



International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research
 Vol. 25, No. 5, pp. 668-684, May 2026
<https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.25.5.29>
 Received Feb 16, 2026; Revised Apr 20, 2026; Accepted Apr 23, 2026

Brain Drain Factors as Determinants of Teachers' Intention to Teach a Broad in the Philippine Basic Education

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Abstract. Brain drain compromises teacher retention and continuity of teaching in developing countries, such as the Philippines. This study explored the brain drain factors predicting the intention of public school teachers in basic education to teach abroad. A descriptive-correlational research design was used, involving 342 public school teachers in Cebu, the Republic of the Philippines. A structured survey questionnaire was used to gather data on push and pull factors, and the intention to teach abroad; descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and multiple regression analyses were conducted. The results indicated a high intent to teach abroad and that most teachers agreed with actively considering overseas opportunities. Push and pull factors were both highly correlated with intention; however, regression indicated that only pull factors were significant ($\beta = 0.371$, $p = 0.000$), while push factors were not ($\beta = 0.027$, $p = 0.638$). The results imply that migration intentions are more influenced by expectations of opportunities abroad than by local dissatisfaction. This study adds to the literature by revealing a dominance of opportunity-driven motivators.

Citation:
 Mahilum, R., & Mutya, R. (2026). Brain Drain Factors as Determinants of Teachers' Intention to Teach a Broad in the Philippine Basic Education. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 25(5), 668-684. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.25.5.29>

Keywords: Brain drain factors; intention to teach abroad; push-pull factors; Philippine basic education

1. Introduction

Global forces that have destabilized and restructured international labor markets are affecting basic education systems worldwide, including teachers' intentions to go abroad. Although overseas teaching may provide avenues for professional learning and cultural exchange, high levels of teacher outmigration can further worsen existing shortages and disrupt continuity in student learning (Podolsky et al., 2016). The growing integration of education systems has broadened international career opportunities and made working abroad an easy option for teachers (Parkhouse et al., 2016). The allocation of mobility creates a serious

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challenge for countries that are already struggling to secure a sufficient and qualified teaching workforce. Hence, insights into the determinants of teachers' intentions to teach abroad are pertinent for establishing constructive retention and workforce planning strategies.

This is often ascribed to brain drain, in this case, migration of skilled labor from less developed societies to more privileged nations (Adeyemi et al., 2018; Adesote & Osunkoya, 2018). The term originated in the late 1960s, when individuals with higher education began migrating from developing nations to industrialized economies in search of greater employment opportunities (Cervantes & Guellec, 2002; Spring, 2008). In education, this shift often results in a loss of human capital, as education requires specialized knowledge of pedagogy, institutional memory, and professional experience in teaching. Brain drain occurs teachers' skills are valued more abroad than at home (Adeyemi et al., 2018). This issue occurs in developing countries, where education systems depend heavily on public-sector teachers.

Brain drain refers to the exodus of skilled labor worldwide in search of better working conditions, salaries, and infrastructure (Hashish & Ashour, 2020). According to scholars, poor educational infrastructure, limited employment opportunities, and high unemployment rates are crucial push factors for seeking jobs abroad (Vazzana & Rudi-Polloshka, 2019). Often, this choice is not the result of a specific issue but rather years of disenchantment and unmet aspirations in careers. In terms of educational systems, the retirement of veteran educators can compromise instructional quality and institutional stability. Consequently, brain drain in academia has become a common issue for policymakers and scholars alike.

Teacher migration mirrors national labor mobility trends in the Republic of the Philippines (Alicamen & Becamon, 2022; Modesto, 2020). Education professionals, along with other sectors, are a source of qualified expatriates in this regard and have made up part of the country's foreign workforce. With an estimated 280 million international migrants around the world, Filipinos are still among the most prolific (Commission on Filipino Overseas, 2025), contributing meaningfully to the socio-economic functioning of countries and regions, including a number who were trained in the Philippines' national education system as educators (Macapagong et al., 2023).

Teachers wanting to work abroad have been shaped by the Philippines' educational aims, values, and competencies (Victoria et al., 2018). Filipino teachers who choose to leave their country for an international career are presented with competitive salaries, exposure to new cultures, and professional growth (Curtis & Ledgerwood, 2018; Modesto, 2020). However, a prolonged teacher exodus poses significant challenges to basic education, particularly for the home country ensuring that every learner receives quality instruction.

