

Professional Commitment and Mobility Among Public Secondary Teachers in Region I: Basis for a Retention Policy Framework

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between professional commitment and teacher mobility among public secondary school teachers in Region I and developed an evidence-based retention policy framework. Using a mixed-methods design, quantitative data from 200 teachers were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative insights from 10 purposively selected participants were examined via thematic analysis. Findings revealed moderate to high levels of professional commitment, with affective commitment most prominent, and low actual turnover despite noticeable mobility intentions. Both push factors (e.g., workload and job demands) and pull factors (e.g., higher salaries and better career opportunities) significantly influenced mobility decisions, with pull factors exerting a stronger effect. No significant relationship was found between professional commitment and mobility; however, significant associations emerged between mobility and push–pull factors, and between professional commitment and pull factors. These results suggest that teacher retention is shaped more by systemic conditions and external opportunities than by professional commitment alone. Based on these findings, a Teacher Retention Policy Framework was developed, outlining strategic policy directions, targeted programs, and feedback mechanisms to support sustainable teacher retention.

Keywords: - Teacher retention, teacher mobility, professional commitment, push and pull factors, retention policy framework.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher retention has become a critical global and national concern as education systems struggle to sustain a stable and qualified workforce amid increasing teacher mobility and attrition. International evidence highlights persistent shortages, rising turnover, and workforce aging, with many teachers leaving the profession or seeking opportunities elsewhere due to challenging working conditions and better prospects abroad (UNESCO, 2023; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2025). Recent studies further emphasize that retention strategies must be supported by coherent workforce planning and policy-based interventions that address teacher shortages through improved working conditions, professional support, and long-term institutional sustainability (Lawal & Emmanuel, 2026). In the Philippines, similar patterns are evident, with significant teacher shortages, increasing workload pressures, and continued migration contributing to instability in the public education system (Education International, 2024; BusinessWorld, 2025; DepEd, 2025). Existing research establishes that teacher mobility is shaped by “push–pull” factors—such as workload, compensation, and career opportunities—while professional commitment remains a key but insufficient determinant of retention (Yeh, 2025; Tarraya, 2023; Cahilog, 2023; See & Morris, 2020). However, there is a notable gap in context-specific studies that integrate these variables

into a localized, evidence-based retention framework, particularly for public secondary teachers in Region I, where distinct labor migration patterns and regional conditions may intensify mobility dynamics. This study therefore aimed to examine the relationship between professional commitment and teacher mobility, including the influence of push–pull factors, and to develop a regionally responsive retention policy framework; it tested the hypotheses that no significant relationships exist between (1) mobility and professional commitment, (2) mobility and push–pull factors, and (3) professional commitment and push–pull factors among public secondary teachers in Region I.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to analyze the professional commitment and mobility of public secondary teachers in Region I as the basis for developing a regional retention policy framework.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of public secondary teachers in Region I, in terms of:
 - a. age;
 - b. gender;
 - c. marital status;
 - d. highest educational attainment;
 - e. bachelor's degree;
 - f. position;
 - g. type of school;
 - h. division;
 - i. length of teaching experience;
 - j. monthly net salary range; and
 - k. number of relevant seminars or trainings attended.
2. What are the Teacher Mobility Patterns in terms of:
 - a. teaching movement history;
 - b. current mobility intentions; and
 - c. intended mobility reasons.
3. What is the level of professional commitment of public secondary school teachers in Region I in terms of:
 - a. affective commitment, as reflected by:
 - 3.a.1. emotional attachment to the school;
 - 3.a.2. sense of belonging;
 - b. continuance commitment, as reflected by:
 - 3.b.1. perceived cost of leaving;
 - 3.b.2. availability of alternative employment;
 - c. normative commitment, as reflected by:
 - 3.c.1. sense of obligation to remain;
 - 3.c.2. moral responsibility toward the profession.
4. What is the extent of influence of the push and pull factors on the teacher mobility decisions among public secondary school teachers?
5. What is the perceived level of effectiveness of retention strategies among public secondary school teachers in Region I, in terms of:
 - a. administrative workload reduction;
 - b. competitive compensation and benefits;
 - c. school climate and collegial relationships;

- d. mental health and wellness support;
 - e. career advancement and promotion pathways;
 - f. professional development and training opportunities;
 - g. administrative and leadership support;
 - h. fair teacher deployment and transfer policies;
 - i. incentives for teachers in hard-to-staff areas; and
 - j. recognition and rewards for performance and long-term service.
6. Is there a significant relationship between the Teacher Mobility Patterns and the level of professional commitment of public secondary school teachers in Region I?
 7. Is there a significant relationship between the Teacher Mobility Patterns and extent of influence of push and pull factors on the teacher mobility decisions among public secondary school teachers?
 8. Is there a significant relationship between the level of professional commitment and the extent of influence of push and pull factors on the teacher mobility decisions among public secondary school teachers?
 9. Based on the results of the study, what Regional Retention Policy Framework may be proposed for public secondary teachers?

Scope and Delimitations

This study examined the professional commitment and mobility of public secondary school teachers in Region I (Ilocos Region) during School Year 2025–2026, focusing on mobility patterns, influencing factors, and levels of commitment as the basis for a proposed Teacher Retention Policy Framework. It covered the four provinces—Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, and Pangasinan—and included 200 public secondary teachers from five Department of Education divisions with equal representation. A subset of ten participants with significant mobility experiences was purposively selected for qualitative analysis to enrich and explain quantitative results. The study was limited to currently employed public secondary teachers within the region, excluding those who had resigned or were working abroad, and was conducted over a three-month data collection period, which constrained the ability to observe long-term mobility trends.

Review of Related Literatures

The reviewed literature establishes that teacher retention, mobility, and professional commitment are interconnected constructs shaped by psychological, organizational, and systemic factors. Professional commitment is widely defined as a multidimensional construct involving emotional, cognitive, and behavioral attachment to the profession, institution, and students (Paunan et al., 2024; Cheng & Zhao, 2023). Foundational theories describe commitment as encompassing affective, continuance, and normative dimensions, which are influenced by intrinsic motivation and organizational conditions (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Imran et al., 2017; Brown et al., 2014; Steers, 1977). Studies further emphasize that commitment develops over time and is reinforced by professional learning, leadership support, and workplace environment (Wang et al., 2021; Brouhier et al., 2025; Riveros et al., 2023). Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors—including fulfillment, recognition, compensation, and institutional support—play critical roles in sustaining teacher engagement and reducing turnover (Tehseen & Hadi, 2015), while institutional mechanisms such as induction programs strengthen early-career

commitment and professional integration (Balutoc, 2023). At a systemic level, structural conditions such as compensation, organizational support, and professional identity significantly influence long-term commitment (Ma et al., 2025).

