UNVEILING THE ROLE OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY IN TEACHER RETENTION: A QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

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Abstract

This research investigates the correlation between the professional identity profiles of English Course teachers and their retention rates. Drawing upon previous research, the study examines how elements of teacher professional identity—namely job satisfaction, occupational commitment, work motivation, and self-efficacy—contribute to teachers' willingness to remain in their current positions. Utilizing a qualitative approach, data were collected from English Courses teachers in Yogyakarta Province, focusing on various subgroups such as English Course size, gender, and teaching experience. Findings reveal that while overall retention rates are high across all subgroups, differences emerge in the strength of professional identity elements and retention rates among teachers from different English Course sizes and demographics. Notably, work environment emerges as a crucial factor influencing teacher professional identity and retention rates, with supportive atmospheres positively impacting teachers' commitment, motivation, and self-efficacy. The study underscores the significance of understanding how professional identity elements interact with contextual factors to shape teacher retention in non-formal education settings. Future research should explore additional contextual variables and interventions to further enhance teacher retention strategies in this sector.

Keywords: Teacher Professional Identity; Teacher Retention Rates; Non-formal Education; Job Satisfaction; Occupational Commitment; Work Motivation; Self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION

Teacher professional identity encompasses the beliefs, values, and perceptions that teachers hold about themselves in their professional roles. It concerns how teachers think about and define themselves by taking into account their interpretation of the interaction they live in (Beijaard et al., 2004; Clouder, 2003; McSweeney, 2012). It delineates the intricate relationship between teachers' self-perceptions and their engagement within educational contexts. A similar definition is presented by Pennington & Richards (2015) stating that identity refers to the sense someone possesses about his/herself as an individual. It includes the individual's self-awareness and self-image that can be portrayed in how the related individuals present about his/herself to other people. That portrayal covering sense of identity and self-image roots in the beliefs and values the individuals hold in interacting with others and conducting their jobs in front of others (Hanna et al., 2020).

Teacher professional identity is never a fixed state. It is instead an ongoing process as a teacher is learning about and working in organizations (R. B. Johnson et al., 2007). The identity is shaped through a process called socialization and it creates the contours to the meaning of being a teacher. In addition, teacher professional identity can also be a reflection of the activity or context where a teacher is positioned, which in this case is in an educational institution (Pennington, 2016). That being said, a teacher's identity is open to change and able to be either reinforced or weakened. For instance, repeated forms of engagement and interactions that

support current patterns of thought and behavior will establish relatively consistent aspects of identity, while certain facets of an individual's identity remain susceptible to alteration through novel encounters and fresh interpretations of past experiences.

Although teacher identity has garnered significant attention from many researchers for the past decades, it still remains difficult to define clearly. Teacher identity, despite various interpretations, has similar conceptualizations across researchers. Researchers have shared similar understanding of the domains of teacher professional identity, all of which represent the set of meaning for the professional identity of a teacher. Those are job satisfaction dealing with how satisfied someone is with their teaching job (e.g. Hong, 2010), commitment dealing with how committed someone is to their teaching profession(e.g. Cheung et al., 2014), motivation dealing with the core reasons why someone is teaching (e.g. Starr et al. (2006)), and self-efficacy talking about how capable someone thinks they are in performing their teaching jobs (e.g. Canrinus et al., 2012). These domains are also I line with what is stated by (Firestone, 1996) and (Watt & Richardson, 2008) explaining that the interactions teachers experience could be interpreted as the presentation of the teachers' job satisfaction, occupational commitment, occupational motivation, and self-efficacy. These constructs are considered as the representation of the personal perspective of the teachers on how they see themselves as professional workers. This concept has garnered significant attention in educational research due to its profound implications for teacher practices, job satisfaction, and especially retention rates.

Understanding teacher professional identity is crucial as it underpins teachers' attitudes and behaviors within their work settings. Teachers' perceptions of themselves influence their instructional practices, interactions with colleagues and students, and overall job satisfaction (Canrinus et al., 2011). It is especially important considering how research has shown that teachers possessing a stable and strong teacher identity are deemed having more ability in coping with professional identity tensions (J. Hong et al., 2017; Pillen et al., 2013). What is more, Rots et al. (2010) explains that various researchers have shown that teachers who have more solid identity tend to have better enthusiasm and emotional involvement at offices. That being said, teacher professional identity has a crucial role in supporting the attainment of educational goals of institutions, which are supported, for instance, through the retainment of the teachers in the institutions.

The importance of exploring teacher professional identity is what drove (Rosari, 2021) in conducting the research on the profile of teacher professional identity of English Course teachers in Yogyakarta. By referring to the key aspects contributing to teacher professional identity, including job satisfaction, occupational commitment, work motivation, and self-efficacy, as elaborated by Firestone (1996) and Watt & Richardson (2008). The research exemplifies the significance of these elements. Rosari (2021) mapped the professional identity of English course teachers. The findings revealed a positive professional identity characterized by high levels of job satisfaction, work motivation, and self-efficacy, although occupational commitment emerged as a weaker element. Further, Rosari's (2021) research on English course teachers in Yogyakarta revealed high levels of job satisfaction, occupational commitment, work motivation, and self-efficacy among participants. The analysis indicated that 91.4% of teachers expressed satisfaction with their teaching job, while 88.6% demonstrated affective commitment towards their work. Furthermore, 98.8% of teachers reported feeling motivated in their teaching roles, with 99.4% expressing high levels of self-efficacy. Notably, self-efficacy emerged as the strongest element contributing to professional identity, while job satisfaction was identified as relatively weaker.

Examining the factors influencing each component of teacher professional identity, (Rosari, 2021) identified key determinants affecting job satisfaction, occupational commitment, work motivation, and self-efficacy. Notably, feelings of fulfillment in supporting students and

institutions emerged as significant contributors to job satisfaction, while frustrations with teaching duties were identified as primary detractors. Affective emotional attachment to their work and institutions was prevalent among teachers, with 100% of respondents expressing a strong connection. Additionally, challenges in maintaining motivation, particularly in finding ways to feel energized when teaching, were highlighted as areas for institutional support. Lastly, teachers' beliefs in their ability to support student learning, particularly among fast and slow learners, emerged as a key concern warranting further institutional support and development initiatives.

