

Teachers' Locus of Control, Sense of Efficacy and Organizational Commitment

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Locus of control is recognized as a crucial psychological factor that can influence individuals' organizational commitment (Hamzah & Othman, 2023; Galvin et al., 2018). Teachers with a strong internal locus of control are more likely to be dedicated, committed, and satisfied with their jobs (Lauermann & Karabenick, 2013; Netto & Dominic, 2026; Li et al., 2025). They tend to believe that their actions significantly influence outcomes, motivating them to actively engage in their work and contribute to their organization. In contrast, individuals with an external locus of control may perceive outcomes as beyond their control, which can lead to lower levels of organizational commitment (Suherlan et al., 2018). Similarly, self-efficacy is another important psychological determinant of organizational commitment (Hussain et al., 2026; Na-Nan et al., 2021; Opolot et al., 2024). Teachers with high self-efficacy are more willing to take on challenges and experiment with new approaches because they are confident in their ability to succeed (Emiru & Gedifew, 2024; Orakçı et al., 2023). This confidence enables them to view challenges as opportunities for growth and development. As teachers

experience success and positive reinforcement, their level of commitment to the organization is strengthened.

Previous studies have shown that both locus of control and self-efficacy influence individuals' attitudes and behaviors in various occupational settings (Papoulidi & Maniadaki, 2025; Cascio et al., 2014; Nykänen et al., 2019; Di Corrado et al., 2021; Howatt, 2011). Understanding how these factors relate to teachers' organizational commitment is essential in identifying the characteristics of committed educators. This can inform strategies that enhance teacher commitment, ultimately improving job satisfaction and benefiting both teachers and students.

Locus of Control

Locus of control refers to the extent to which individuals believe that life events are determined by internal factors or external forces (Botha & Dahmann, 2023; Cascio et al., 2014). Cobb-Clark et al. (2023) highlighted its influence on personality, decision-making, social behavior, and mental health, emphasizing the need for further research on cultural differences, well-being, and interventions that strengthen locus of control.

There are two types of locus of control: internal and external. Individuals with an internal locus of control believe they can influence outcomes through their actions, while those with an external locus of control attribute outcomes to external factors such as luck or powerful others. These beliefs develop over time through reinforcement and environmental influences (Botha & Dahmann, 2023). An internal locus of control is associated with higher motivation and more positive workplace perceptions, even in structured environments (Nisula & Olander, 2025). It is also linked to proactive behaviors such as better decision-making, entrepreneurial tendencies, and effective self-regulation. Furthermore, individuals with an internal locus of

control are more likely to seek help, manage their health and finances effectively, and perform better academically. In contrast, those with an external locus of control often experience feelings of helplessness and insecurity.

Locus of control also influences self-efficacy and perceived control. Individuals with an internal orientation tend to view money as a resource to be managed efficiently, while those with an external orientation are more likely to value extrinsic rewards (Cascio et al., 2014). Generational differences also exist, as Krishna and Agrawal (2025) found that younger generations, such as Millennials and Gen Z, are more likely to attribute outcomes to external factors, whereas older generations exhibit a stronger internal locus of control. Moreover, increased reliance on technology and algorithms may reduce individuals' sense of personal agency, contributing to a more external locus of control (Yuan et al., 2025). Cultural context also plays a role, as individuals from collectivist societies with an external locus of control may experience higher levels of stress and anxiety, while those with an internal locus report better well-being (Sullivan et al., 2021).

Interventions such as cognitive-behavioral strategies that promote goal setting and empowerment have been shown to strengthen internal locus of control and improve outcomes (Mehrtak et al., 2017; Botha & Dahmann, 2023). However, scholars argue that locus of control alone cannot fully predict behavior, as it is influenced by situational factors and interactions between internal and external elements (Galvin et al., 2018; Hamzah & Othman, 2023; Gyurák Babel'ová et al., 2025). Additionally, its effects on behavior, education, and participation remain inconsistent and context-dependent (Roazzi et al., 2016; Flores et al., 2020; Chiang et al., 2019; Flores et al., 2020; Xue et al., 2020).

