

# The Mediating Effect of Leadership Behaviors of School Heads on the Relationship between Interpersonal Support and Professional Commitment of Teachers

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**ABSTRACT:** This study determined the mediating effect of leadership behaviors of school heads on the relationship between interpersonal support and professional commitment of teachers in public elementary schools of Island Garden City of Samal. The quantitative research design was utilized bearing a sample of 300 teachers of elementary teachers of Island Garden City of Samal. Three set of adapted survey questionnaires were used in gathering the data from the target respondents. These instruments were subjected for content validity and reliability test. The analysis data was done using the mean, pearson r correlation coefficient and path analysis. The results revealed that the level of interpersonal support and professional commitment of teachers, and the level of leadership behaviors of school heads were high. There was significance on the relationship between interpersonal support and professional commitment of teachers, interpersonal support and leadership behaviors of school heads, and leadership behaviors of school heads and professional commitment of teachers. Furthermore, a significant no mediation of leadership behaviors of school heads on the relationship between interpersonal support and professional commitment of teachers was proven in the present study.

**KEYWORDS:** interpersonal support, leadership behaviors of school heads, professional commitment of teachers, mediation, Philippines

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## I. INTRODUCTION

A supportive and collaborative work environment can positively impact teachers, enhancing their job satisfaction and commitment to the profession. However, when teachers face various challenges, it surely impacts their professional commitment making it a problematic issue. When teachers are bombarded with excessive workload, when teachers feel inadequate financial remuneration, or feel undervalued or unappreciated, and some other demotivating things, this will definitely lead to problems on teachers' commitment which may lead to poor performance and poor delivery of instruction (Sanchez, 2022; Tindowen, Bautista, Echalar & Parallag, 2020). Hence, administrative leaders are expected to lend a helpful hand and encouragement to his/her subordinate teachers. However, there are instances when leaders fail to act like one which leads to the problem on the professional commitment of the subordinating teachers. In recent years, this has become a prevalent problem as leaders' behaviors are not perceived by teachers as positive. Reasons like workload stress, administrative support and resource constraints are few of what were mentioned in some studies (Imron, Wiyono, Hadi, Gunawan, Abbas, Saputra & Perdana, 2020; Tindowen, Bautista, Echalar & Parallag, 2020). Further, there are also instances when leaders are too taut with their policies leading their teachers to question interpersonal support from their heads. Thus, making teachers demotivated in performing at their best (Egan, Zigarmi And Richardson, 2019).

In this time, teachers' commitment is best measured as it is considered important especially during the sudden shift of learning modalities. Hence, conducting studies relating to teachers' commitment is necessary most importantly when teachers are seen to be too passive in innovating. In this lense, the study Akram (2019) pointed out that schools must make effort to retain best teachers, especially that no school can be better than the quality of its teachers. As emphasized in the study of Falcone (2018) if employees understand their objectives and the criteria used for evaluation, they are in a good position to appraise their own performance. Many people know what they do well on the job and what they need to improve. If they have the opportunity, they will criticize their own performance objectively and take action to improve it. With this, it is imperative that school leaders must possess behaviors needed in handling faculty members in the most favorable atmosphere.

## II. METHOD

The respondents of this study were the public elementary school teachers of Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del

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Norte, Philippines with 588 teachers. This study used the Raosoft, and the recommended sample size is 233. the researcher added 67 teachers to complete the 300 respondents, which is the recommended respondents of the study. The stratified-random sampling technique will be employed in selecting the respondents. However, the inclusion criterion includes only the kindergarten to grade six teachers of public elementary schools of Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del Norte, Philippines. Other teachers who do not meet the criteria, such as volunteer teachers and pre-service teachers, shall not be a part of this study. The respondents of the conduct of the study were oriented before their rights and privileges to voluntarily withdraw or refuse to participate in the study if they wanted to do so and they shall not be penalized.