Building upon these findings, the present study seeks to explore how the identified elements of teacher professional identity influence retention rates in English courses in Indonesia. This study, in other words, serves as a continuation to investigate the relationship between teacher professional identity and retention rates in English courses. By examining the interplay between professional identity and retention, this study aims to provide valuable insights for English course management, policymakers, and educational authorities in fostering supportive work environments and promoting teacher retention. In Indonesia, the proliferation of non-formal schools, including English courses, underscores the importance of understanding teacher professional identity within these contexts. English course teachers face distinct demands and expectations compared to their counterparts in formal education institutions (Cheung et al., 2014). They are required to continuously enhance their English language proficiency and teaching skills to meet the evolving needs of students ((US), 2003). Their professional identity is shaped by interactions within these environments, impacting their job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and commitment (Firestone, 1996; Watt & Richardson, 2008).

Retention rates, defined as the willingness of teachers to stay with the institution they are working in (Hirsch & Emerick, 2006), are a critical aspect of educational success. It is a process where employees choose to stay in a certain organization for a certain period of time. In that period of time, the employees are expected to work on the organization's projects and to succeed them. Referring to this definition, teacher retention rate can be defined as teachers' process in which they are expected to stay in schools for a certain period of time. During that period of time, the teachers are expected to succeed in the goals of the schools, such as improving the achievement of the students.

The study emphasizes the crucial importance of teacher retention rates for schools, as the departure of teachers can have significant repercussions. Previous research has demonstrated that low retention rates can adversely affect school outcomes, as organizations may experience decreased performance and diminished outcomes due to the loss of experienced personnel (Ayeni & Amanekwe, 2018; Goldhaber et al., 2007; Long et al., 2012). This impact is particularly pronounced in schools serving low-achieving populations, where inexperienced teachers are associated with lower student achievement (Hanushek et al., 2016; S. M. Johnson et al., 2005; Ronfeldt et al., 2013). Experienced teachers, or those willing to remain in an organization for an extended period, are better equipped to understand and address the needs of both the school and its students, thereby potentially improving outcomes (Brill & McCartney, 2008; Rivkin et al., 2005). These effects underscore the multifaceted impact of low teacher retention rates on schools, extending beyond performance considerations. The effort, time, and resources required to train new teachers and provide ongoing professional development further compound the challenges faced by schools. Given these implications, this research aims to explore the relationship between teacher retention rates and teacher professional identity.

Studying teacher professional identity extends beyond mere self-definition in a professional context; it offers insight into teachers' professional lives and career decision-making processes (J. Y. Hong, 2010). This understanding is crucial as teachers' professional identity informs their effectiveness, motivation, and retention (Avalos & Aylwin, 2007; Day et al., 2005, 2006; Lasky, 2005), shaping their judgments and actions in the workplace (Watson, 2006). Investigating

teacher professional identity provides valuable insights into various aspects of their professional lives, including motivation, career decisions, emotions, job satisfaction, and commitment. Furthermore, examining teacher professional identity in non-traditional school settings, such as English Courses, offers unique opportunities to understand how teacher interactions and dynamics in such environments influence and shape professional identity differently from formal school settings (Lemke, 2008; Watson, 2006).

The findings of this research hold significant implications for various stakeholders within the education sector. English course management and administrators stand to benefit from insights into how teacher professional identity impacts retention rates. By understanding the factors that influence teacher satisfaction and commitment, they can develop strategies to foster a supportive work environment that encourages teacher retention. Additionally, policymakers and educational authorities can utilize these findings to inform policies and initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality and stability of non-formal education institutions. Teacher training programs and professional development providers can also leverage these insights to tailor their offerings to the unique needs and demands of English course teachers, ultimately contributing to the professional growth and effectiveness of educators in non-formal education settings.

By examining the professional identity of English course teachers and its implications for retention rates, this study seeks to provide valuable insights for educational stakeholders. Understanding how teacher professional identity influences retention can inform strategies for enhancing teacher satisfaction and institutional performance. Thus, the research question guiding this study is: How does teacher professional identity contribute to teacher retention rates in English courses in Yogyakarta?
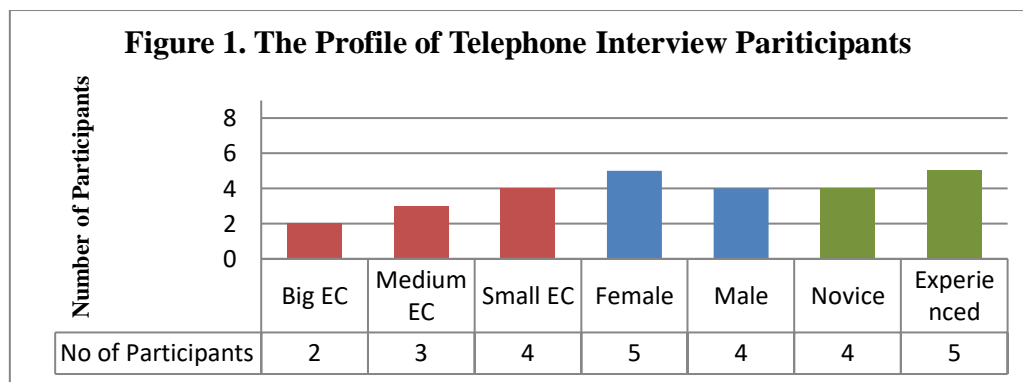
METHOD

This research builds upon the groundwork laid by Rosari's (2021) study, which explored the professional identity of English Course teachers in Yogyakarta. Initially, a Likert-scale questionnaire was distributed to 35 teachers across Yogyakarta City and Sleman Regency, aiming to capture the diversity of English Course providers. These institutions were categorized based on size into big, medium, and small English Courses, providing a comprehensive representation of the teaching landscape in the region. Following (Ary et al., 2010), the researcher then subdivided the teacher population into three subgroups based on specific criteria: English Course size, gender, and teaching experience. This strategic subdivision allowed for the identification of common characteristics within the broader English Course teacher population, facilitating a nuanced analysis of professional identity and retention rates. These subgroup selections were made by identifying common characteristics within the broader English Course teacher population that were also representative in the sample (Cohen et al., 2017).

Subsequent to the initial survey, the research methodology of this study incorporated written and phone interviews to delve deeper into the intricacies of professional identity and retention. The written interview, conducted in a structured manner, involved open-ended questions designed to elicit in-depth responses from participants regarding their professional identity and its relationship to their retention-related decision-making processes within their English Courses. Structured interview is a type of interview in which the procedures and contents are made in advanced. Being organized in advance means the wordings and the sequence of interview questions are planned before the interview is conducted and therefore the interview has little freedom to create modifications to the questions (Cohen et al., 2017). Notably, the written interview also served as a validation tool for the primary data gathered through the Likert-scale questionnaire, ensuring the robustness of the research findings. Drawing on the insights of (Ary et al., 2010), structured interviews were utilized to capture the beliefs, opinions,

and preferences of English Course teachers in their own words, allowing participants the flexibility to revise, remove, or add information to their responses. To implement this written interview, 11 open ended questions were embedded at the end section of the questionnaire previously distributed.