Sense of Efficacy

A strong sense of efficacy enables teachers to apply innovative teaching strategies that enhance student motivation, engagement, and achievement while effectively managing diverse classroom situations (Emiru & Gedifew, 2024; Eren et al., 2025). Teacher efficacy is a critical motivational factor that allows educators to overcome challenges confidently and contribute to improved educational outcomes (Li, 2023; Alkan et al., 2026; Emiru & Gedifew, 2024; Eren et al., 2025).

Recent studies indicate that teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to adopt technology-based instructional strategies, which enhance student engagement and performance (Emiru & Gedifew, 2024; Orakcı et al., 2023). Accurate measurement of teacher self-efficacy is therefore essential in understanding its impact on instructional practices and classroom challenges. Professional development and collaboration also play a significant role in enhancing teacher efficacy. High-quality training programs and collaborative learning communities have been shown to improve both self-efficacy and teaching practices (Chong & Kong, 2012; Liu et al., 2025; Pan & Cheng, 2023).

Teacher efficacy is a key determinant of student outcomes (Eren et al., 2025; Al-Alwan & Mahasneh, 2014; Salas-Rodríguez et al., 2025; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Al-Alwan and Mahasneh (2014) emphasized its importance in developing students' attitude towards learning, while Eren et al. (2025) identified it as one of the most influential factors affecting student achievement. Differences in efficacy may also exist across demographics, as empirical evidence shows that female teachers demonstrated higher confidence with better classroom management and student engagement (Zahir et al., 2025; Wettstein et al., 2021). Additionally, personal values and traits

such as independence, conscientiousness, and openness significantly enhance teachers' self-efficacy and motivation (Barni et al., 2019).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment refers to an individual's emotional attachment, sense of obligation, and perceived cost of leaving an organization (Choi et al., 2015; Klein & Park, 2015; Chigeda et al., 2022; Mueller et al., 2023). It is important in developing a dedicated and productive workforce (Lo et al., 2024), influenced by loyalty and job satisfaction. It also contributes to improved performance, satisfaction, and employee retention (Saini, 2025; Yeh & Huang, 2025), driven by emotional connection, job stability, and social relationships within the workplace.

Human resource management practices also play a significant role in fostering commitment. Aligning organizational strategies with employee needs, such as supporting work–life balance and implementing gender-sensitive approaches, enhances job satisfaction, well-being, and organizational commitment (Chigeda et al., 2022; Choi et al., 2015; Klein & Park, 2015). However, research indicates that commitment levels may vary. For instance, Gazi et al. (2024) found that while employees may be satisfied with salary and career progression, overall commitment can remain low, particularly in interpersonal and job-related aspects. Empirical evidence shows the strong link between job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Lo et al., 2024; Lee & Kim, 2023; Cúlibrk et al., 2018).

According to Klein and Park (2015), organizational commitment develops through different dimensions. The instrumental commitment is driven by cost–benefit considerations in early career stages (Kaur & Sandhu, 2010). On the other hand, affective commitment usually emerges over time through emotional attachment (Mercurio, 2015).

RESEARCH FOCUS: Measuring Public School Teachers' Locus of Control, Sense of Efficacy and Organizational Commitment

In this study, Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) was used to explain how teachers with an internal locus of control and high self-efficacy are more likely to demonstrate stronger organizational commitment. When teachers believe that their actions influence outcomes and that they are capable of succeeding, they become more engaged, motivated, and dedicated to their work. These beliefs foster greater effort, collaboration, and professional commitment, ultimately enhancing job satisfaction, performance, and overall organizational success.

The study employed a correlational research design to examine the relationships among locus of control, sense of efficacy, and organizational commitment of teachers. It was conducted at an integrated public school in the District of Lezo, Aklan, Philippines, involving 45 teachers selected from a total population of 50 using a Raosoft calculator.

Data were collected using three adopted and modified questionnaires measuring locus of control (Thomson & Handley, 1990), sense of efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), and organizational commitment (Mowday et al., 1979). The instruments underwent content validation by experts and reliability testing, yielding acceptable Cronbach's alpha values of 0.859 for Locus of Control, 0.823 for Sense of Efficacy, and 0.954 for Organizational Commitment, indicating strong reliability.