This study used a survey questionnaire to gather data. The questionnaire is a structured type of questionnaire, and it is divided into three (3) scales, which are: Interpersonal Support (Tangible Support, Belonging Support, Self-esteem Support, Appraisal Support); Professional Commitment (Affective Professional Commitment, Continuance Professional Commitment, and Normative Professional Commitment); and Leadership Behavior. The questionnaire is also validated by the panelists before the survey conducted. In this survey, the respondents will put a check in the box, which could indicate their response in each statement. The questionnaire for the interpersonal support is adopted from Cohen and Hoberman (1983). This aims to examine the interpersonal support of teachers in terms of tangible, belonging, self-esteem, and appraisal. The interpersonal support has the following interpretation first, this means that the items relating to interpersonal support are manifested at all times has range of 4.20-5.00. Another item relating to interpersonal support are manifested oftentimes true has range of 3.40-4.19. Then, items relating to interpersonal support are not manifested at all times has range of 2.60-3.39. Lastly, items relating to interpersonal support are observed oftentimes not true has range of 1.80-2.59. For the questionnaire on the level of Professional Commitment, it was adopted from Bagraim (2003) This instrument aims to measure the professional commitment of the teachers in terms of affective, continuance, and normative. The Professional Commitment has the following interpretations about items relating to Professional commitment are manifested at all times has a range of 4.20-5.00. The items relating to Professional commitment are sometimes manifested with a range of 3.40-4.19 the items relating to Professional commitment are manifested oftentimes with a range of 2.60-3.39 the items relating to Professional commitment are manifested occasionally has a range of 1.80-2.59, the items relating to Professional commitment are seldom manifested with range of 2.60 – 3.39, the items relating to Professional commitment are oftentimes not manifested with a range of 1.80-2.59 and the items relating to Professional commitment are not manifested at all times has a range of 1.00-1.79. Lastly, the instrument on leadership Behavior is adopted from Jones (2016). This aims to determine the leadership behavior of the school heads. The Leadership Behavior with the items relating to leadership behavior are evident at all times has a range of 4.21 – 5.00, the items relating to leadership behavior are evident oftentimes with a range of 3.41 – 4.20, the items relating to leadership behavior are evident occasionally with a range of 2.61 – 3.40, the items relating to leadership behavior are evident seldomly with a range of 1.81 – 2.60, and the items relating to leadership behavior are not evident at all times has a range of 1.00 – 1.80. The instruments went through the process of expert validation and was subjected to minimal modification so as to fit with the locale and the context of the respondents. A Pilot testing was also conducted which resulted to a Cronbach alpha of 0.832 indicating an acceptable level of reliability.

The researcher used the descriptive-correlation research design. According to Wagner (2014), this design involves collecting data in order to determine whether the relationship exists. The relationship investigated is between Professional Commitment of Teachers and Leadership Behaviors of School Heads. Descriptive research describes the attitudes and behaviors observed during the investigation, while correlational research involves identifying statistical relationships between two variables (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009). This design is considered to be the fit design for this study to identify the strength and nature of association between two or more variables (Creswell, 2003). In this the study, the levels of Interpersonal Support of teachers and the level of Professional Commitment of teachers and the mediating effect of Leadership behavior to these variables were measured. Thus, a correlational design is deemed necessary to come up with the appropriate method to use. The following steps were undertaken in the collection of data for the study. First was the Asking of permission to conduct the study. Letters were sent to the respective school heads where the respondents are in. After the approval of the conduct was sought, the researcher then edited the instruments and did the pilot testing. The researcher personally went to the schools to administer the survey and it took 5 days before it was completed. As the researcher held the accomplished instruments, data tabulation then followed and these were sent to the statistician for data analysis and treatment. This study used the following statistical tools the Mean to determine the average score of the two variables and Pearson r Correlation Coefficient were used to determine the relationship between the Professional Commitment of Teachers and Interpersonal Support of teachers. As part of the implementation of honesty in all aspect of the study with accountability, professional courtesy, and fairness in working with others. The study went through ethical review to ensure that this study is conducted in a responsible and ethically accountable way.

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## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Interpersonal Support of Teachers

Presented in Table 1 the level of Interpersonal Support of Teachers which resulted to an overall mean of 3.41 with a corresponding overall Standard Deviation of 0.52 which is interpreted as high. This means that the Interpersonal Support of Teachers is high and that at some point teachers support each other but not on a very high extent. It can be observed in the indicators that Self-Esteem Support only garnered a mean of 3.30 with an SD of 0.62 interpreted as moderate. The specifics of this indicator also resulted to a moderate result in items relating to the teacher's capacity in helping others solve their problems which also holds true with their perception that people do not have much confidence in another teacher which also resulted in a moderate rating.