In tandem with the written interview, phone interviews were conducted to provide further depth and detail to the data collected. This methodological choice was informed by (Ary et al., 2010), who highlighted the efficiency and high response rates associated with phone interviews compared to face-to-face interactions. To ensure representativeness, the researcher selected participants from each subgroup identified earlier, aiming for an equitable distribution across English Course size, gender, and teaching experience. The questions posed during the phone interviews served as follow-ups to participants' responses in the written interview, enabling a comprehensive exploration of professional identity and retention across diverse contexts. The number of participants involved in this telephone interview was 9 people whose profile can be seen in the following figure:

Figure 1. The Profile of Telephone Interview Pariticipants

	Big EC	Medium EC	Small EC	Female	Male	Novice	Experienced
No of Participants	2	3	4	5	4	4	5

Upon completion of data collection, the research moved into the analysis phase, employing a coding process as recommended by (Ary et al., 2010). This coding process involved three steps: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding, allowing for the systematic organization and interpretation of the qualitative data obtained from the interviews. Additionally, the researcher utilized the results of the Likert-scale questionnaire analysis and mode calculation from Rosari's (2021) research to supplement the findings. By integrating quantitative and qualitative data sources, the research aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between professional identity and retention rates among English Course teachers in Indonesia. Ultimately, the combination of both types of data – quantitative and qualitative – was deemed essential for developing a robust understanding of the research questions concerning professional identity and retention rates. As emphasized by (Ary et al., 2010), this mixed-methods approach enables researchers to explore phenomena from multiple perspectives, enriching the depth and breadth of insights gained. Through meticulous data collection, analysis, and integration, this research seeks to contribute valuable knowledge to the field of English Course education, informing strategies for enhancing teacher retention and professional development in similar educational contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The concept of teacher professional identity, defined as how teachers perceive themselves based on workplace interactions, has been extensively discussed in prior literature (e.g. Hanna et al.,
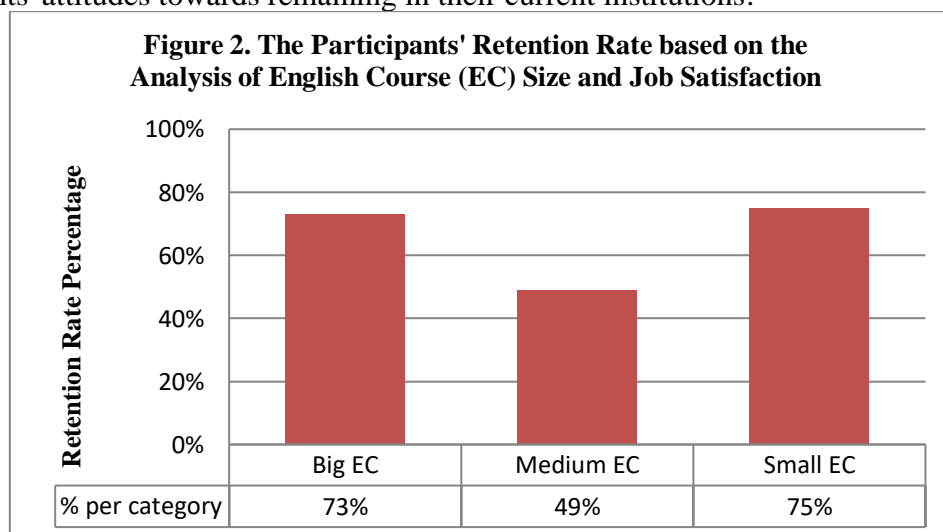
2020; Lasky, 2005; Pennington & Richards, 2016). Rosari's (2021) research has explored the profiles of professional identity among English Course teachers, shedding light on their career-related decision-making, motivation, effectiveness, and retention (Ávalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Day et al., 2005; J. Y. Hong, 2010; Lasky, 2005). This research builds upon these theories by analyzing how teachers' professional identity mapped in Rosari's (2021) research influences their decision to remain in or leave their current positions. By examining the profiles of teacher professional identity, this study aims to provide insight into the retention rates of non-formal school teachers, an underexplored area in research on teacher professional identity and retention rates.

This result section and late the discussion part are organized into four subsections, corresponding to each element of teacher professional identity: job satisfaction, occupational commitment, work motivation, and self-efficacy. The study involved 35 English Course teachers from various institutions in Yogyakarta City and Sleman Regency. To address the research question regarding the relationship between teachers' professional identity profiles and their retention rates, participants responded to 11 statements and questions. These included ranking factors influencing their work, assessing their likelihood of remaining in their positions based on professional identity, and providing reasons for their decision to stay, considering job satisfaction, occupational commitment, work motivation, and self-efficacy.

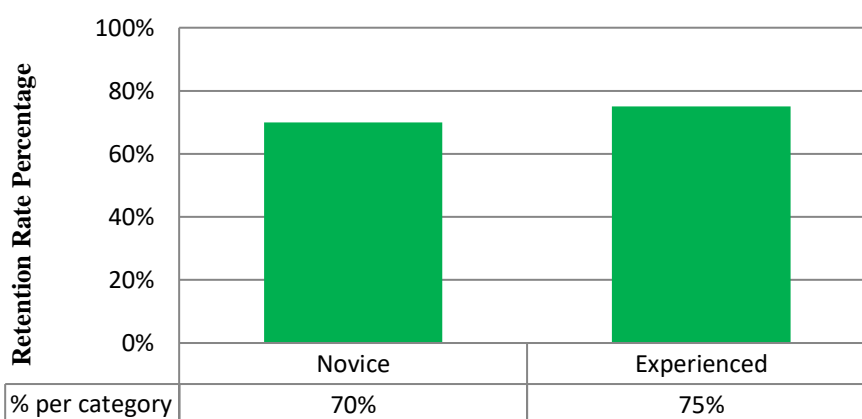### The English Course Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Retention Rate

Job satisfaction, representing an individual's positive emotional state towards their job (Locke, 1969), serves as a crucial predictor of teacher retention rates (Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012; T. W. Lee, 1988). The influence of job satisfaction on retention rates stems from its antecedents, including leadership style, opportunity for advancement, compensation, work environment, organizational climate, and organizational structure (Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012; Testa, 1999). To delve deeper into participants' decisions to remain in their current workplaces, the researcher utilized a range of questions. These included multiple-choice questions assessing participants' likelihood of remaining in their English Courses based on job satisfaction, inquiries prompting them to rank the aforementioned antecedents in order of influence on their decision to stay, and open-ended questions aimed at eliciting detailed insights into their reasons for staying. Prior to responding to these inquiries, participants were required to provide feedback using a 4-point Likert scale. Analysis of their responses revealed that, based on their satisfaction with their current roles, approximately 67% expressed a willingness to remain in their current positions. Further exploration, taking into account the classification of research participants based on English Course size, gender, and teaching experience, yielded more nuanced findings regarding participants' attitudes towards remaining in their current institutions.

