructs that were being investigated. A correlational research design was thus applied to test the nature of relationships between the independent variable and dependent variable. The study population included all teachers on the pay role in the private secondary schools found in KCCA. The study sample was selected from 15 secondary schools located in Makindye, Nakawa, Kampala Central, Kawempe and Rubaga, the five Divisions of KCCA. The schools included 2 best and 1 worst performer as per the KCCA education department report (2024). Census sampling was used to select teachers from each of the 15 secondary schools. This action ensured equitable representation of teachers and schools. The actual sample of teachers who participated in the study was 240 teachers out of 265 who were targeted, giving 90.6% response rate, which according to Majid (2022), is good enough to lead to credible findings.

Sample characteristics

In regard to the demographic information of respondents, out of the 240 respondents who participated in the study, the majority (50.1%) were male and 49.1% were female; 56.2% were aged 30 years and above while 67.2% had attained bachelor's degree in education. Further, more than a half (50.9%) were subject teachers; and most of them (42.2%) had teaching experience of 10 years and above. Therefore, respondents had sufficient education and work experience to be able to effectively analyse what was going on in their schools and profession as to provide credible information.

Measures

A self-administered questionnaire was used to measure demographic data in section A, Organisational support in section B and Teacher commitment in Section C. The items on teacher commitment were adapted from Thien et al (2014) and had an internal consistency of 0.78. Job commitment was assessed as affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Some of the items were phrased as "Leaving this job would be against my principles", "I genuinely care about the well-being of this school" and "The benefits of staying on this job outweigh the costs of leaving". Organisational support was assessed as social, professional development and resources support from the school leadership; and the items were adapted from Masoom (2021) and had internal consistency of 0.81. Examples of the items include; "School management always provides resources and structures to help me achieve my profession goals" and "Leaders in my school consistently support and encourage professional development opportunities for teachers". The Cronbach's

alpha value of all the subscales were higher than 0.7 demonstrating good internal consistency which implied the scale used was satisfactory and reliable. A five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, was used to score the items responses.

Data cleaning

To manage missing values, the SPSS multiple imputation test was applied through the ‘missing value analysis’ feature as recommended by Papageorgiou, et al.(2018), the generated data bases were examined through predictive mean matching and it was affirmed that statistically valid inferences could be attained in the presence of missing values. Hence data cleaning was not needed to eliminate cases with missing values. To manage outliers, a z-score test in SPSS was applied. Using the descriptive command, z-scores were created for all the variables and any values having $z \geq 3.29$ was excluded as advised by Mahapatra et al.(2020). To ascertain whether data conformed to the assumptions of regression, the researcher examined the general distribution of data using the normal curve to ascertain skewness and kurtosis to test for normality of data (see figs 1 and 2). For both Teacher job commitment and organisational support, the skewness and kurtosis indicated a bell-shaped distribution. So data was considered normally distributed and appropriate for descriptive and inferential analysis.