Teacher mobility is conceptualized as a complex, multidimensional process that extends beyond physical transfer to include intentions and career considerations shaped by individual, organizational, and systemic factors (Palma-Vásquez et al., 2022; Vagi & Pivovarov, 2017). Push-pull theory explains mobility as the result of interacting pressures and opportunities, where unfavorable working conditions, limited growth, and institutional inequities push teachers away, while better compensation, career advancement, and professional recognition attract them elsewhere (Eriçok, 2025). Organizational conditions such as leadership, workload, and school environment significantly influence mobility decisions (Nguyen et al., 2020; Farahmandpour & Voelkel, 2024), and mobility is often viewed as an indicator of systemic issues rather than purely individual choice (Ingersoll, 2001). Empirical studies highlight that mobility contributes to inequitable teacher distribution and affects educational quality, particularly in disadvantaged areas (Hanushek et al., 2004; World Bank, 2023; Özoğlu, 2015). In the Philippine context, teacher migration is strongly driven by disparities in compensation, working conditions, and career opportunities, with experienced teachers often seeking employment abroad for improved professional and personal outcomes (Hermoso, 2025; Magonsik & Ngag, 2025; Delilan, 2025).

Teacher retention is framed as a strategic priority that ensures workforce stability and educational quality, influenced by a combination of financial, professional, and organizational factors (Shaoan & Namanyane, 2004; OECD, 2024). Literature emphasizes that workload, accountability pressures, and mismatches between expectations and actual working conditions significantly affect retention (Perryman & Calvert, 2020). Retention is strengthened by job satisfaction, which is shaped by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, supportive leadership, and positive working environments (Tehseen & Hadi, 2015). Teacher well-being, professional development opportunities, and institutional support systems further contribute to sustained engagement (Kurrle & Warwas, 2025; Balutoc, 2023). However, retention is ultimately a multidimensional issue influenced by personal, professional, organizational, and socio-economic factors (Encabo & Ambalong, 2025), requiring systemic and integrated approaches that address both structural conditions and professional identity (Ma et al., 2025). Theoretical frameworks such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (1959), and Lee's Push-Pull Theory (1966) collectively explain how motivation, need satisfaction, and external opportunities shape teacher commitment and mobility decisions.

Policy literature highlights that teacher retention and mobility are influenced by both global and national frameworks. International organizations emphasize the need for improved working conditions, equitable teacher distribution, and professional support systems (UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2023; OECD, 2024). Regional initiatives such as those from the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC, 2026) underscore the importance of coordinated mobility systems and professional standardization. In the Philippines, policies such as the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers (Republic Act No. 4670) provide legal protection for teacher welfare, yet challenges such as teacher shortages, workload demands, and administrative burdens persist (EDCOM II, 2023). Recent reforms by the Department of Education aim to address these issues through workload rationalization and reduction of administrative tasks, promoting better work conditions and supporting retention (DepEd, 2024, 2025). Overall, the literature underscores that

teacher retention and mobility are not isolated phenomena but are shaped by the dynamic interaction of motivation, organizational conditions, and broader policy environments.

Building on the conceptual foundations presented in the literature, empirical studies further demonstrate that teacher mobility, commitment, and retention are dynamic and interrelated processes shaped by lived experiences across diverse educational contexts. Studies consistently show that turnover intention develops gradually rather than as a single decision, often persisting over time due to prolonged interaction with workplace conditions such as workload, emotional demands, and institutional challenges (Räsänen et al., 2020). Meta-analytic and qualitative findings reinforce that burnout, weak organizational commitment, limited workplace support, and lack of recognition significantly influence teachers' intention to leave, outweighing purely demographic factors (Li & Yao, 2022; Aulia & Haerani, 2022). Local studies echo these patterns, highlighting salary limitations, heavy workload, insufficient support, and attractive external opportunities as key drivers of mobility, particularly within the Philippine context where overseas employment presents a strong alternative (Saldevia & Pedroso, 2025; Blase & Naanep, 2025). These findings affirm that teacher mobility is shaped by both internal dissatisfaction and external opportunities, reflecting a balance of push and pull forces.

Further empirical evidence emphasizes the critical role of school-level and organizational conditions in shaping teachers' decisions to stay or leave. Studies identify leadership quality, collegial relationships, workload distribution, and access to professional development as central determinants of retention, with supportive environments consistently linked to lower turnover rates (Nguyen et al., 2020; Mohammed & Borkoski, 2024; Viano et al., 2019). Leadership, particularly transformational leadership, plays a significant role in strengthening teachers' organizational commitment and professional engagement (Noraazian & Khalip, 2016; Cabayag & Guhao, 2024). Local and international findings further highlight that supportive leadership, fair workload, and professional growth opportunities foster job satisfaction and retention, even in challenging environments (Espanto, 2024). These results indicate that organizational climate does not only directly influence mobility but also shapes teachers' psychological attachment and professional experience.

At the individual level, psychological constructs such as motivation, commitment, work engagement, and well-being are consistently identified as key factors influencing retention. Studies show that teachers are more likely to remain when they experience professional fulfillment, strong interpersonal relationships, and opportunities for growth (Vaidya & Hanna, 2023; Cabaron & Oco, 2023). While some findings suggest that commitment does not always directly translate into performance outcomes (Moro & Torres-Santos, 2022; Raralio, 2023), a more consistent relationship emerges between commitment and retention, particularly through affective and career-oriented dimensions (Viernes, Pontillas, Ongcachuy et al., 2024; Bading, 2022). Teacher well-being also plays a crucial role, as stress, burnout, and poor work-life balance significantly increase turnover intention, while supportive environments and meaningful work reduce the likelihood of leaving (Arnold & Rahimi, 2025; Collie, 2023). Additionally, professional identity, autonomy, and perceived status are shown to strengthen retention, as teachers who feel respected and empowered demonstrate stronger commitment to their profession (Jiang et al., 2025).