Figure 2. The Participants' Retention Rate based on the Analysis of English Course (EC) Size and Job Satisfaction

	Big EC	Medium EC	Small EC
% per category	73%	49%	75%

Figure 3. The Participants' Retention Rate based on The Analysis of Gender and Job Satisfaction

% per category	Female	Male
	62%	75%
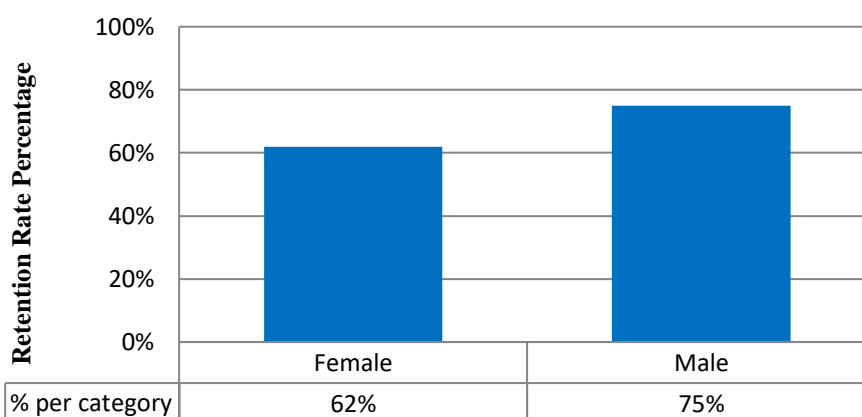
Figure 4. The Participants' Retention Rate based on The Analysis of Teaching Experience and Job Satisfaction

% per category	Novice	Experienced
	70%	75%

The English Course Teachers' Occupational Commitment and Retention Rate

Occupational commitment, defined as an individual's affective reaction to their occupation (K. Lee et al., 2000), plays a pivotal role in shaping attachment attitudes and subsequent behaviors such as the decision to remain in or leave a particular workplace (Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012). Given the variance in attachment styles among workers, the willingness of teachers to remain in their current roles varies from one individual to another.

To understand the nature of English Course teachers' attachment to their institutions and its implications for retention rates, the researcher employed Meyer & Allen's (1997) three components of occupational commitment: affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. Initially, participants were asked to assess their emotional attachment to their work using close-ended questions rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Subsequently, participants were invited to provide insights into their reasons for remaining in their non-formal schools through an open-ended question, which allowed for a deeper exploration of their responses. Analysis of participants' feedback revealed that, based on their occupational
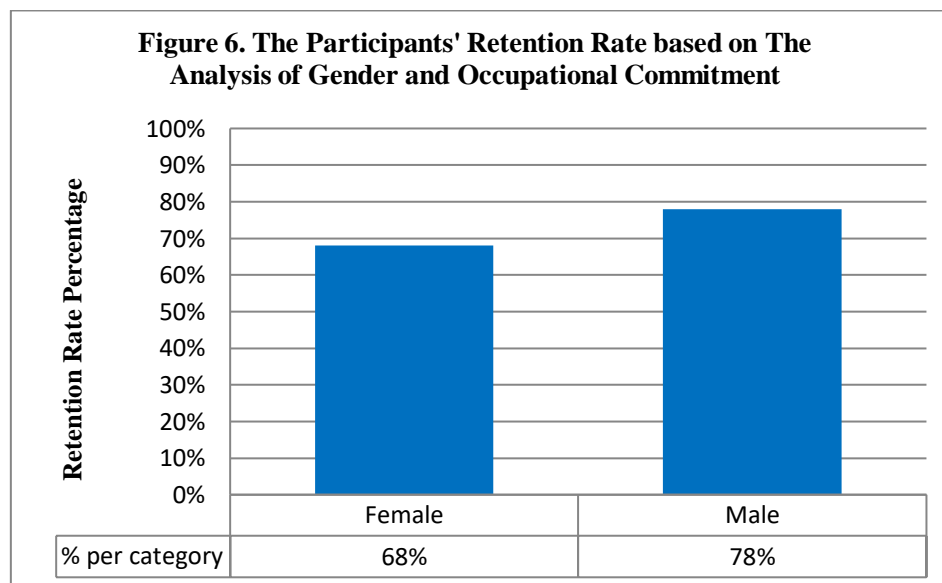
commitment to their current roles, approximately 72% expressed a likelihood of staying in their current workplace.

Further analysis involved coding participants' responses to the open-ended question in the written interview, leading to the identification of five major themes explaining the types of occupational commitment observed among teachers and the reasons underlying their desire to remain in their current workplaces. These themes, elucidated in Table 1, shed light on the diverse forms of occupational commitment exhibited by teachers and their motivations for retention.
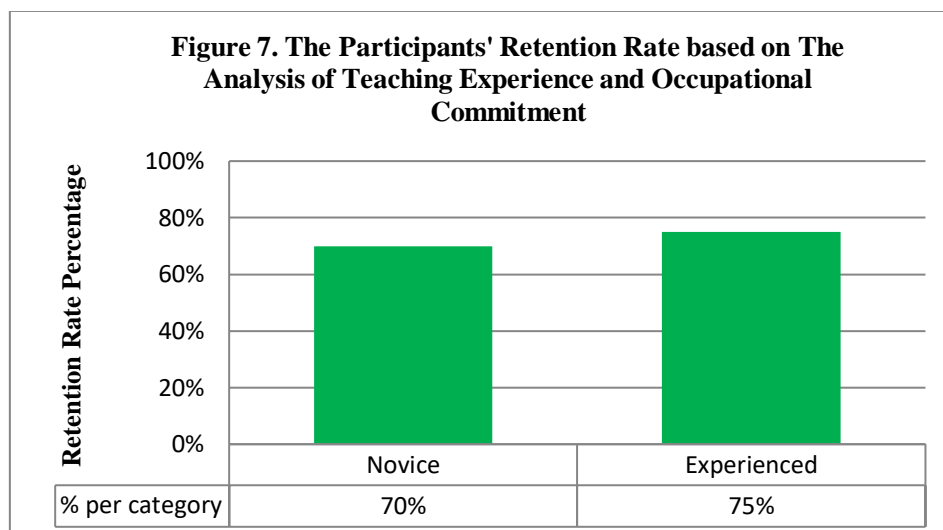
Table 1. The Theme and Type of Occupational Commitment of the Teachers