Fig 1: Histogram showing Normality of Teacher Job Commitment

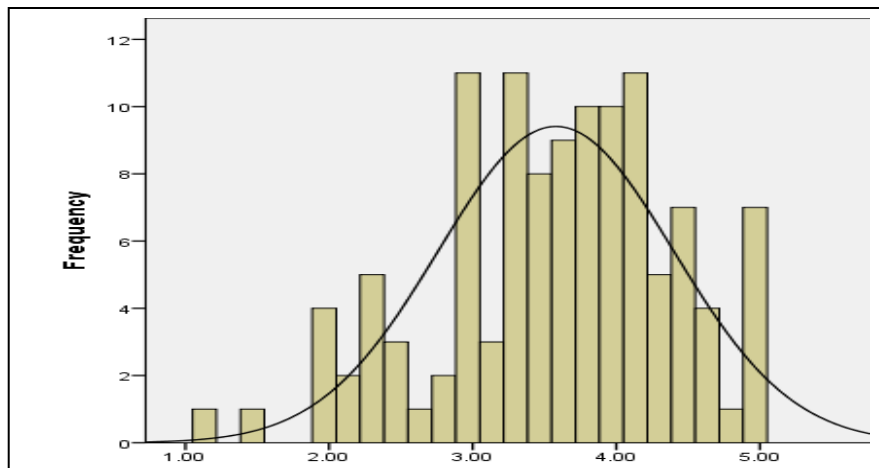
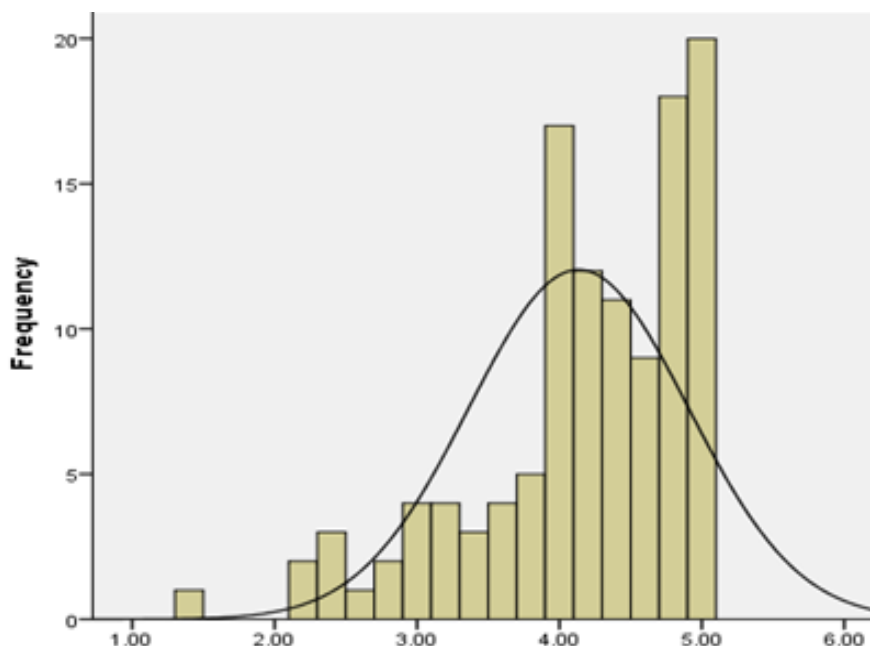


Fig 2: Histogram showing Normality of Organisational support



Data analysis

Quantitative approaches were applied to analyse data. This involved descriptive analysis measures such as frequencies, percentages, standard deviation and means. The levels of the variables in the sample were determined using descriptive analysis. Pearson correlation, simple linear and multiple regression analysis was used to perform inferential data analysis.

FINDINGS

Status of organisational support and teacher commitment in private secondary schools in KCCA:

Teacher job commitment in private Secondary schools in KCCA

Teacher commitment was assessed as teacher feeling indebted to remain in the profession (Normative), emotional connection to teaching profession (Affective) and commitment to the school (Continuance). Findings on these aspects are shown summarized in tables 1-3

Table 1: Status of Normative commitment

Aspects	Mean	SD	Rating
I am a valuable teacher in my profession	4.22	1.35	Agree
I feel a moral obligation to continue working in the teaching profession	4.00	1.25	Agree
Leaving this profession would be against my principles	3.18	1.34	Not sure
I feel a strong sense of loyalty to the teaching profession	4.05	1.06	Agree
I feel a sense of duty to remain with this profession	3.78	1.21	Agree
I believe it's important to show commitment by staying in this profession	3.80	1.23	Agree
Overall score	3.84	1.24	Agree

Table I shows that teachers generally agreed (mean= 3.84 SD=1.24) to being committed to their profession. They affirmed, they are valuable in their teaching profession (mean=4.22, SD=1.35), Staying in their profession is a honorable choice (mean=3.98, SD=1.25), a moral obligation (mean=4.00, SD=1.25) and a right thing to do (mean=3.94, SD=1.13). They believed it was important to show commitment by staying in their current profession (mean=3.80, SD=1.23). Hence teachers felt professionally attached to their teaching roles.

Table 2 Status of Affective commitment

Aspects	Mean	SD	Rating
I am proud to be a teacher	4.00	1.27	Agree
I genuinely care about the goodness of my teaching profession.	4.04	1.10	Agree
This teaching profession has become a significant part of my life.	3.85	1.18	Agree
I have a deep affection for being a teacher.	3.85	1.18	Agree
I feel a strong sense of belonging to the teaching profession	3.99	1.15	Agree
I am enthusiastic about the work I do as a teacher.	4.02	1.15	Agree
I often express my affection for the teaching profession to others.	3.67	1.19	Agree
I am emotionally attached to the people in the teaching profession	3.66	1.25	Agree
Overall score	3.89	1.18	Agree

The teachers overwhelmingly agreed (mean= 3.89, SD=1.18) that they like their professions (table 2). They agreed that they are proud to be teachers, (mean=4.00, SD=1.27), genuinely care about being good teachers (mean=4.01, SD=1.10), teaching being a significant part of their lives (mean=3.85, SD=1.18), feeling a strong

sense of belonging to teaching profession (mean=3.99, SD=1.15) and being enthusiastic about being teachers (mean=4.02, SD=1.15). Therefore, teachers professed a strong interest in teaching profession.