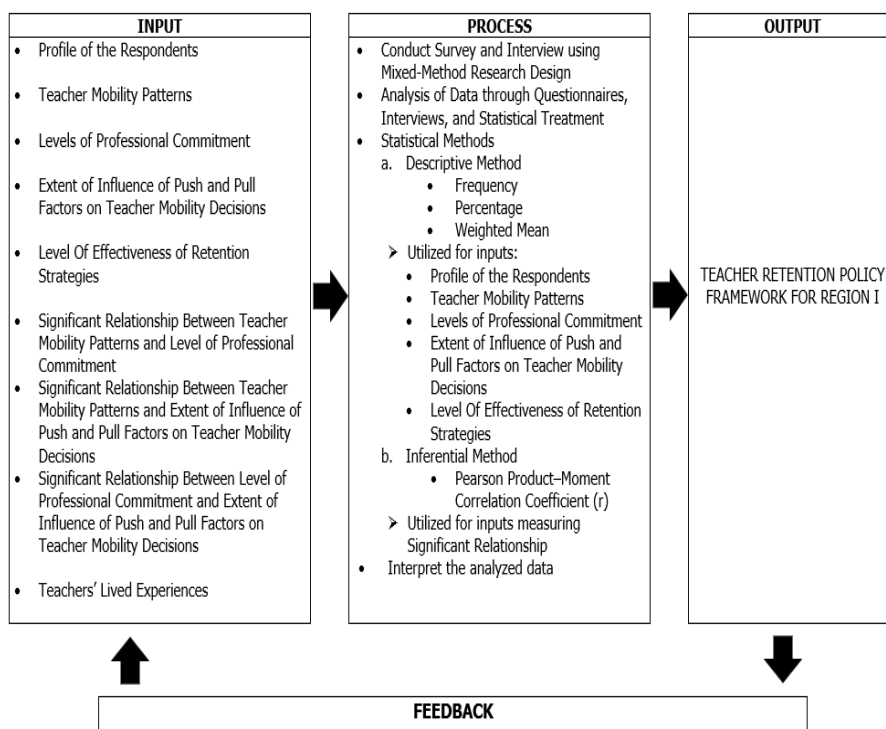
Across both international and local contexts, retention is best understood as the outcome of interacting personal, organizational, and socio-economic factors. Studies highlight that intrinsic motivations such as passion, purpose, and commitment to students must be supported by extrinsic conditions including compensation, career opportunities, and institutional support to sustain long-term engagement (Cabasal, Pua, Soriano et al., 2025). While global studies often emphasize structural and psychological dimensions such as autonomy, burnout, and professional status (Arnold & Rahimi, 2025; Collie, 2023; Jiang et al., 2025), Philippine-based research underscores socio-economic realities, including salary disparities, workload pressures, and migration opportunities (Saldevia & Pedroso, 2025; Blase & Naanep, 2025). Despite these contextual differences, a common pattern emerges: teachers remain when professional fulfillment aligns with supportive working conditions and viable career prospects.

Synthesizing these findings, the studies collectively demonstrate that teacher mobility and retention are not driven by isolated factors but by the interaction of commitment, workplace conditions, and external opportunities. Mobility intentions develop through sustained exposure to challenges and opportunities, while retention is strengthened by supportive leadership, positive work environments, and meaningful professional engagement (Räisänen et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2020; Li & Yao, 2022; Vaidya & Hanna, 2023). However, gaps remain in the literature, particularly in integrating mobility patterns with multidimensional commitment and push-pull factors within specific regional contexts. This highlights the need for a more comprehensive and localized approach, which the present study addresses by examining these variables collectively to inform a responsive teacher retention policy framework for Region I.

Theoretical Framework -

This study was primarily anchored on the ***Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment***, which conceptualizes professional commitment as a multidimensional construct consisting of affective (emotional attachment), continuance (perceived cost of leaving), and normative (sense of obligation) components, providing a comprehensive lens for understanding why teachers remain in or leave the profession. These dimensions framed the assessment of teachers' commitment and explained how varying levels of attachment influence retention behavior. Supporting this core framework, *Motivation-Hygiene Theory* and *Hierarchy of Needs* were used to explain how workplace conditions, motivation, and need satisfaction shape the development of commitment, while *Push-Pull Theory* accounted for mobility decisions by examining the interplay of factors that drive teachers away from or attract them to alternative opportunities. Together, these theories position professional commitment as the central mechanism linking individual needs, organizational conditions, and external opportunities, framing teacher retention as a dynamic outcome of interacting psychological, structural, and contextual influences.

Conceptual Framework



METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the research procedures used to examine professional commitment and teacher mobility among public secondary school teachers in Region I, including the research design, research steps, data collection and sample selection, and data analysis methods employed to generate evidence for the development of a context-based retention policy framework.

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-method research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively analyze teacher mobility patterns, levels of professional commitment, and factors influencing retention. Quantitative data were collected through a structured survey administered to public secondary school teachers in Region I, providing measurable insights into mobility trends and decision factors, while qualitative data from selected interviews offered deeper contextual understanding and explanation of emerging patterns (Creswell, 2018). The integration of both data sets enabled a more holistic analysis and served as the foundation for developing a data-driven Regional Teacher Retention Policy Framework.

Research Steps

The data gathering procedure was conducted in systematic phases to ensure accuracy, reliability, and ethical compliance. Formal authorization was secured from Department of Education Region I and relevant school heads, with informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality strictly observed. Quantitative data were collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms to public secondary school teachers across Region I within a two-week period. Subsequently, a purposively selected subset of respondents with notable mobility experiences participated in the qualitative phase through structured written interviews, adopted in place of face-to-face sessions due to scheduling constraints. The open-ended

responses provided in-depth insights aligned with emerging quantitative findings. Data were then systematically organized and analyzed, with quantitative data subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics, and qualitative data examined through thematic analysis. All procedures adhered to ethical standards, ensuring that collected data were used solely for academic purposes.