**Table 1. Level of Interpersonal Support of Teachers**

Indicator	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Tangible Support	0.58	3.41	High
Belonging Support	0.60	3.44	High
Self-esteem Support	0.62	3.30	Moderate
Appraisal Support	0.60	3.48	High
Overall	0.52	3.41	High

The level of Interpersonal Support among teachers is high. This result corroborates with the practical implications stipulated in the study of Ford, Olsen, Khojasteh, Ware, and Urick (2019) that school leaders have a significant mechanism through which to affect the attitudes and emotions of teachers which precede turnover behavior. Further they emphasized that whereas the interpersonal factor (teacher-principal contacts) primarily fosters organizational commitment among teachers, the intrapersonal dimension predominantly functions through burnout. At the organizational level, creating a supportive, trusting workplace where teachers can advance their knowledge and abilities has been linked to organizational commitment and collective teacher burnout, but only to the extent that these initiatives help to increase collective teacher efficacy (Ford et al.,2019). Additionally, the result of this study is in support with the study results of Sulistiasih and Widodo (2022) which pointed out that Interpersonal support affects organizational commitment. This happens when teachers manifest openness, empathy, supportiveness, positivity and equality and that they can make other teachers easy to deal with.

### Professional Commitment of Teachers

Presented in Table 2 the level of Professional Commitment of Teachers with an overall SD of 0.44 and an overall mean of 3.64 which is interpreted as high. Among the indicators, it can be highlighted that the Affective commitment gained the lowest mean of 3.29 interpreted as moderate while Continuance and Normative garnered a mean of 3.74 and 3.90 interpreted as high. The specifics of this variable show a poor perception among teachers especially in the items relating to how they feel in being a teacher.

**Table 2. Level of Professional Commitment of Teachers**

Indicator	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Affective	0.55	3.29	Moderate
Continuance	0.60	3.74	High
Normative	0.53	3.90	High
Overall	0.44	3.64	High

The level of Professional Commitment of teachers is high which means that the feeling of dedication among the individuals of a group towards their profession is considerably overwhelming as perceived by the teachers. This result supports the viewpoints of Cox (2019) who stated in his study that committed teachers understand that teaching is a career that changes standards and regulations quite regularly and are committed to keeping up with these ever-changing methods. Further, they are committed to challenging themselves and take every opportunity to continue learning, all for the success of their students. Moreover, the results of this study also serve as an additional emphasis to the concept of Sashi (2019) and Awwad (2020) on professional commitment as a crucial part among teachers since teachers with high commitment are the ones needed by the society in making education vibrant and production oriented. The teachers who possess professional commitment and selfless devotion are key players in helping pupils, develop a positive attitude towards learning (Cox, 2019; Awwad, 2020).

### Leadership Behaviors of School Heads

Presented in table 3 the level of Leadership Behavior of School Heads which resulted in an SD of 0.43 and an overall

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mean of 4.05 interpreted as high. It can be gleaned from this table that the item about failing to take the necessary action resulted as the lowest mean of 2.93 interpreted as moderate. With the spread of the results in this variable, the result reveals a high leadership behavior among school heads which means that teachers perceive this with all positive considerations. Further, the results indicate that school heads exhibit a high level of leadership behavior. This means that, on average, school heads are performing well in their leadership roles according to the data collected.