Data gathering involved securing permissions, administering questionnaires, and processing responses using SPSS. For analysis, descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and Spearman rho correlation were used, with a 5% level of significance to determine relationships among variables.

The study showed interesting results with implications for educational management. For instance, as shown in Table 1, teachers' locus of control varied in degree.

Table 1

Teachers' locus of control

Indicators	Mean	Description	SD
1. When my students' grades improve, it's likely because I motivated them or they put in more effort.	4.86	Very High	0.351
2. If I struggled to set up learning centers, it's probably because I lacked materials or didn't spend enough time on activities.	3.82	High	0.962
3. If my students don't benefit from individualized instruction, it's likely because I have trouble managing it or they need a more traditional approach.	3.54	High	1.014
4. When a student improves their grade, it's more likely because they put in more effort or I found better ways to teach them.	4.72	Very High	0.497
5. If my class becomes disruptive when left alone, it's likely because I didn't leave interesting work or the students were noisier than usual.	3.66	High	1.239
6. If my students fail a math test, it's more likely because they weren't attentive or I didn't use enough examples.	3.72	High	0.970
7. If learning centers work well, it's because I worked hard or my students easily adapted.	4.58	Very High	0.499
8. When a student raises their grade, it's more likely because I motivated them or they tried harder.	4.78	Very High	0.418
9. If a student struggles with a concept, it's likely because they couldn't understand it or I couldn't explain it well.	3.68	High	1.019
10. When a student does better, it's more likely because they tried harder or I encouraged them.	4.72	Very High	0.497
11. If I can't keep my class quiet, it's probably because the students are rowdier or I'm less able to settle them.	3.46	High	1.073
12. If a class play succeeds, it's likely because I put in effort or the students were exceptional performers.	4.58	Very High	0.575
13. If I have trouble keeping order, it's probably because I didn't put in extra effort or the students were more uncontrollable.	3.54	High	1.182
14. If a student can't do an assignment, it's likely because they weren't paying attention or I gave an inappropriate assignment.	3.56	High	1.264
15. If lessons on Mexico don't go well, it's likely because the students weren't interested or I didn't put enough effort into them.	3.78	High	0.975
16. If a student starts volunteering, it's more likely because they found a topic interesting or I encouraged them.	4.86	Very High	0.351
17. If a student can't stay on task, it's likely because the task is less interesting or the student can't concentrate.	3.92	High	1.007
18. If I can't devise an instructional system, it's probably because there are too many students or I lack knowledge.	3.32	Moderate	1.133

Indicators	Mean	Description	SD
19. If students perform well on a test, it's likely because they studied or I taught well.	4.80	Very High	0.404
20. If a student's performance deteriorates, it's likely because I didn't motivate them enough or they put in less effort.	3.56	High	1.215
21. If a new student struggles to make friends, it's more likely because others didn't make an effort or I didn't encourage friendliness.	3.30	Moderate	1.233
22. If students perform better on a test than last year, it's likely because I put in more effort or this year's students are smarter.	4.46	Very High	0.676
23. If I reprimand a student more often, it's probably because they misbehaved more or I'm less tolerant.	3.88	High	0.872
24. If an underachiever does homework well, it's likely because they tried or I explained well.	4.58	Very High	0.538
25. If a student does better schoolwork, it's more likely because I helped them or they tried harder.	4.68	Very High	0.551
Composite Mean	4.09	High	0.510

Legend: 4.21-5.00 Very High, 3.41-4.20 High, 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 1.81-2.60 Low, 1.00-1.80 Very Low

The results show that teachers exhibit a high level of locus of control ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.510$). These imply that their actions and decisions significantly influence events within the school. Teachers attribute students' success and challenges to both internal factors (e.g., teaching effectiveness, motivation, and flexibility) and external factors (e.g., student behavior and classroom conditions), reflecting a balanced and adaptive perspective. High mean scores in motivating students ($M = 4.86$) and encouraging participation ($M = 4.86$) highlight strong internal control, while lower scores in classroom management ($M = 3.46$) and instructional development ($M = 3.32$) suggest challenges related to external constraints.