Data Collection and Sample Selection

The study utilized validated quantitative and qualitative instruments alongside a structured sampling design to ensure comprehensive and reliable data collection. The primary instrument for the quantitative phase was a structured Teacher Survey Questionnaire administered via Google Forms, consisting of four sections: mobility profile, professional commitment, push–pull factors influencing mobility decisions, and perceived effectiveness of retention strategies. The instrument underwent expert validation to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with study variables. Complementing this, qualitative data were gathered through structured written interviews with open-ended questions designed to elicit in-depth insights into teachers' mobility experiences and retention perspectives. The respondents included 200 public secondary school teachers selected through stratified convenience sampling across five Department of Education divisions in Region I—Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan I, and Pangasinan II—with equal representation ($n=40$ per division) to reflect administrative structures. Inclusion criteria required respondents to be currently employed public secondary teachers with at least one year of experience. For the qualitative phase, 10 participants were purposively selected from the survey respondents based on significant mobility experiences, ensuring that in-depth narratives directly complemented the quantitative findings.

Data Analysis Methods

The study employed a combination of descriptive, inferential, and qualitative analyses to comprehensively examine teacher mobility, professional commitment, and retention factors in Region I. Descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage, were used to profile respondents and describe mobility patterns, while weighted mean, composite mean, and ranking were applied to assess mobility reasons, levels of professional commitment, push–pull factors, and perceived effectiveness of retention strategies across key policy areas. Inferential analysis using the Pearson Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient determined the significance, strength, and direction of relationships among mobility patterns, professional commitment, and influencing factors at a 0.05 level of significance, supplemented by cross-tabulation and comparative analysis to explore variable interactions. Qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis, involving coding and categorization of responses into themes that explained and enriched quantitative findings. Finally, results from both approaches were integrated to generate a data-driven and contextually grounded Regional Teacher Retention Policy Framework.

Research Hypotheses and Validation

The study tested three null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance to examine the relationships among teacher mobility, professional commitment, and push–pull factors among public secondary school teachers in Region I: (Ho1) no significant relationship between mobility patterns and professional commitment, (Ho2) no significant relationship between mobility patterns and push–pull factors, and (Ho3) no significant relationship between professional

commitment and push–pull factors. These hypotheses were validated using the Pearson Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient to determine the strength, direction, and significance of relationships, supported by descriptive and comparative analyses. The results of these tests provided empirical evidence for accepting or rejecting the hypotheses and informed the development of the Regional Teacher Retention Policy Framework.

Study Limitations and ethical considerations

The study was limited to currently employed public secondary school teachers in Region I, excluding those who had resigned or were working abroad, and was conducted within a three-month data collection period, restricting the ability to capture long-term mobility trends. The use of stratified convenience sampling and self-reported survey data may also introduce response and generalizability limitations. Despite these constraints, strict ethical standards were observed throughout the research process, including securing approval from the Department of Education, obtaining informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation, and maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of respondents. All data were used solely for academic purposes, and participants were given the flexibility to respond without coercion, ensuring integrity and ethical compliance in the conduct of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered in the study. The findings are organized according to the statement of the problem and are discussed in relation to relevant literature, studies, and theoretical perspectives to provide a comprehensive understanding of teacher mobility, professional commitment, push–pull factors, and retention among public secondary school teachers in Region I.

SOP 1. What is the profile of public secondary teachers in Region I, in terms of:

- a. *age;*
- b. *gender;*
- c. *marital status;*
- d. *highest educational attainment;*
- e. *bachelor's degree;*
- f. *position;*
- g. *type of school;*
- h. *division;*
- i. *length of teaching experience;*
- j. *monthly net salary range; and*
- k. *number of relevant seminars or trainings attended.*

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents
n= 200

Variables	Categories	Frequencies	Percentage
Age	20 - 30	51	25.50%
	31 - 40	79	39.50%
	41 - 50	47	23.50%
	51 - 60	22	11.00%
	60 and above	1	0.50%
Gender	Female	133	66.50%

	Male	65	32.50%
	Prefer not to say	2	1.00%
Marital Status	Married	118	59.00%
	Single	76	38.00%
	Widowed	4	2.00%
	Separated	2	1.00%
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	27	13.50%
	With Master's Unit	63	31.50%
	Master's Degree	69	34.50%
	With Doctoral Units	22	11.00%
	Doctoral Degree	19	9.50%
Bachelor's Degree/Specialization	BSEd - English	43	21.50%
	BSEd - Filipino	17	8.50%
	BSEd - Social Studies	30	15.00%
	BSEd - TLE	5	2.50%
	BSEd - MAPEH	7	3.50%
	BSEd - Math	14	7.00%
	BSEd - Science	42	21.00%
	Bachelor of Physical Education	1	2.50%
	BS Business Administration	5	2.50%
	BS Accountancy	4	2.00%
	Values Education/AB		
	Philosophy	7	3.50%
	BA Communication	6	3.00%
	BS Psychology	3	1.50%
	BTVTED/BTTE	8	4.00%
	ICT	7	3.50%
	BEED General Education	1	0.50%
Position	Teacher I	39	19.50%
	Teacher II	28	14.00%
	Teacher III	70	35.00%
	Teacher IV	9	4.50%
	Teacher V	12	6.00%
	Teacher VI	21	10.50%
	Teacher VII	8	4.00%
	Master Teacher I	2	1.00%
	Master Teacher III	4	2.00%
	Head Teacher III	4	2.00%
	Others	3	1.50%
Type of School	Junior High School	95	47.50%
	Senior High School	50	25.00%
	Integrated School	55	27.50%
Division	Pangasinan I	40	20.00%
	Pangasinan II	40	20.00%
	La Union	40	20.00%
	Ilocos Norte	40	20.00%
	Ilocos Sur	40	20.00%
Teaching Experience	Less than 5 years	41	20.50%
	5-9 years	83	41.50%
	10-14 years	39	19.50%
	15-19 years	14	7.00%
	20 years and above	23	11.50%
Salary			
	Above ₱50,000	11	5.50%

	₱40,001–₱50,000	17	8.50%
	₱30,001–₱40,000	124	62.00%
	Below 30,000	48	24.00%
Trainings and Seminars	1-3	49	24.50%
	4-6	44	22.00%
	7-10	26	13.00%
	More than 10	73	36.50%
	None	8	4.00%

The findings indicate that public secondary school teachers in Region I are predominantly early- to mid-career (ages 31–40; 5–9 years of experience), female, and largely married, with most holding or pursuing graduate degrees and concentrated in mid-level positions (Teacher I–III). They are primarily assigned in Junior High Schools, evenly distributed across divisions, and earn within the ₱30,001–₱40,000 range, while demonstrating strong engagement in professional development through frequent training participation. These patterns suggest a developing yet professionally active workforce whose commitment and mobility are shaped by career-stage needs, financial considerations, and workplace conditions (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2025; Wang et al., 2021). Consistent with the literature, factors such as career progression, compensation, workload, and personal circumstances influence retention and mobility decisions, highlighting the importance of context-sensitive and career-stage-responsive strategies rather than one-size-fits-all approaches (See & Morris, 2020; Ma et al., 2025; Magonsik & Ngag, 2025).