NO	THEME	TYPE OF COMMITMENT ACCORDING TO MEYER & ALLEN (1997)
1	Positive relation with colleagues	Affective Commitment
2	The love/passion for teaching	
3	Supportive work environment	
4	Responsibilities as teachers	Normative Commitment
5	Needs (e.g. money, experience)	Continuance Commitment

By answering the provided questions both in the questionnaire and follow up written and phone interview, the researcher could find out that the average percentage of the teachers' retention rate is 72% which is considered high. Further exploration, taking into account the classification of research participants based on English Course size, gender, and teaching experience, yielded more nuanced findings regarding participants' attitudes towards remaining in their current institutions.
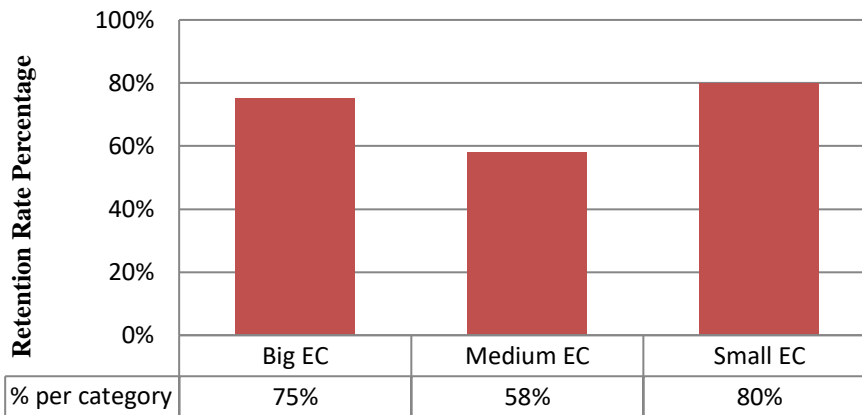

Figure 6. The Participants' Retention Rate based on The Analysis of Gender and Occupational Commitment

% per category	Female	Male
	68%	78%

Figure 7. The Participants' Retention Rate based on The Analysis of Teaching Experience and Occupational Commitment

% per category	Novice	Experienced
	70%	75%

The English Course Teachers' Work Motivation and Retention Rate

Work motivation encompasses the array of factors that drive individuals to initiate, sustain, and perpetuate their work behaviors (Sinclair et al., 2006). It comprises various elements, including financial incentives, job content, opportunities for career development, the social and supportive work environment, and respect for one's private life, as delineated by (Conway & Briner, 2002) and (Coyle-Shapiro, 2002). These factors serve as the foundation for understanding teacher retention rates within educational contexts.

To elucidate the relationship between work motivation and teacher retention, the researcher presented the participants with a series of inquiries aimed at discerning their attitudes towards their current employment settings. These inquiries included a multiple-choice question soliciting participants' likelihood of remaining in their current English Courses, a query prompting respondents to rank the aforementioned motivational factors in order of influence on their retention decisions, and an open-ended question designed to elicit detailed insights into their reasons for desiring to maintain their current positions. Preliminary to responding to these inquiries, participants were required to provide answers to closed-ended questions utilizing a 4-point Likert Scale.

Analysis of the participants' responses revealed that, when considering their work motivation within their current teaching roles, their propensity to remain in their current workplaces was reported at 72%. This finding underscores the significance of investigating the interplay between work motivation and teacher retention within educational settings. Further exploration, taking into account the classification of research participants based on English Course size, gender, and teaching experience, yielded more nuanced findings regarding participants' attitudes towards remaining in their current institutions.

Figure 8. The Participants' Retention Rate based on the Analysis of English Course (EC) Size and Work Motivation

% per category	Big EC	Medium EC	Small EC
	75%	58%	80%

Figure 9. The Participants' Retention Rate based on The Analysis of Gender and Work Motivation

% per category	Female	Male
	68%	78%
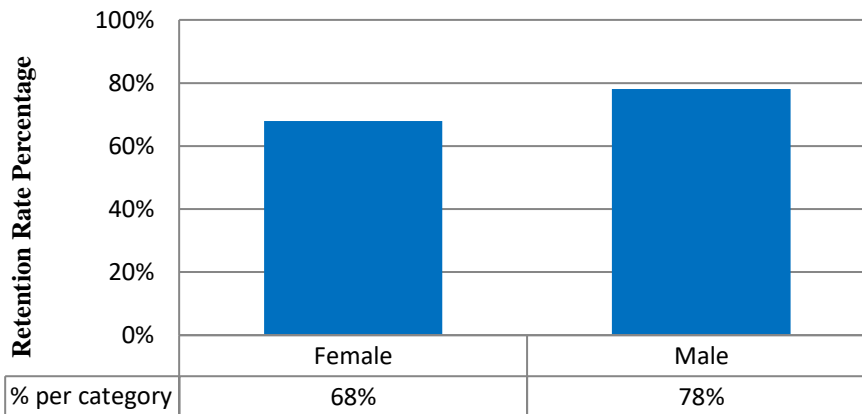
Figure 10. The Participants' Retention Rate based on The Analysis of Teaching Experience and Work Motivation