**Table 3. Level of Leadership Behaviors of School Heads**

Item	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Does personal favors for group members.	0.76	4.20	Very High
Makes their attitudes clear to the group.	0.71	4.11	High
Does little things to make it pleasant to be a group member.	0.87	3.99	High
Tries out his/her new ideas with the group.	0.70	4.35	Very High
Acts as the real leader of the group.	0.74	4.27	Very High
Easy to understand.	0.72	4.23	Very High
Rules with an iron hand.	1.01	3.68	High
Finds time to listen to group members.	0.70	4.35	Very High
Criticizes poor work.	1.23	3.30	Moderate
Gives advance notice of changes.	0.72	4.12	High
Speaks in a manner not to be questioned.	0.90	3.88	High
Keeps to himself.	0.78	3.67	High
Looks out for the personal welfare of individual group members.	0.78	4.28	Very High
Assigns group members to particular tasks.	0.64	4.38	Very High
Is spokesman of the group.	0.68	4.23	Very High
Schedules the work to be done.	0.79	4.18	High
Maintains definite standards of performance.	0.69	4.08	High
Refuses to explain their actions.	1.08	3.34	Moderate
Keeps the group informed.	0.71	4.19	High
Acts without consulting the group.	1.12	3.11	Moderate
Backs up the members in their actions.	0.73	4.03	High
Emphasizes the meeting of deadlines.	0.77	4.17	High
Treats all group members as her/his equals.	0.73	4.21	Very High
Encourages the use of uniform procedures.	0.69	4.30	Very High
Gets what she/he asks for from his/her superiors.	0.64	3.95	High
Willing to make changes.	0.67	4.26	Very High
Makes sure that the group understands her/his part in the organization.	0.69	4.24	Very High
Friendly and approachable.	0.67	4.48	Very High
Asks the group members to follow standard rules and regulations.	0.67	4.43	Very High
Fails to take necessary action.	1.16	2.93	Moderate
Makes group members feel at ease when talking with them.	0.78	4.29	Very High
Let the group members know what is expected of them.	0.77	4.20	Very High
Speaks as the representative of the group.	0.71	4.20	Very High
Puts suggestions made by the group into action.	0.69	4.14	High
Sees to it that group members are working up to capacity.	0.65	4.24	Very High
Let other people take away her/his leadership role.	1.13	3.40	High
Gets her/his superiors to act for the group's welfare.	0.88	3.80	High
Gets group approval in important matters before going ahead.	0.71	4.16	High
Sees to it that the work of the group members is coordinated.	0.72	4.24	Very High
Keeps the group working together as a team.	0.75	4.41	Very High
Overall	0.43	4.05	High

The level of leadership behavior of school heads is high. This further means that teachers perceive this with all positive considerations. This result is similar to what was emphasized in the study result of Ahmet (2015) and Hallinger and Chen (2018) which state that leadership is about working with people to do new things in a world which is increasingly complex and fast changing. This result also confirms with the theory of "Great Man" Theories of Carlyle (1847) which mostly emphasizes that that the capacity for leadership is inherent – that great leaders are born, not made. These were observed based on the rating that the teachers gave towards the leadership behavior of their school heads as reflected in the results.

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### Significance on the Relationship between Interpersonal Support and Professional Commitment of Teachers

Presented in Table 4.1 the significant relation between Interpersonal Support and Professional Commitment with an overall computed R-value of 0.457 and P-value which is less than 0.05 interpreted to fall within the threshold of moderate positive correlation. It can further be surmised in the table that the indicators: Tangible Support got an R-value of 0.454 with a P-value of 0.000, Belonging Support got an R-value of 0.454 with a P-value of 0.000, Self-Esteem Support got an R-value of 0.372 with a P-value of 0.000, and Appraisal Support got an R-value of 0.416 with a P-value of 0.000 which means that they also have a positive correlation with Professional Commitment. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 4.1 Significance on the Relationship between Interpersonal Support and Professional Commitment of Teachers**

Interpersonal Support	Professional Commitment			Overall
	Affective	Continuance	Normative	
Tangible Support	.452**	.293**	.339**	.454**
	.000	.000	.000	.000
Belonging Support	.452**	.293**	.339**	.454**
	.000	.000	.000	.000
Self-esteem Support	.485**	.245**	.152**	.372**
	.000	.000	.008	.000
	.545**	.222**	.228**	.416**
Appraisal Support	.000	.000	.000	.000
Overall	.552**	.279**	.260**	.457**
	.000	.000	.000	.000

The significant influence of Interpersonal Support to Professional Commitment showed a positive correlation. Hence, this is a contribution to the growing literature on claims that Tangible Support, Belonging Support, Self-Esteem Support, and Appraisal Support are importance factors that affect Professional Commitment specifically, Affective Professional Commitment, Continuance Professional Commitment and Normative Professional Commitment.