SOP 2. What are the Teacher Mobility Patterns in terms of:

- teaching movement history;*
- current mobility intentions; and*
- intended mobility reasons.*

Table 2
Teaching Movement History
n= 200

Questions	Categories	Frequencies	Percentage
Have you ever transferred to another school?	Yes	50	25.00%
	No	150	75.00%
Number of Transfer	1	44	22.00%
	2	3	1.50%
	3+	3	1.50%
	Main Reasons for Transfer	Frequencies	Rank
	Personal (family, location, health)	34	1
	Better opportunities elsewhere	11	2
	Career Advancement	9	3
	Workload issues	3	4
	School climate or leadership issues	2	5
	Localization	1	6

Findings reveal that while actual teacher mobility is relatively low—only 25% reported prior transfers, mostly single occurrences driven primarily by personal reasons—the workforce exhibits conditional mobility characterized by underlying intentions and influencing factors.

Table 3
Current Mobility Intentions
n= 200

Questions	Categories	Frequencies	Percentage
Do you plan to transfer to another school/division in the next 1–2 years?	Unsure	29	14.50%
	No	151	75.50%
	Yes	20	10.00%
Do you plan to leave DepEd for work outside the Philippines?	Unsure	59	29.50%
	No	115	57.50%
	Yes	26	13.00%

Most respondents expressed no immediate plans to transfer or leave the Department of Education, though notable proportions remain uncertain or consider opportunities abroad, indicating latent mobility tendencies.

Table 4
Intended Mobility Reasons
n= 200

Reasons	1	2	3	4	WM	DM
Higher Salary	25 12.50%	31 15.50%	44 22.00%	100 50.00%	3.10	Strong
Heavy Workload	37 18.50%	46 23.00%	66 33.00%	51 25.50%	2.66	Strong
Workplace stress/burnout	40 20.00%	53 26.50%	60 30.00%	47 23.50%	2.57	Strong
Leadership/Supervision issues	60 30.00%	69 34.50%	36 18.00%	35 17.50%	2.23	Slightly
School Climate	64 32.00%	69 34.50%	40 20.00%	27 13.50%	2.15	Slightly
Search for Professional growth	40 20.00%	45 22.50%	61 30.50%	54 27.00%	2.65	Strong
Family or personal reasons	54 27.00%	43 21.50%	48 24.00%	55 27.50%	2.52	Strong
Desire to migrate	67 33.50%	56 28.00%	37 18.50%	40 20.00%	2.25	Slightly
Others	148 74.00%	28 14.00%	10 5.00%	8 4.00%	1.33	Not a reason

Intended mobility reasons were strongly associated with both pull factors (higher salary, professional growth) and push factors (workload, stress), consistent with the push–pull framework (Yeh, 2025; Tarraya, 2023; Cahilog, 2023). Qualitative responses further highlighted individualized drivers such as family needs, health, workplace relationships, and aspirations for migration, reinforcing that mobility decisions are multidimensional and context-specific (Vagi & Pivovarova, 2017; See & Morris, 2020). Overall, the results suggest a generally stable but potentially mobile workforce, where decisions to stay or leave are shaped by a dynamic interplay of personal, professional, and systemic factors.

SOP 3. What is the level of professional commitment of public secondary school teachers in Region I in terms of:

- a. affective commitment, as reflected by:
 - 3.a.1. emotional attachment to the school;
 - 3.a.2. sense of belonging;

- b. continuance commitment, as reflected by:
 - 3.b.1. perceived cost of leaving;
 - 3.b.2. availability of alternative employment;
- c. normative commitment, as reflected by:
 - 3.c.1. sense of obligation to remain;
 - 3.c.2. moral responsibility toward the profession.

Table 5

Level of professional commitment of public secondary school teachers in Region I

n = 200

AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT						
A. Emotional Attachment to the School	1	2	3	4	WM	DM
I feel emotionally attached to my school.	5 2.50%	16 8.00%	114 57.00%	65 32.50%	3.20	Agree
Teaching in my current school is personally meaningful to me.	5 2.50%	10 5.00%	103 51.50%	82 41.00%	3.31	Strongly Agree
I feel happy when I think about continuing my career in this school	8 4.00%	14 7.00%	114 57.00%	64 32.00%	3.17	Agree
	3.23					Agree
B. Sense of Belonging						
I feel a strong sense of belonging in my school community.	3 1.50%	8 4.00%	114 57.00%	75 37.50%	3.31	Strongly Agree
I am proud to say that I am a public school teacher in this school.	8 4.00%	4 2.00%	78 39.00%	110 55.00%	3.45	Strongly Agree
I feel that my school feels like a family to me.	6 3.00%	11 5.50%	102 51.00%	81 40.50%	3.29	Strongly Agree
	3.35					Strongly Agree
CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT						
A. Perceived Cost of Leaving	1	2	3	4	WM	
Leaving my teaching position would require major personal sacrifices.	11 5.50%	13 6.50%	92 46.00%	84 42.00%	3.25	Agree
I feel I have more to lose than gain if I leave public school teaching.	12 6.00%	49 24.50%	101 50.50%	38 19.00%	2.83	Agree
Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my job.	13 6.50%	53 26.50%	100 50.00%	34 17.00%	2.78	Agree
	2.95					Agree
B. Availability of Alternative Employment	1	2	3	4	WM	
I believe I have limited job alternatives outside public school teaching.	18 9.00%	70 35.00%	90 45.00%	22 11.00%	2.58	Agree
It would be difficult for me to find a job comparable to this one.	23 11.50%	58 29.00%	95 47.50%	24 12.00%	2.60	Agree
Few employment opportunities outside teaching would match my current benefits and stability.	18 9.00%	66 33.00%	91 45.50%	25 12.50%	2.62	Agree