Table 3 Status of continuance commitment

Aspects	Mean	SD	Rating
I feel that it would be costly for me to leave the teaching proffession	3.33	1.26	Not sure
Leaving teaching would require a significant sacrifice on my part.	3.24	1.30	Not sure
The benefits of staying as a teacher outweigh the costs of leaving.	3.41	1.27	Not sure
I have invested too much effort in the teaching proffesion to easily leave it.	3.16	1.24	Not sure
The benefits I receive from being a teacher make it challenging to consider leaving.	3.11	1.27	Not sure
The costs associated with leaving teaching are too high.	2.91	1.28	Not sure
Overall score	3.19	1.27	Not sure

In connection to continuance commitment (table 3), it was revealed that teachers were not sure (mean= 3.19 SD=1.27) whether they wanted to remain in teaching (table 3). They were not sure it would be costly for them to teaching (mean=3.33, SD=1.26), leaving teaching would require a significant sacrifice on their part (mean=3.24, SD=1.30), the benefits of staying in the teaching profession outweighs the costs of leaving(mean=3.41, SD=1.27), felt a sense of obligation to stay in the teaching profession because of the investments they have made (mean=3.19, SD=1.26) .Generally, respondents did not feel it would be costly on their part to leave the teaching profession .

Organisational support provided to Teachers in private Secondary schools in KCCA

In connection to organisational support, the researcher examined whether teachers were helped by school leaders to understand, adhere, love and accept the assigned tasks, so they could be successful and efficient in doing their job tasks.

Table 4: Status of organisational support

Aspects	Mean	SD	Rating
Our head teacher fosters a sense of teamwork.	4.22	1.14	Agree
Teachers perceive the head teacher's policies as fair and transparent.	4.04	1.01	Agree
Our headteacher provides supportive leadership that fosters a positive teaching environment.	4.27	.95	Agree
Leaders in my school recognize and appreciate the efforts and contributions of teachers.	4.16	1.01	Agree
Leaders in my school communicate clearly with teachers about the profession's goals and expectations.	4.16	1.09	Agree
Leaders in my school maintain an open-door policy, making it easy for teachers to share concerns and ideas on being good teachers.	4.17	1.03	Agree
School management always provides resources and structures to help me achieve my professional goals.	3.88	1.04	Agree
Leaders in my school consistently support and encourage professional development opportunities for teachers.	4.23	.99	Agree
Overall Score	4.14	1.03	Agree

The results in table 4 show that generally teachers agreed (mean= 4.14, SD=1.03) that they are supported by the school administration to do their work roles well. They agreed head teachers fostering teamwork (mean=4.22, SD=1.14), their policies are fair and transparent (mean=4.27, SD=.95), school leadership fosters a

positive teaching environment (mean=4.04, SD=1.01), recognizes and appreciates efforts and contributions of teachers (mean=4.16, SD=1.01) . So teachers perceived school leadership as being supportive to their job performance.

Organisational support and teacher job commitment in secondary schools in Kampala Capital City Authority

Pearson correlation test was used to ascertain the link between teacher job commitment and organisation support. The results are shown in table 5.

Table 5 : Correlations between teacher job commitment (Normative, Affective, Continuance) and organisational support

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1-Teacher job commitment	1				
2-Normative commitment	.710**	1			
3-Affective commitment	.621**	.631**	1		
4-Continuance commitment	.717**	.615**	.523**	1	
5-Organisational support	.542**	.611**	.452**	.396*	1

Significant level: **p<.01, *p<.05, No asterisk = not significant.

The findings (table 5) show that teacher job commitment was significantly related to organisational support ($r=.54^{**}$, $p<.01$). Among the indicators of job commitment, affective ($r=.45^{**}$, $p<.01$) and normative ($r=.61^{**}$, $p<.01$) had higher correlations with organisational support. This means when the school leadership provides mentoring, collaboration, and incentives to teachers, it increases the likelihood of teachers liking to stay and advance within the teaching profession because they like their work.

Regression between organisational support and teacher commitment in private secondary schools in Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA)

Simple regression analysis was used to ascertain whether a causal association existed between organisational support and teacher commitment.