The findings indicate that teachers are reflective practitioners who recognize both their influence and the limitations posed by external factors. However, areas such as classroom management, instructional differentiation, and student social development require additional support. These results align with Cascio et al. (2014), Chiang et al. (2019) and Galvin et al. (2018) that locus of control influences teachers' emotional well-being and professional effectiveness.

Table 2*Teachers' sense of self-efficacy*

Indicators	Mean	Description	SD
1. I can achieve a significant impact in reaching the most difficult students.	4.40	Very High	0.639
2. I can contribute significantly to help my students think critically.	4.60	Very High	0.535
3. I can effectively manage and control disruptive behavior in the classroom.	4.42	Very High	0.609
4. I can do a lot to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork.	4.52	Very High	0.580
5. I can clearly communicate my expectations about student behavior.	4.38	Very High	0.725
6. I can effectively encourage students to believe in their ability to do well in schoolwork.	4.74	Very High	0.443
7. I can respond adeptly to difficult questions from my students.	4.42	Very High	0.575
8. I can establish routines to maintain smooth-running activities.	4.56	Very High	0.501
9. I can do much to help my students value learning.	4.74	Very High	0.443
10. I can gauge student comprehension of what I have taught.	4.42	Very High	0.575
11. I can craft good questions for my students to a considerable extent.	4.52	Very High	0.505
12. I can foster student creativity through various means.	4.48	Very High	0.544
13. I can ensure that children follow classroom rules.	4.60	Very High	0.571
14. I can improve the understanding of students who are failing.	4.46	Very High	0.646
15. I can calm disruptive or noisy students effectively.	4.42	Very High	0.575
16. I can establish a classroom management system with each group of students.	4.50	Very High	0.580
17. I can adjust my lessons to the proper level for individual students.	4.58	Very High	0.575
18. I can use a variety of assessment strategies.	4.52	Very High	0.580
19. I can prevent a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson.	4.40	Very High	0.535
20. I can provide alternative explanations or examples when students are confused.	4.58	Very High	0.538
21. I can respond effectively to defiant students.	4.40	Very High	0.606
22. I can assist families in helping their children do well in school.	4.24	Very High	0.716
23. I can implement alternative strategies in my classroom.	4.56	Very High	0.541
24. I can provide appropriate challenges for every capable student.	4.50	Very High	0.505
25. I can use personalized teaching methods to cater to the diverse learning styles of challenging students, ensuring a customized and effective learning experience.	4.52	Very High	0.614
Composite Mean	4.49	Very High	0.414

Legend: 4.21-5.00 Very High, 3.41-4.20 High, 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 1.81-2.60 Low, 1.00-1.80 Very Low

As indicated in Table 2, teachers demonstrated a very high level of self-efficacy ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.414$), indicating strong confidence in managing instruction and student engagement. High scores in encouraging students' self-belief ($M = 4.74$), fostering appreciation for learning ($M = 4.74$),

maintaining discipline ($M = 4.60$), and promoting critical thinking ($M = 4.60$) reflect teachers' strong instructional competence. Although all indicators fall within the "very high" range, slightly lower scores in engaging families ($M = 4.24$), managing difficult students ($M = 4.40$), and handling disruptive behavior ($M = 4.42$) suggest areas that require further development. In this case, teachers demonstrate strong confidence in their ability to positively influence student learning and classroom dynamics.

These findings support Barni et al. (2019) that teachers' values and motivation significantly influence their self-efficacy and professional practices. As clearly manifested in the self-assessment of the teachers, their positive values reflect on their choices. For example, encouraging students' self-belief and fostering appreciation for learning could develop student mindsets for learning. These practices are necessary in nurturing independent learning and life-long learning attitudes of the students.