	2.60					Agree
NORMATIVE COMMITMENT						
A. Sense of Obligation to Remain	1	2	3	4	WM	
I feel a strong obligation to continue working in my school.	7 3.50%	19 9.50%	132 66.00%	42 21.00%	3.05	Agree
I believe it is my duty to remain in the teaching profession.	6 3.00%	22 11.00%	122 61.00%	50 25.00%	3.08	Agree
I feel that I ought to remain in my current teaching position.	8 4.00%	35 17.50%	115 57.50%	42 21.00%	2.96	Agree
	3.03					Agree
B. Moral Responsibility toward the Profession	1	2	3	4	WM	
I feel a moral responsibility to contribute to Philippine education.	5 2.50%	9 4.50%	115 57.50%	71 35.50%	3.26	Strongly Agree
I would feel guilty if I left the teaching profession at this time.	42 21.00%	113 56.50%	38 19.00%	7 3.50%	2.05	Disagree
Leaving the profession now would feel morally wrong to me.	8 4.00%	49 24.50%	106 53.00%	37 18.50%	2.86	Agree
	2.72					Agree
OVERALL MEAN	2.98					Agree

Findings reveal that public secondary school teachers in Region I demonstrate a generally high level of professional commitment (AWM = 2.98), with affective commitment emerging as the strongest dimension (AWM = 3.29), followed by normative (AWM = 2.88) and continuance commitment (AWM = 2.77). Teachers exhibit strong emotional attachment, sense of belonging, and pride in their schools, indicating that commitment is largely driven by intrinsic motivation and positive organizational experiences, consistent with the Three-Component Model of Meyer and Allen and supported by studies emphasizing the role of engagement and school climate (Wang et al., 2021; Riveros et al., 2023; Collie et al., 2020). While teachers also recognize the practical costs of leaving and demonstrate a sense of professional obligation, these factors play secondary roles compared to emotional attachment. This pattern suggests that retention is primarily sustained by meaningful work experiences and supportive environments, reinforcing literature that highlights affective commitment as the strongest predictor of teacher retention (See & Morris, 2020).

SOP 4. What is the extent of influence of the push and pull factors on the teacher mobility decisions among public secondary school teachers?

Table 6
Extent of influence of the push and pull factors on the teacher mobility decisions among public secondary school teachers in Region I

n= 200

Push Factors	1	2	3	4	WM	DM
Heavy teaching and administrative workload	13 6.50%	44 22.00%	66 33.00%	77 38.50%	3.04	Strong Factor
Low salary compared to responsibilities	7 3.50%	34 17.00%	63 31.50%	96 48.00%	3.24	Strong Factor
Burnout and exhaustion	6 3.00%	38 19.00%	66 33.00%	90 45.00%	3.20	Strong Factor
School climate issues (conflicts, politics)	22 11.00%	62 31.00%	58 29.00%	58 29.00%	2.76	Strong Factor

Lack of support from leadership/administration	26 13.00%	55 27.50%	71 35.50%	48 24.00%	2.71	Strong Factor
Limited career advancement opportunities	11 5.50%	68 34.00%	71 35.50%	50 25.00%	2.80	Strong Factor
Insufficient instructional resources	6 3.00%	53 26.50%	78 39.00%	63 31.50%	2.99	Strong Factor
Health and safety concerns	26 13.00%	52 26.00%	67 33.50%	55 27.50%	2.76	Strong Factor
	2.94					Strong Factor
Pull Factors	1	2	3	4	WM	DM
Higher pay abroad	2 1.00%	7 3.50%	47 23.50%	144 72.00%	3.67	Very Strong Factor
More manageable workload	4 2.00%	8 4.00%	56 28.00%	132 66.00%	3.58	Very Strong Factor
Better living conditions	1 0.50%	10 5.00%	60 30.00%	129 64.50%	3.59	Very Strong Factor
Opportunities for professional growth	5 2.50%	19 9.50%	51 25.50%	125 62.50%	3.48	Very Strong Factor
Stronger social and financial benefits	3 1.50%	7 3.50%	48 24.00%	142 71.00%	3.65	Very Strong Factor
Family migration opportunities	7 3.50%	19 9.50%	62 31.00%	112 56.00%	3.40	Very Strong Factor
Desire for international experience	7 3.50%	21 10.50%	54 27.00%	118 59.00%	3.42	Very Strong Factor
					3.46	Very Strong Factor

Results indicate that both push and pull factors significantly influence teacher mobility decisions, with push factors rated as strong (AWM = 2.94) and pull factors as very strong (AWM = 3.46), demonstrating that external opportunities exert a greater overall influence. Key push factors include low salary, burnout, and heavy workload, aligning with studies identifying working conditions and compensation as major sources of dissatisfaction (Nguyen et al., 2020; Tarraya, 2023; Yeh, 2025). In contrast, pull factors such as higher pay abroad, better benefits, improved living conditions, and professional growth opportunities were rated highest, reflecting the strong attraction of global employment prospects (Cahilog, 2023; UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2024). These findings support Push–Pull Theory, emphasizing that mobility decisions arise from the interaction of unfavorable internal conditions and attractive external opportunities. Qualitative responses highlight heavy workload, administrative burden, limited resources, and organizational pressures as primary push factors influencing mobility decisions. Conversely, higher salary, better working conditions, career advancement opportunities, and improved work–life balance were cited as strong pull factors, reinforcing that mobility is shaped by both internal challenges and external opportunities.