% per category	Novice	Experienced
	71%	73%
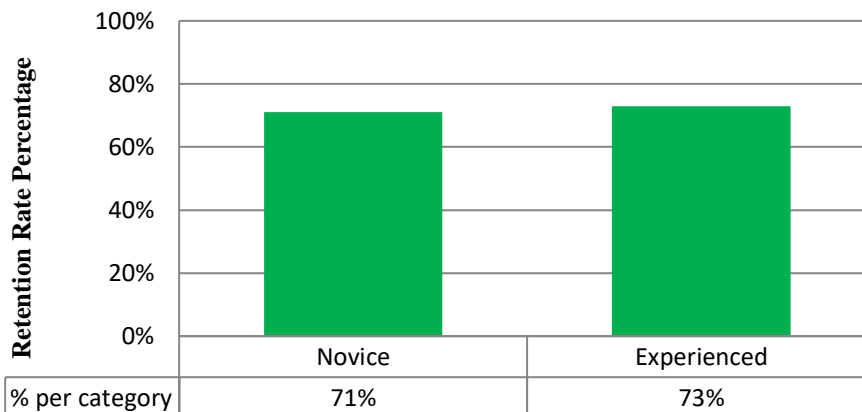
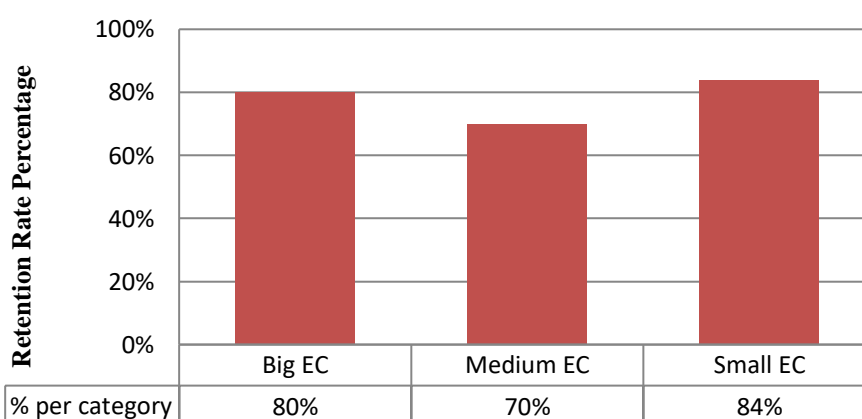### *The English Course Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Retention Rate*

Self-efficacy, defined as an individual's belief in their capacity to effectively execute tasks and achieve desired outcomes (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003), serves as a significant predictor of teacher

engagement and retention (Sarıçam & Sakız, 2014; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016). This construct elucidates the extent to which various factors influence teachers' decisions to remain in their current positions. Key determinants of self-efficacy include past mastery experiences, observation of successful peers, collegial support, and administrative backing (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016).
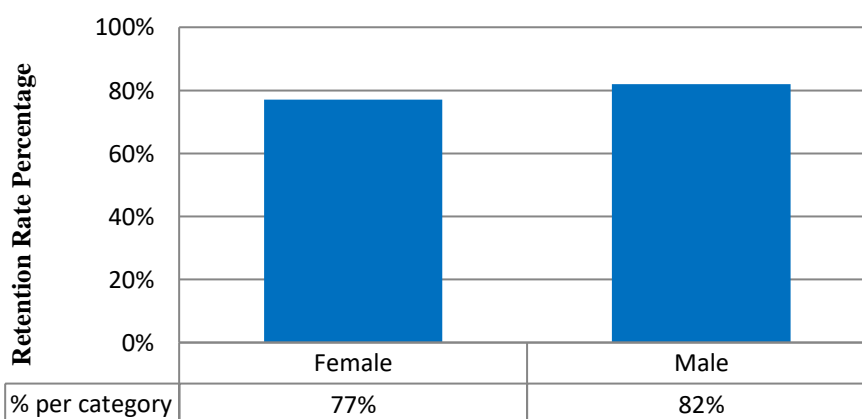
To investigate the relationship between self-efficacy and teacher retention, the researcher employed a multifaceted approach. Participants were presented with a series of inquiries aimed at assessing their likelihood of remaining in their current English Courses based on their perceived self-efficacy levels. Additionally, they were prompted to rank the aforementioned factors according to their perceived influence on their retention decisions. These inquiries were supplemented by open-ended questions designed to elicit deeper insights into participants' motivations for remaining in their current workplaces.
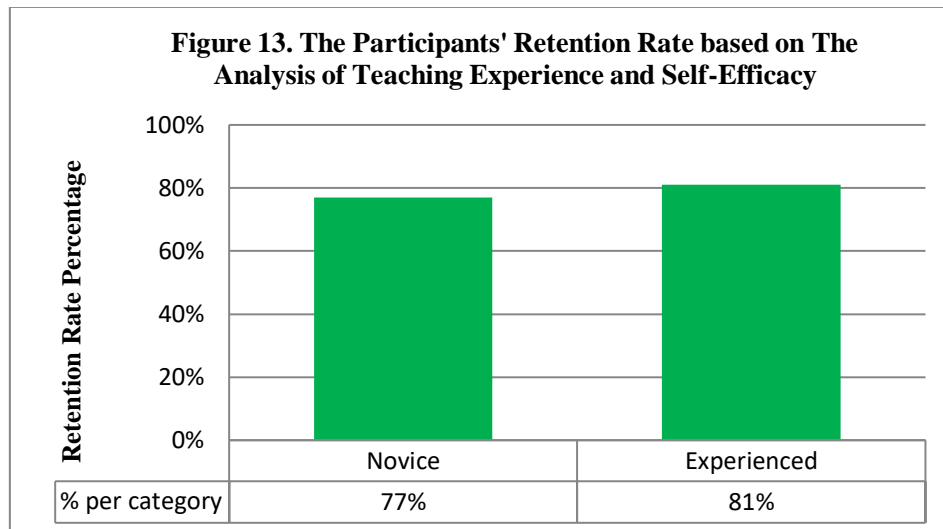
Prior to responding to these inquiries, participants were asked to rate their agreement with statements using a 4-point Likert scale. Analysis of participants' responses revealed a collective inclination towards remaining in their current workplaces, with a retention likelihood of 79%. Further exploration, taking into account the classification of research participants based on English Course size, gender, and teaching experience, yielded more nuanced findings regarding participants' attitudes towards remaining in their current institutions.

Figure 11. The Participants' Retention Rate based on the Analysis of English Course (EC) Size and Self-Efficacy

	Big EC	Medium EC	Small EC
% per category	80%	70%	84%

Figure 12. The Participants' Retention Rate based on The Analysis of Gender and Self-Efficacy

	Female	Male
% per category	77%	82%

Figure 13. The Participants' Retention Rate based on The Analysis of Teaching Experience and Self-Efficacy

% per category	Novice	Experienced
	77%	81%

Discussion

The English Course Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Retention Rate

The retention rates of English Course teachers, stratified by institution size, reveal notable variations. Participants from big and small English Courses exhibit high retention rates (73% and 75% respectively), whereas those from medium English Courses have a substantially lower retention rate of 49%. These findings underscore the impact of institution size on teacher retention.

An analysis of participant responses elucidates the primary factors influencing job satisfaction and retention. Across institution sizes, a supportive work environment emerges as the foremost determinant. Participants highlight the significance of flexible work environments that foster camaraderie and skill development. This emphasis on workplace support aligns with previous research by Ingersoll & Smith (2003) and Tickle et al. (2011), which underscore the pivotal role of working conditions in teacher job satisfaction and turnover.