The study results from Yang, Badri, Al Rashedi and Almazroui (2019) which stated that there is evidence that teacher commitment was significantly influenced by the social and interpersonal support. Results were examined in terms of strengthening instructors' dedication in the empirical setting. Similarly, in the current study, results reveal that teachers appreciate much the interpersonal support they enjoy not just from their co-teachers but also from their school head that makes them more committed in every task they do.

### Significance on the Relationship between Interpersonal Support and Leadership Behaviors of School Heads

Presented in Table 4.2 the significant difference between Interpersonal Support and Leadership Behaviors of School Heads which also shows that the computed R-value is 0.538 and the p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 which denotes a significant relationship between the above-mentioned variables. Further, the indicators of Interpersonal support also garnered an R-value of 0.414, 0.498, 0.425, and 0.521 which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

**Table 4.2 Significance on the Relationship between Interpersonal Support and Leadership Behaviors of School Heads**

Interpersonal Support	Leadership Behavior
Tangible Support	.414**
	.000
Belonging Support	.498**
	.000
Self-esteem Support	.425**
	.000
Appraisal Support	.521**
	.000
Overall	.538**
	.000

## The Mediating Effect of Leadership Behaviors of School Heads on the Relationship between Interpersonal Support and Professional Commitment of Teachers

The significant relationship between Interpersonal Support and Leadership Behaviors of School Heads manifests a positive correlation which definitely supports the study results of few researchers. Their studies have proven how significant Interpersonal Support is, especially the self-esteem support, in drawing the best out of the school heads. Teachers' productivity was found to be increased by school administrators' administrative behaviors that promote involvement and are adaptable, sharing leadership at school, and displaying individual-oriented and supportive leadership behaviors (Cansoy, 2019).

### Significance on the Relationship between Leadership Behaviors of School Heads and Professional Commitment of Teachers

Presented in Table 4.3 the significant relationship between Leadership Behavior of School Heads and the Professional Commitment of Teachers which resulted in an R-value of 0.296. This further means that there is a positive relation between the above-mentioned variables as the positive R-value is less than 1. This further indicates that there is a relationship between the leadership behaviors exhibited by school heads and the professional commitment of teachers. Specifically, as the leadership behavior improves (or is perceived to be higher), the professional commitment of teachers tends to increase.

**Table 4.3 Significance on the Relationship between Leadership Behaviors of School Heads and Professional Commitment of Teachers**

Leadership Behaviors	Professional Commitment			
	Affective	Continuance	Normative	Overall
	.317**	.015	.397**	.296**
	.000	.794	.000	.000

The significant relationship between Leadership Behaviors of School Heads and Professional Commitment of Teachers showed a positive correlation which definitely supports the study results of few researchers. The researchers Sanchez (2022) and Kiral (2020) emphasized by understanding and leveraging the positive correlation between leadership behaviors and teacher commitment, school heads can foster a more committed, motivated, and effective teaching workforce, ultimately leading to better educational outcomes for students. Further, the leadership of school heads is another important factor for the success of a school is its teachers' commitment. The study of Elias (2020), value-added work performance, lower intention of employees about leaving their job, and higher satisfaction with the organization are associated with professional commitment. Hence, the result of the current study corroborates with the previous studies mentioned.