Teachers are usually pushed to teach abroad by local dissatisfaction and pulled towards overseas opportunities (Mohamed et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023). Research has indicated that push factors, such as large workloads, low wages and salary levels, limited opportunities for professional advancement, and poor institutional support, can contribute to teachers' intention to leave home (Ndende, 2021). In contrast, pull factors include job safety, better pay, a better work-home life balance, and the availability of advanced teaching facilities abroad (Moon, 2007). Job satisfaction is a crucial aspect of this decision – satisfied, active teachers have been reported to show stronger organizational commitment and thus lower (probably) turnover intentions than the group with low job satisfaction (Baluyos et al., 2019). It follows that outflows caused by unresolved workplace problems will lead to an even more structural teacher shortage.

Several factors affect teachers' decisions to work abroad and their educational backgrounds. Identification of these provides a basis for educational systems to formulate interventions to minimize teacher attrition and enhance retention. Thus, the purpose of this study was to determine the factors considered brain drain determinants of intention to teach abroad among basic education teachers in the Philippines. The research provides data-backed policies that balance global mobility with sustainable national workforces and offers insight into key push-and-pull factors. The results aim to inform international and national dialogues on retention, talent management, and the essential sustainability of basic education systems.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Brain Drain and Migration Intentions

The vast migration of skilled, high-level professionals from their home countries negatively impacts human capital development in any country (Wanniarachchi et al., 2022). The education sector has been documented to face structural challenges because of this, leading to under-resourced faculty and teachers (Muthanna & Sang, 2018). Since brain drain is not an economic problem, it can be defined as a socio-cultural process that shapes aspirations and the struggle for higher living standards in the scope of professional achievement (Aytaç & Aydın, 2019). While remittances are expected to boost the economy, this migration triggers declining institutional performance and service delivery at home (Adeyemi et al., 2018). High-quality teachers' exits not only disrupt instructional continuity, but also create instability among school staff, destabilizing reform efforts over time.

Push-pull factors are the common explanation for migration; this means that, in an individual's decision to migrate, both forces are considered: pushing teachers from one area and pulling them toward another (e.g., work abroad). The push factors include low income, poor working conditions, limited resources, and restricted avenues for professional growth in the home country. In contrast, pull factors are higher salaries, better facilities, and greater recognition for one's profession outside the home country (Muthanna & Sang, 2018). Research has reported that professionals often cite opportunities for expanded training, greater career prospects, and research settings as the main reasons for migration (Rigby & Ryan, 2018). In contrast, family ties, a national service orientation, and

commitment to local development entice many teachers back home (Rigby & Ryan, 2018). It is in understanding these multidimensional drivers that the Filipino teacher's intention to teach abroad becomes evident in their individual and societal perspectives on Philippine basic education.

2.2 Job Satisfaction, Compensation, and Organizational Support

Profession-related variables that can affect educators' career satisfaction include organizational factors such as leadership support, promotion opportunities, workplace relationships, and recognition systems (Arian & Khan Sabir et al., 2018; García-Hernández et al., 2021). Adequate compensation has been repeatedly identified as one of the most significant predictors of teacher motivation, performance, and retention, with poor pay causing teachers to migrate (Bowen et al., 2017; Tahseen & Hadi, 2015). Salary satisfaction is the emotional response of employees to their compensation systems and can greatly affect morale and turnover intentions (Zhou & Ma, 2022). Studies have also found that low remuneration can diminish commitment and adversely affect the quality of instruction and, therefore, student outcomes (Sumardiyanto et al., 2025; Young & Keup, 2018). Thus, compensation and organizational climate are two central constructs for understanding migration intentions of teachers.

2.3 Psychological and Professional Motivations for Teaching Abroad

Psychological and professional factors also push teachers overseas, in addition to somewhat lower salaries (and cost-of-living adjustments). Many educators conceptualize opportunities for cultural immersion, interaction with diverse educational systems, and powerful professional development experiences as transformative (Hauerwas et al., 2017; Serin, 2017). The relationship between organizational commitment and the retention of talented educators has been recognized; however, declining organizational obligation has strengthened migration trends in many countries (Abdallah Yassine & Jacobs, 2025; Guzeller & Celiker, 2020).

Apart from the various factors affecting job satisfaction, the role of different leader relationships and working conditions, namely the school environment (need for support), and fulfillment derived from being a teacher, are also important indicators towards individual perceptions of efficiency concerning their jobs as educators (Ker et al., 2022; Sriadmitum, 2023; Tria, 2023). This information suggests that financial considerations do not solely dictate migration intentions; they may also be shaped by professional identity development and aspirations for global engagement.