Table 6: Simple Regression of teacher commitment on organisational support

Variable	Standardized Coefficients	Significance
	Beta (β)	(p)
Organisational support	.542	0.000*
$R^2=0.293$		
Adjusted $R^2 = 0.287$		
$F = 147.32$, $p = 0.000^*$		

Significant level: **p<.01, *p<.05, No asterisk = not significant

- Dependent Variable: Teacher job Commitment
- Predictor: organisational support

The results (table 6) reveal that organisational support accounted for a 29.3 % ($R^2 = .293$, $\beta = 0.542$, $p < 0.05$) increase in teacher commitment. Therefore, 70.7 % of the variation in teacher job commitment was accounted for by other factors not considered under this model.

DISCUSSION

It was revealed that organisational support is a significant factor in teachers' job commitment in private secondary schools in Kampala Capital City Authority. It made a positive increase ($R^2 = .293$) in teacher job commitment. This means teachers like their work roles and strive to do them well, when they receive meaning full support and direction from their school leadership. It was revealed that support in terms of encouraging collaboration and teamwork and supportive leadership fosters a positive teaching environment, enabling teachers to perceive their profession as valuable and good to work in. This confirmed Ye et al. (2023) findings that school leadership that provides care, professional assistance and working resources enhances job commitment among teachers for they feel that they care for their well being and work efficiency. It was revealed that teachers being involved in important decision-making made them feel that school leadership recognizes their competence, appreciates their efforts and contributions, thus liking their profession more. They developed feelings of ownership of the initiations they work for which decreased their intentions to leave the profession. This confirms Li et al. (2019) conclusions that teachers who feel valuable in their profession due to reasonable participation in decision making, develop attachment to the profession which increases their willingness to persist in serving and demonstrating unwavering loyalty to it. Thus schools that provide professional confidence and job security are likely to have better performing teachers.

It was further noted that Head teachers providing transformational guidance to teachers enhanced their endearment to their job tasks. Head teachers in KCCA private secondary schools allowed some joint consultation with teachers and agreement upon the course of action involving lower supervisors such as heads of departments and district education stakeholders. This according to Maki (2023) plays a pivotal role in ensuring that teachers are supported professionally at school. This created an inviting school atmosphere that enhances trust amongst teachers and administrators so that ownership of the programs by teachers is achieved. Teachers subsequently felt that this was their profession and resolved to stick to it.

However, teachers were unclear on some policies that had been developed by the school leadership. This was due to the fact that policies were not well illustrated and communication was irregular. In line with Holmes et al. (2019), schools have to be careful with this, for it can breed frustration and disappointment with the profession . School leaderships, especially head teachers have to ensure that they develop skills of giving relevant support supervision services so that teachers can see their school leaderships as being interested in their professional growth. There were indications that school leadership did not always ensure that teachers agreed to a new course of action that was developed. Head teachers developed teaching strategies and curriculum management approaches without enabling teachers own and feel responsible for implementing something they have suggested. This agrees also with the Person-Environment Fit theory which emphasizes a specifically clarified role for every person within a social system with specific expectations which influence the way an individual behaves and performs within the system. School administration must clearly define the vision, mission, key result areas, competences and expectations for teachers; and play their supervisory role so that teachers can feel valuable, like the profession, thus leading to better job teacher commitment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Private secondary schools should have effective mechanisms to solidify affective and normative commitment, as well as improve continuance commitment, personal attributes that are relevant to teachers' job performance. A model of teacher job commitment development appropriate for working conditions of private secondary schools in Uganda should be researched.

Schools should have structured communication channels that allow Interchange of opinions about problems and generation of possible actions by both the school leadership and the teachers to understand the importance of effectively doing their key job tasks well. Head teachers need to put in place mechanisms such as teacher consultation and joint participatory planning in identifying relevant recognition strategies that meet the teacher's professional advancement needs more effectively. To further provide an enabling job performance environment, school leadership style should be changed from being compliance and standards-driven to professional development and transformation orientation.

Limitations of the study and future directions

Firstly all the teachers were treated equally in this study, regardless of being a teacher of science or a teacher of arts yet most stakeholders in education tend to favour science teachers regarding organisation support. Secondly, the self-report nature of data may have exaggerated or limited connection among variables due to self-bias. So, care has to be taken while generalising and applying results. Therefore, future research should utilise the advantages of mixed-methods and longitudinal research with larger samples.

Conflict of Interest And Ethics clarification

The researcher declares that this study was carried out without any commercial linkage that could be interpreted as a potential conflict of interest. Respondents provided written informed consent to participate in this research, confidentiality and privacy of any information they provided was ensured and codes were utilized to maintain their anonymity.

Data availability statement

Field data supporting the conclusions of this manuscript will be made available without due reservation upon reasonable request.

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