**Table 5 Mediation Analysis of the Three Variables**

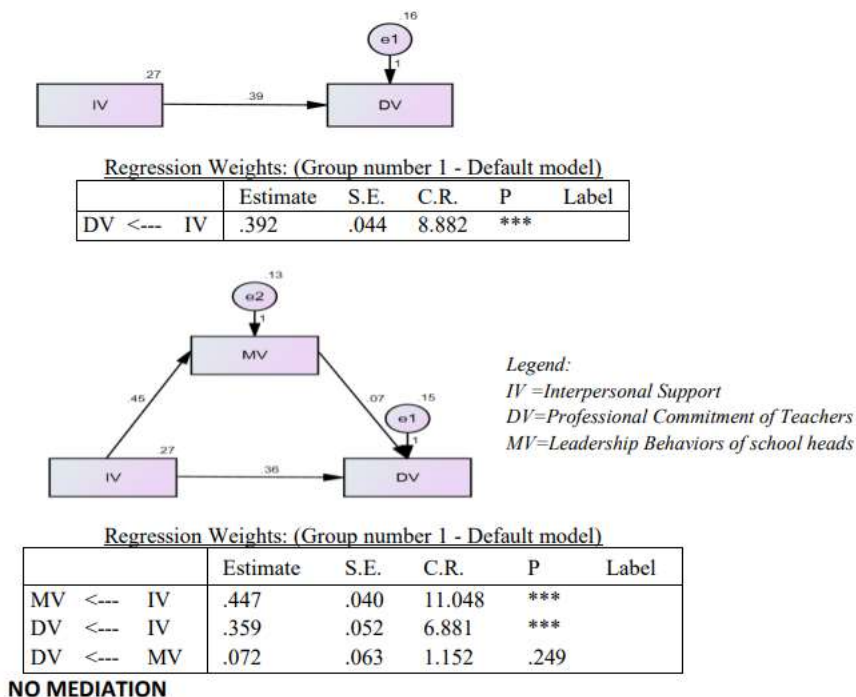


Figure 2. Path Diagram for the Regression

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### **Mediation Analysis of the Three Variables**

On the mediation analysis, results reveal that the regression analysis on the mediating effect resulted in a no mediation output. Shown in a table 5 and the path diagram in figure 2 is the mediation analysis of interpersonal support, professional commitment of teacher, and leadership behaviors of school heads. The regression coefficient of IV partner to MV is 0.447 with the standard error of 0.45. It implies that the principals engaged interpersonal support to the teachers. Now, the regression coefficient of MV to DV is 0.072 with the standard error of 0.15. This shows that the principal's leadership attributes have a significant effect on professional commitment of teachers. Further, the regression coefficient for IV and DV is 0.359 with the standard error of 0.392. This means that interpersonal support significantly affects professional commitment of teachers. The current study resulted in a no mediation result of the three variables. This contradicts with what usual study results reveal that empirical evidence supports the idea that teachers' collaboration, professional motivation, and commitment are influenced by the leadership behaviors of school principals (Cansoy, Parlar & Polatcan, 2020).

Further, more other studies have also claimed the significant mediating effects that leadership significantly influences teachers' intention to stay, psychological capital, perceived organizational support (Aria, Jafari & Behifar, 2019).

### **IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

After the thorough data analysis in this study of the mediating effect of leadership behaviors of school heads on the relationship between interpersonal support and professional commitment of teachers in public elementary schools of Island Garden City of Samal, it can be concluded that the Interpersonal Support of Teachers in terms of tangible support, belonging support, self-esteem support, and appraisal support is high and that at some point teachers support each other but not on a very high extent. In terms of the level of Professional Commitment of teachers with affective professional commitment, continuance professional commitment, and normative professional commitment, it is high yet, the specific of this variable shows a poor perception among teachers especially in the items relating to how they feel in being a teacher. As to the level of leadership behavior of school heads, it is also high which means that teachers perceive this with all positive considerations.

The significant differences between and among variables are also observed yet with their singular capacity only. When all the variables were tested together, specifying the mediating role of Leadership Behaviors of School Heads in the relationship between Interpersonal Support and Professional Commitment, no mediation was observed.

The study then holds true with the "Great Man" Theories of Carlyle (1847) that effective leadership requires a set of skills that cannot be taught or learned in a formal setting. These skills include charm, persuasion, commanding personality, high degree of intuition, judgment, courage, intelligence, aggression, and action orientation. However, it is then best to recommend that teachers from the mentioned locale of the study should consider attending intervention programs and seminars which will help themselves to boost their sense of Self-Esteem support so they can be more flexible in dealing with their colleagues as results only reveal a moderate level on this. This also holds true in terms of Professional Commitment; teachers also got a moderate level in their affective commitment as they consider themselves as weak in being enthusiastic about being an actuary.

With continuous effort the public elementary school teachers, school heads and students in the Island Garden City of Samal, this study can further become a basis for another study to explore which may investigate a deeper understanding on the experiences of public-school teachers in dealing with their school heads and in portraying their roles as educators in their locale.

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