2.4 Teacher Compensation and Working Conditions in the Philippines

Migration intentions have been frequently associated with teacher compensation and workload in the Philippine context. According to reports, salary changes have been notoriously interpreted as inadequate solutions to decades-old inequities in the remuneration and valuing of public school educators (Rende et al., 2021; Stromquist, 2018). Low salaries continue to be a major source of educational burden, affecting educators' decision-making regarding working overseas (Gonçalves et al., 2021). Teachers have additional responsibilities beyond classroom instruction, acting as administrators and community members, which

can lead to an emotional and psychological overload (Silvestre & Carlos, 2023). Given these contextual realities, local structural challenges must be examined to understand the causes of brain drain from the Philippine basic education.

The existing literature suggests that brain drain is influenced by several economic, organizational, and psychological factors that interact to affect migration intentions. The majority of studies reviewing skilled migration in higher education, engineering, and healthcare workers are available for developed countries, but few have examined basic education teachers in developing nations. In addition, little research provides an integrated and predictive model to understand the impact of compensation incentives, job satisfaction, organizational support, and professional aspiration on teaching-abroad intentions. These gaps are important to understand how brain drain dynamics operate within the Philippine education system. Accordingly, the current study investigates brain drain factors as predictors of teachers' intention to teach abroad, providing empirical evidence to assist retention policy and workforce planning.

3. Methodology

3.1 Design

The present study used a descriptive–correlational research design to examine the scope of brain drain among basic education teachers and its relationship with their intent to teach abroad. Because the variables naturally occur in teachers' real settings, this design is appropriate for identifying the direction and magnitude of relationships without manipulating conditions within those settings. The correlational nature of this study allows the identification of the factors most strongly correlated with intention to teach abroad, providing guidance essential for evidence-informed policy to retain potential teachers. Creswell and Creswell (2017) noted the use of non-experimental quantitative approaches, including survey-based designs, in educational research to explore relationships between variables.

3.2 Respondents

The respondents in this study were 342 teachers from public and private primary and secondary schools in Cebu, the Philippines, which provided a diverse representation in the context of education. A random sampling technique was employed to ensure that each member of the target population had an equal chance of being selected, thereby enhancing the representation and generalizability. This sampling technique minimizes selection bias and enhances the validity of the study's conclusions (Etikan et al., 2016; Taherdoost, 2016). This is consistent with established research design principles, which recommend random sampling in quantitative studies to support objective data collection and rigorous statistical analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Table 1 presents the demographic profile distribution of the 342 respondents in the study. Most respondents were female (86.55%), while only 13.45% were male. Most respondents were between 31 and 40 years old (37.13%), followed by those aged 41–50 (28.95%), indicating a predominantly mid-career teaching population. A higher percentage of respondents were teaching in secondary or high schools

(53.80%), than in primary or elementary schools (46.20%). In terms of specialization, a significant portion were from the technical and livelihood education field (31.87), followed by English (14.04%) and Science (12.28%). Most respondents held the position of Teacher III (42.98%) and had over 10 years of teaching experience (44.44%), with most working in public schools (85.38%)

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents (N=342)

| Profile | Variables | Responses | |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------|-------|
| | | f | % |
| Sex | Male | 46 | 13.45 |
| | Female | 296 | 86.55 |
| Age | 21-30 years old | 88 | 25.73 |
| | 31-40 years old | 127 | 37.13 |
| | 41-50 years old | 99 | 28.95 |
| | 51 years old and above | 28 | 8.19 |
| Teaching Level | Primary/Elementary School | 158 | 46.20 |
| | Secondary/High School | 184 | 53.80 |
| Field of Specialization | General Content | 37 | 10.82 |
| | <i>Araling Panlipunan</i> (Social Studies) | 24 | 7.02 |
| | English | 48 | 14.04 |
| | Science | 42 | 12.28 |
| | <i>Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao</i> (Values Education) | 10 | 2.92 |
| | Filipino | 21 | 6.14 |
| | Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH) | 10 | 2.92 |
| | Mathematics | 41 | 11.99 |
| Technical and Livelihood Education | 109 | 31.87 | |
| Teaching Position | Teacher 1 | 140 | 40.94 |
| | Teacher 2 | 40 | 11.70 |
| | Teacher 3 | 147 | 42.98 |
| | Master Teacher 1 | 11 | 3.22 |
| | Master Teacher 2 | 4 | 1.17 |
| Teaching Experience | 0-3 years | 54 | 15.79 |
| | 4-6 years | 70 | 20.47 |
| | 7-9 years | 66 | 19.30 |
| | 10 years and above | 152 | 44.44 |
| Type of School | Public | 292 | 85.38 |
| | Private | 50 | 14.62 |