Contrastingly, the secondary factors affecting job satisfaction vary among English Course types. Compensation emerges as the primary concern for teachers in medium-sized institutions, influencing their decision to stay. This was confirmed through interviews, with respondents emphasizing the importance of fair compensation in job satisfaction and retention. For example, D emphasized, "*We work because we need to get paid. I think the salary I get from my current institution is enough for my daily needs and savings. That's why I stay in this institution.*"

Gender disparities in retention rates are evident, with male teachers exhibiting higher longevity compared to their female counterparts. This trend is consistent with previous studies by Borman & Dowling (2008) and Guarino et al. (2006), which indicate longer service durations among male educators.

Further analysis reveals divergent priorities between male and female teachers regarding job satisfaction. While both prioritize working environment and opportunities for advancement, female teachers prioritize organizational climate, while male teachers emphasize leadership style. For female teachers, organizational climate concerns, such as workload distribution and job relevance, significantly impact job satisfaction and retention. As IO noted, "*One of my reasons of not to extend my contract here is due to the amount of workload that is getting heavier. The management keeps on deducting the number of employees and therefore distributing the responsibilities of the former employees to the remaining ones.*" In contrast, S, a male teacher, emphasized the importance of leadership style in job satisfaction, stating, "*There*

is very good communication between the management and us (teachers). This enables us to improve ourselves."

Interestingly, the length of teaching experience does not significantly influence retention rates. Novice and experienced teachers exhibit comparable retention rates, contrary to existing research suggesting higher turnover among novice educators. Both groups prioritize a supportive work environment, emphasizing its role in facilitating continuous learning and professional growth. For instance, C, a novice teacher, expressed, "*My current workplace provides me with time flexibility that may not be provided by other institutions so that I can at the same time do my master's study.*" Similarly, AE, an experienced teacher, highlighted, "*My work environment here is comfortable and we can strengthen each other's weaknesses.*"

In summary, while institution size, compensation, and gender play significant roles in teacher retention, a supportive work environment emerges as a critical factor across all categories. These findings underscore the importance of fostering supportive workplace cultures to enhance teacher satisfaction and retention.

The English Course Teachers' Occupational Commitment and Retention Rate

The analysis uncovers a notable average teacher retention rate of 72%, primarily characterized by affective commitment, indicating an emotional attachment and involvement with the institution (Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Participants cited positive relations with colleagues, passion for teaching, career advancement opportunities, and supportive work environments as key reasons for their willingness to remain in their current roles. For instance, Z, an English teacher from a big English Course, emphasized the importance of positive relations with colleagues, stating, "*My colleagues are fun to be with and I feel like I can learn a lot from them.*" Similarly, N, a teacher from a small English Course, highlighted the supportive environment, saying, "*I still want to work here because my colleagues are supportive and willing to improve our quality as English teachers together.*" These statements underscore the significance of positive work relationships and supportive environments in fostering retention (Tickle et al., 2011).

However, some participants exhibited normative commitment, viewing their responsibilities as obligations, while others demonstrated continuance commitment, driven by financial needs or career portfolio development (Meyer & Allen, 1997). An example of normative commitment can be found in the response of D, a teacher of a medium English Course, who stated, "*I still work here because I still have responsibilities to my students.*" AC, from one of the big English Courses, highlighted the aspect of continuance commitment, saying, "*Because of need.*" She further explained that this referred to her salary, which she wouldn't receive from other English Courses. Similarly, X's commitment was indicated to be continuance, stating, "*I stayed here because I want to continue my study requiring work experience.*" These responses illustrate the varying motivations behind teachers' commitment to their institutions.

Moreover, teacher retention rates varied significantly based on the size of the English Course, with rates of 76%, 57%, and 79% for big, medium, and small courses, respectively. Positive relations with colleagues and supportive work environments emerged as significant factors influencing retention, as exemplified by participants' statements emphasizing the value of teamwork and quality management (Tickle et al., 2011). Additionally, gender differences were observed, with male teachers exhibiting a higher retention rate (78%) compared to females (68%), aligning with previous research indicating longer service duration among male educators (Birkeland & Curtis, 2006; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Guarino et al., 2006).

Among experienced teachers, positive work conditions and opportunities for professional growth were cited as influential factors in their retention decisions. R, an experienced teacher from a small English Course, emphasized the importance of supportive teamwork and quality management, stating, "*The main factors that build my emotional attachment with my institution*

are the comfort at work and supportive teamwork." AG, an experienced teacher from a medium English Course, highlighted the support provided by the school for teacher improvement, stating, "*The institution I am currently working for provides me with a teacher competency test in with which I could keep honing my quality.*" These findings underscore the critical role of supportive work environments and career advancement opportunities in fostering teacher retention (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Tickle et al., 2011).

In conclusion, the retention of English Course teachers is influenced by a combination of personal, organizational, and contextual factors. Affective commitment, driven by emotional attachment and involvement, emerges as a dominant factor in teacher retention, highlighting the importance of fostering positive work relationships and supportive environments. Normative and continuance commitment also play roles, particularly among teachers who perceive their responsibilities as obligations or who are motivated by financial needs.

The English Course Teachers' Work Motivation and Retention Rate

The analysis of teacher retention rates reveals intriguing insights into the dynamics of English Course sizes. Figure 8 illustrates the varying likelihoods of participants from different English Course sizes to remain in their current positions: 75% for teachers in big courses, 58% for those in medium courses, and a notable 80% for educators in small courses. These findings shed light on the nuanced challenges associated with retaining teachers across different institutional contexts, with medium-sized courses presenting particular retention difficulties.

Delving deeper into the factors influencing teachers' work motivation unveils significant distinctions based on English Course size. For teachers in big courses, financial rewards emerge as the primary motivator, with AD emphasizing the importance of adequate compensation for their workload, stating, "*I get paid fairly relative to my workload.*" Conversely, job content plays a pivotal role for educators in medium and small courses, as expressed by B, who finds teaching to be a source of self-achievement, and G and H, who highlight their passion for teaching.

Despite the significance of job content, the retention rates of medium courses remain comparatively low. Further exploration reveals that a lack of social and supportive work environments contributes to this disparity. AG underscores the importance of supportive colleagues in fostering motivation and job satisfaction, stating, "*Once in a while, there must be a hard time for us at work. In this kind of situation, the role of supportive friends at work is needed.*" This illuminates the critical role of workplace relationships in shaping teachers' experiences and influencing their decisions to stay or leave.