Table 3

Teachers' organizational commitment

Indicators	Mean	Description	SD
1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.	4.56	Very High	0.577
2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.	4.48	Very High	0.505
3. I am loyal to this organization.	4.7	Very High	0.544
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.	4.34	Very High	0.658
5. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.	4.42	Very High	0.609
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.	4.62	Very High	0.635
7. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar.	4.3	Very High	0.763
8. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.	4.56	Very High	0.541
9. It would not change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization.	4.16	High	0.792
10. I am glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.	4.54	Very High	0.613
11. There's much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely.	4.38	Very High	0.602

Indicators	Mean	Description	SD
12. I find it easy to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees.	4.44	Very High	0.675
13. I really care about the fate of this organization.	4.5	Very High	0.580
14. For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.	4.44	Very High	0.611
15. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite my best choice on my part.	4.42	Very High	0.810
Composite Mean	4.46	Very High	0.455

Legend: 4.21-5.00 Very High, 3.41-4.20 High, 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 1.81-2.60 Low, 1.00-1.80 Very Low

As reflected in Table 3, teachers also demonstrated a very high level of organizational commitment ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.455$), indicating strong loyalty, pride, and emotional attachment to the institution. High scores in loyalty ($M = 4.70$), pride in being part of the organization ($M = 4.62$), and willingness to exert extra effort ($M = 4.56$) reflect deep commitment and engagement. However, slightly lower scores in long-term retention ($M = 4.16$), willingness to stay under unchanged conditions, and flexibility to work in other organizations ($M = 4.30$) suggest that commitment, while strong, is not absolute. These findings indicate that teachers value their organization but remain open to alternative opportunities under certain conditions.

This aligns with Kaur and Sandhu (2010) and Mercurio (2015) that organizational commitment develops through both affective (emotional) and instrumental (practical) dimensions. While there are other factors influencing organization commitment, the results clearly indicate that the teachers were highly influenced by the organizational leaders and the system itself.

Table 4 indicates no significant relationship between locus of control and organizational commitment ($r_s = 0.23$, $p = 0.108$). This suggests that teachers' beliefs about control over outcomes do not directly influence their level of commitment to the organization. Therefore, external factors such as supportive work environments, recognition, and professional development opportunities are vital in fostering commitment. This is consistent with

Suherlan et al. (2018), who also found no significant relationship between locus of control and organizational commitment.

Table 4

Relationship between teachers' locus of control and organizational commitment

Variables	rs value	p value
Level of Locus of Control* Level of Organizational Commitment	0.23 ^{ns}	0.108

^{ns}p>0.05, not significant

Table 5 shows a significant relationship between self-efficacy and organizational commitment ($r_s = 0.717$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that higher self-efficacy is associated with stronger commitment. Teachers who are confident in their abilities are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and dedicated to their organization.

Table 5

Relationship between the teachers' self-efficacy and organizational commitment

Variables	rs value	p value
Level of Sense of Self-Efficacy * Level of Organizational Commitment	0.717*	<0.001

*p<0.05, significant

This finding aligns with Biçer (2023) and Wang et al. (2024) that increased self-efficacy enhances job satisfaction, resilience, and professional commitment. Teachers who feel more capable of managing classroom dynamics and promoting student learning tend to demonstrate higher levels of commitment and loyalty. Strengthening teachers' self-efficacy can enhance their engagement and dedication for a more motivated and cohesive teaching community.

Table 6*Relationship between teachers' locus of control and self-efficacy*

Variables	rs value	p value
Level of Locus of Control* Level of Sense of Self-Efficacy	0.359*	0.010

*p<0.05, significant

Results in Table 6 also show a significant relationship between locus of control and self-efficacy ($r_s = 0.359$, $p = 0.010$). This indicates that teachers with a stronger internal locus of control tend to have higher self-efficacy. Teachers who believe they can influence outcomes are more proactive, resilient, and motivated to improve their teaching practices. This finding is supported by Botha and Dahmann (2023) that internal locus of control enhances confidence and goal attainment.

Conclusion

Teachers' high level of locus of control can influence school outcomes. The strong sense of ownership and responsibility in their roles act as proactive agents of change that could contribute to the overall development of the school community. Similarly, the very high level of self-efficacy indicates that teachers perceive themselves as highly capable of managing classroom instruction and student engagement. In this environment, a culture of empowerment, confidence, and continuous improvement could prosper. All these factors could potentially influence the teachers' organizational commitment, which goes beyond job satisfaction. As a result, teachers exhibit enhanced performance and stronger collaboration.

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