SOP 5. What is the perceived level of effectiveness of retention strategies among public secondary school teachers in Region I, in terms of:

- a. *administrative workload reduction;*
- b. *competitive compensation and benefits;*
- c. *school climate and collegial relationships;*
- d. *mental health and wellness support;*
- e. *career advancement and promotion pathways;*
- f. *professional development and training opportunities;*
- g. *administrative and leadership support;*
- h. *fair teacher deployment and transfer policies;*
- i. *incentives for teachers in hard-to-staff areas; and*
- j. *recognition and rewards for performance and long-term service.*

Table 7
Summary of the Level of Effectiveness of Retention Strategies
by Policy Area

Compensation	WM	DM
Provision of competitive compensation and benefits	3.58	Very Effective
Incentives for teachers assigned to hard-to-staff areas	3.58	Very Effective
Recognition and rewards for performance and long-term service	3.57	Very Effective
Composite Mean	3.58	Very Effective
Career Development		
Availability of clear career advancement and promotion pathways	3.59	Very Effective
Access to scholarships and professional development opportunities	3.54	Very Effective
Composite Mean	3.57	Very Effective
Teacher Welfare		
Improvement of school climate and collegial relationships	3.51	Very Effective
Strengthening of mental health and wellness programs	3.6	Very Effective
Composite Mean	3.56	Very Effective
Workload Management		
Reduction of administrative workload	3.47	Very Effective
Strong administrative and leadership support	3.52	Very Effective
Fair and transparent teacher deployment and transfer policies	3.56	Very Effective
Composite Mean	3.52	Very Effective
AWM	3.56	Very Effective

Findings indicate that teachers perceive retention strategies as highly effective overall (AWM = 3.57), with all ten strategies rated “Very Effective,” reflecting strong consensus on the need for comprehensive and multi-dimensional interventions. Among these, mental health and wellness support (WM = 3.60), career advancement pathways (WM = 3.59), and competitive compensation and benefits (WM = 3.58) ranked highest, highlighting the importance of well-being, professional growth, and financial stability in sustaining retention (Kurrle & Warwas, 2025; OECD, 2024; Cahilog, 2023). Grouped by policy areas, Compensation (WM = 3.58), Career Development (WM = 3.57), Teacher Welfare (WM = 3.56), and Workload Management (WM = 3.52) were all rated very effective, indicating that retention is shaped by the interaction of financial, professional, psychological, and structural factors rather than a single dimension. Qualitative responses emphasized that positive school climate, supportive leadership, and meaningful student engagement are key factors that encourage them to stay in the profession. Additionally, teachers highlighted the need for improved compensation, reduced workload, access to resources, and career development opportunities as essential policy supports for strengthening retention. These findings reinforce the view that holistic and integrated strategies—addressing workload, leadership, recognition, and development—are essential for sustaining teacher commitment and reducing mobility, consistent with literature emphasizing systemic approaches to retention (OECD, 2024; See & Morris, 2020).

SOP 6. Is there a significant relationship between the Teacher Mobility Patterns and the level of professional commitment of public secondary school teachers in Region I?

Table 8
Significant Relationship Between the Teacher Mobility Patterns and the Level of Professional Commitment of Public Secondary School Teachers in Region I

n= 200		
The Level of Professional Commitment of Public Secondary School Teachers in Region I		
The Teacher Mobility Patterns	ρ	-0.023
	Sig.	0.751

Results reveal that there is no significant relationship between teacher mobility patterns and professional commitment ($\rho = -0.023$, $p = 0.751$), indicating that mobility decisions operate independently of teachers’ levels of commitment. Despite generally high commitment levels, teachers may still consider mobility regardless of their emotional attachment, sense of obligation, or perceived costs of leaving. This finding contrasts with studies suggesting that commitment predicts retention, and instead supports perspectives that mobility is shaped by broader contextual and structural factors rather than internal attitudes alone (Nguyen et al., 2020; Palma-Vásquez et al., 2022). In line with Push–Pull Theory, the results suggest that strong external pull factors—such as better compensation, improved living conditions, and global opportunities—can outweigh internal commitment. Overall, the findings imply that fostering professional commitment alone is insufficient; effective retention requires addressing both internal motivations and external conditions influencing teachers’ career decisions (OECD, 2024; UNESCO, 2023).

SOP 7. Is there a significant relationship between the Teacher Mobility Patterns and extent of influence of push and pull factors on the teacher mobility decisions among public secondary school teachers?

Table 9
Significant Relationship Between the Teacher Mobility Patterns and Extent of Influence of Push and Pull Factors on the Teacher Mobility Decisions among Public Secondary School Teachers in Region I

n= 200

		Push Factors	Pull Factors
The Teacher Mobility Patterns	P	0.598***	0.385***
	Sig.	0.001	0.001

Note: *** $p \leq 0.001$ (highly significant)

The level of significance for all inferential statistical tests in this study was set at 0.05.

Additional annotations (e.g., **, ***) are used to indicate lower p-value thresholds for reference; however, all decisions regarding statistical significance were based on the 0.05 level.

Results show that teacher mobility patterns have a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship with push factors ($\rho = 0.598$, $p = 0.001$) and a weak to moderate significant relationship with pull factors ($\rho = 0.385$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that both sets of factors meaningfully influence mobility decisions, with push factors exerting a stronger effect. This suggests that internal workplace conditions—such as workload, burnout, and limited career advancement—serve as the primary drivers of mobility, while external opportunities act as reinforcing influences. These findings strongly support Push–Pull Theory, highlighting that mobility is initiated by dissatisfaction within the system and further encouraged by attractive alternatives elsewhere (Yeh, 2025; Tarraya, 2023; Cahilog, 2023). Overall, the results emphasize that addressing internal organizational issues is critical, as these factors play a more decisive role in shaping mobility patterns than external opportunities alone.

SOP 8. Is there a significant relationship between the level of professional commitment and the extent of influence of push and pull factors on the teacher mobility decisions among public secondary school teachers?

Table 10
Significant Relationship Between the Level of Professional Commitment and the Extent of Influence of Push and Pull Factors on the Teacher Mobility Decisions among Public Secondary School Teachers in Region I

n= 200

		Push Factors	Pull Factors
The Level of Professional Commitment	P	0.12	0.191**
	Sig.	0.092	0.007

Note: ** $p \leq 0.01$ (significant)

The level of significance for all inferential statistical tests in this study was set at 0.05.

Additional annotations (e.g., **, ***) are used to indicate lower p-value thresholds for

reference; however, all decisions regarding statistical significance were based on the 0.05 level.