Gender disparities in teacher retention rates are also evident, with male teachers exhibiting higher retention rates (78%) compared to females (68%). Analysis of the factors influencing retention rates reveals that financial rewards are more salient for female teachers. AC, for instance, highlights the importance of financial reward, stating, "*Because of need.*" Conversely, male teachers prioritize a supportive work atmosphere, with K finding the work environment conducive to professional development, stating, "*It enables me to develop as a teacher.*" These gender-based differences underscore the complex interplay between individual motivations and institutional factors in shaping teacher retention outcomes.

Interestingly, the length of teaching experience does not significantly affect retention rates, challenging previous research suggesting higher turnover among novice teachers. While novice teachers cite financial rewards as influential, experienced teachers prioritize job content and passion for teaching. C explains that financial rewards are important for financing graduate studies, while F emphasizes passion for teaching, stating, "*My decision to stay at my current work is because my passion is teaching and I want to be useful for others with the knowledge I have.*" This highlights the importance of aligning institutional strategies with the diverse needs and motivations of teachers at different career stages.

In summary, the findings underscore the importance of considering contextual factors such as course size, gender, and teaching experience in understanding teacher retention. Addressing these factors, particularly by fostering supportive work environments and providing adequate compensation, is essential for enhancing teacher retention and promoting job satisfaction.

The English Course Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Retention Rate

The analysis presented in Figure 11 illustrates the likelihood of participants from different sizes of English Courses to retain their current positions. Notably, teachers from small English Courses showed the highest retention rate at 84%, while those from medium English Courses exhibited the lowest at 70%. Further examination of participants' responses from written and phone interviews elucidated that self-efficacy, shaped by previous mastery experiences, was pivotal in their decision to stay. These mastery experiences encompass both successful and failed teaching processes, which contribute significantly to teachers' belief in their teaching abilities. For instance, one participant coded as Z stated in the interview, "*I have mastered the teaching materials and teaching methodologies well enough so I believe I could give the best to my students coming from any levels and types.*" This illustrates how previous mastery experiences contribute to teachers' self-efficacy, aligning with existing literature emphasizing the importance of work experience in teachers' belief in their teaching abilities (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016).

Collegial support emerged as the second most influential factor for teachers from big and medium English Courses, while for those from small English Courses, observing successful peers played a crucial role. Participants emphasized the importance of supportive colleagues in building confidence in their teaching abilities. For example, one participant, AE, a teacher from a big English Course, explained that helpful coworkers built his confidence in teaching and enabled him to provide the best for his students. Meanwhile, another participant, J, a teacher from a small English Course, stated that observing successful teachers teaching similar classes inspired and motivated her to improve her own teaching standards (Boyd et al., 2011). These excerpts underscore the significance of collegial support and peer observation in enhancing teachers' self-efficacy and retention.

Gender-based analysis indicated a significant difference in retention rates, with male teachers exhibiting higher longevity compared to their female counterparts. Both genders, however, ranked previous mastery experiences as the most influential factor in their self-efficacy and retention. For example, participant X, a female teacher, explained her self-efficacy by stating, "*I was able to design a wide variety of educational activities in the classes I taught,*" while participant Q, a male teacher, stated, "*My teaching could result in positive impacts on my students.*" These excerpts highlight how previous mastery experiences contribute to both male and female teachers' self-efficacy and decision to stay (Birkeland & Curtis, 2006; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Guarino et al., 2006).

Examining retention rates based on teaching experience length revealed a marginal difference, with experienced teachers exhibiting slightly higher rates. Novice and experienced teachers attributed their self-efficacy and decision to stay to previous mastery experiences, emphasizing the learning gained from successes and failures. For instance, participant F, a novice teacher, stated, "*I had been successfully adapting myself to my duties and to challenges at work,*" while participant Z, an experienced teacher, emphasized, "*I have mastered the teaching materials provided by the institution, and therefore I believe I can give the best in teaching any kinds of level and any types of students.*" These excerpts underscore the role of previous mastery experiences in teachers' self-efficacy and retention (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Liu, 2007; Stockard & Lehman, 2004).

Overall, regardless of English Course type, gender, or experience, previous mastery experiences consistently emerged as the most influential factor in teachers' self-efficacy and retention,

underscoring the significance of experiential learning in their professional development. Conversely, support from school was deemed the least significant factor across various demographics. This comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing teacher retention rates provides valuable insights for educational institutions aiming to enhance teacher satisfaction and longevity in the profession

CONCLUSION

This study builds upon previous research to deepen our understanding of the interplay between teacher professional identity and retention rates among educators in English Courses. By examining the profiles of professional identity and retention rates of teachers within this context, we have illuminated the intricate dynamics shaping educators' commitment to their current institutions.

Our analysis revealed that the elements comprising teacher professional identity—namely job satisfaction, occupational commitment, work motivation, and self-efficacy—play a pivotal role in influencing educators' willingness to remain in their current workplaces. Notably, the antecedents of each element were found to exert varying degrees of influence on retention rates. Work environment emerged as the most influential factor, significantly impacting job satisfaction and consequently affecting educators' propensity to retain.

Furthermore, our findings underscore the importance of love or passion for teaching and positive relationships with colleagues in fostering occupational commitment among educators. Similarly, the significance of job content in bolstering work motivation highlights the critical role of fulfilling job roles in sustaining educators' commitment to their profession. Moreover, the pivotal role of previous mastery experiences in shaping educators' self-efficacy underscores the significance of experiential learning in fostering educators' confidence in their abilities.

Importantly, our study indicates that, regardless of the specific elements of teacher professional identity or subgroups of educators considered, the overall retention rates among English Course teachers remain high. However, the paramount influence of work environment suggests that efforts to enhance educators' professional identity and retention rates must prioritize the cultivation of supportive and accommodating work environments.

In light of these findings, future research endeavors should focus on exploring targeted interventions aimed at fostering supportive work environments and enhancing educators' professional identity. Longitudinal studies tracking educators' career trajectories over time could provide invaluable insights into the longitudinal dynamics underpinning retention rates. Additionally, comparative analyses across different educational contexts and geographic regions could enrich our understanding of the generalizability of these findings.

In conclusion, this study highlights the central role of teacher professional identity in shaping retention rates among English Course teachers. By elucidating the nuanced interplay between professional identity elements and retention dynamics, the findings offer valuable insights for policymakers, educational leaders, and practitioners seeking to optimize teacher retention rates and foster educational excellence within English Course settings.

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