Findings reveal that professional commitment has no significant relationship with push factors ($\rho = 0.12$, $p = 0.092$), but shows a weak yet statistically significant positive relationship with pull factors ($\rho = 0.191$, $p = 0.007$). This indicates that workplace challenges are experienced regardless of commitment level, while external opportunities can influence even highly committed teachers. The absence of a relationship with push factors aligns with the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, suggesting that dissatisfaction from workload, salary, and conditions operates independently of motivation (Tarraya, 2023; Oca, 2025). Meanwhile, the significant link with pull factors implies that committed teachers remain responsive to better opportunities, reflecting a rational evaluation of benefits consistent with commitment theory and supported by studies on teacher migration and career advancement (Cahilog, 2023; Yeh, 2025). Overall, the findings highlight that commitment alone does not insulate teachers from external influences, reinforcing the need for retention strategies that enhance both internal conditions and the overall attractiveness of staying in the profession.

SOP 9. Based on the results of the study, what Regional Retention Policy Framework may be proposed for public secondary teachers?

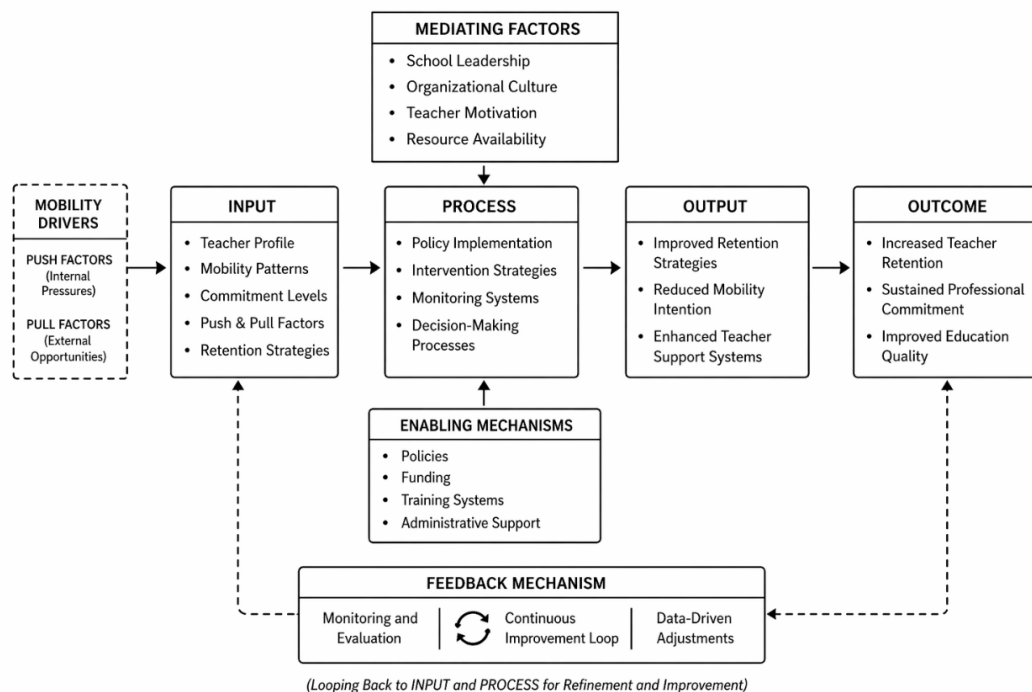


Fig. 1 Teacher Retention Policy Framework Structural Model

The proposed Regional Teacher Retention Policy Framework for Public Secondary Teachers in Region I presents a comprehensive, evidence-based system that integrates the study's key findings on professional commitment, mobility patterns, and the influence of push-pull factors. Grounded in established theories such as John P. Meyer and Natalie J. Allen's Three-Component Model, Everett Lee's Push-Pull Theory, and Frederick Herzberg's

Motivation–Hygiene Theory, the framework recognizes that teacher retention is not solely driven by intrinsic commitment but is significantly shaped by organizational conditions and external opportunities. Structured as an interconnected system of inputs, processes, mediating factors, enabling mechanisms, outputs, and outcomes, it emphasizes targeted policy implementation in key areas such as compensation, workload management, career development, and teacher well-being. The inclusion of a continuous feedback mechanism ensures adaptability through data-driven monitoring and evaluation. Overall, the framework highlights that sustainable teacher retention requires a balanced approach that strengthens internal support systems while enhancing the overall attractiveness and competitiveness of the teaching profession, ultimately contributing to long-term workforce stability and improved educational quality in the region.

SUMMARY

The findings indicate that public secondary school teachers in Region I comprise a stable, moderately experienced, and professionally committed workforce, primarily driven by strong affective attachment to teaching. However, while actual mobility remains low, there exists a notable level of latent mobility shaped by personal, professional, and economic considerations. Teacher mobility is influenced more by external pull factors—such as better compensation, working conditions, and career opportunities—than by internal push factors like workload and administrative demands. Importantly, professional commitment does not significantly predict mobility, as even highly committed teachers remain responsive to external opportunities. Although existing retention strategies are perceived as effective, their impact is limited by inconsistent implementation and inability to fully counterbalance external incentives. Overall, the results highlight that teacher retention is a complex, context-dependent issue requiring a comprehensive and systematic policy framework that addresses both internal working conditions and external competitiveness.

CONCLUSIONS

- The study concluded that teacher retention in Region I cannot rely on professional commitment alone. While teachers demonstrate strong emotional attachment to the profession, their decisions to stay or leave are ultimately shaped by a dynamic interaction of workplace conditions and external opportunities. Mobility remains low in practice but persists as an underlying possibility, driven more by attractive alternatives, such as better compensation, career growth, and improved working conditions, than by dissatisfaction alone. This means that even committed teachers are not insulated from leaving. Therefore, sustainable retention requires a comprehensive, system-level approach that not only strengthens intrinsic motivation but also improves organizational support, reduces workload pressures, enhances career pathways, and increases the overall competitiveness of the teaching profession to effectively counter external pull factors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based from the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

The study recommends adopting a comprehensive, proactive, and system-level approach to teacher retention in Region I that goes beyond strengthening professional commitment alone. Education authorities and school leaders should prioritize improving compensation, career

development pathways, workload management, and teacher well-being, while also enhancing leadership support and school climate. Monitoring systems must be established to track both actual mobility and underlying intentions, allowing early intervention. Retention strategies should address both push factors (e.g., workload, resources, administrative demands) and pull factors (e.g., external opportunities, higher salaries) by making the teaching profession more competitive and supportive. Ultimately, the adoption of an integrated retention policy framework—supported by continuous evaluation and responsive implementation—is essential to sustain teacher engagement, reduce mobility risks, and ensure long-term workforce stability.

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