3.3 Instrument

To gather the necessary data, this study used a structured questionnaire comprising three general components. The demographic profile sheet (Part I) collected teacher profile data, which were useful for describing the sample characteristics. A "Brain Drain Factors Scale (Part II)" assessed the teachers' perceived push and pull factors that prompt them to pursue teaching abroad, adapted from Thapa and Shrestha (2017). The statements of Part III, the "Intention to Teach Abroad Scale", were adapted from Schnusenberg et al. (2012) and measured teachers' intention to brain drain. Each item in Part II and Part III was rated using a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly

agree), such that higher scores reflected greater agreement with the statements. Validation and reliability testing were conducted for the adapted instruments to determine their appropriateness for the Philippine basic education context (Table 2). It was also content and face-validated by three research instrument specialists, with a content validity ratio of 1.00, indicating that all items were considered important and applicable to the Philippine basic education context.

The indicators showed good reliability, as all factor loadings for ‘intention to teach abroad’, ‘pull factors’, and ‘push factors’ exceeded 0.70 (Hair et al., 2021), indicating that the items were adequately represented by their respective latent variables (see Table 2). Cronbach’s α values (0.906–0.947) and composite reliability (CR; 0.925–0.957) exceeded the minimum-recommended threshold of 0.70 and were deemed excellent internal consistency, as per best-practice measurement model evaluation guidelines (Hair et al., 2021). Furthermore, all constructs exhibited average variance extracted values above the threshold of 0.50, demonstrating sufficient convergent validity and indicating that each construct explains more than half of its indicators’ variance (Hair et al., 2021).

Even with such strong psychometric properties, the composite reliability of push factors (0.957) slightly exceeded its optimal upper boundary, which may indicate redundancy among items; hence, further research is required to confirm discrimination among conceptual categories (Guenther et al., 2023). In summary, the results attest to the measurement instrument meeting pre-determined reliability and construct validity thresholds, which justified its usage for further structural model analysis regarding (a) intentions to teach abroad and related push-pull attributes in line with other extant studies (Benitez et al., 2020; Hair et al., 2021)

Table 2: Validity and reliability of the instrument

| Constructs | Factor loadings | Cronbach’s alpha | Composite reliability | Average variance extracted |
|---------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Intention to Teach Abroad | 0.865-0.927 | 0.931 | 0.947 | 0.782 |
| Pull Factors | 0.748-0.873 | 0.906 | 0.925 | 0.637 |
| Push Factors | 0.785-0.937 | 0.947 | 0.957 | 0.762 |

3.4 Data Gathering Procedure

Before the study’s implementation, certificates from the Danao City Division Superintendent of Schools and the Graduate School were obtained. The informed consent form explained respondents’ roles. It stated that participation was voluntary (with a withdrawal clause allowing them to withdraw from the study at any time), outlined respondents’ rights, and described the non-disclosure steps taken. The certificates and informed consent form were provided to the responders through online (email, messenger) and face-to-face modalities.

The respondents were asked to fill out the questionnaire, in their own time and flexibility constraints. The questionnaire responses were gathered and evaluated. Scores of the respondents were counted, statistically managed, and evaluated. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, respondents were assigned a unique code.

Data were stored in soft-copy files on password-protected computers, and the hard copies obtained from respondents have been kept in locked cabinets. Strict adherence to all ethical research principles, including voluntary participation and informed consent or refusal to participate, were maintained, along with the confidentiality of responses.

3.5 Data Analysis

Documents and data from the research were carefully processed and analyzed to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and integrity of the results. Frequencies and percentages were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of teacher respondents. The mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data and determine the level of agreement among brain drain factors and respondents' intention to teach abroad, which was interpreted in terms of central tendency (mean) and dispersion (standard deviation). Pearson product-moment correlation tests were performed to evaluate the strength and direction of relationships among brain drain factors with the intention to teach abroad. In addition, multiple regression analysis was used to examine the influence of predictors associated with brain drain on teachers' intentions to work abroad. Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS Statistics version 27 were used to analyze and interpret the data.

4. Results and Findings

4.1 Descriptive Statistics on Brain Drain Factors and Intention to Teach Abroad

Table 3 summarizes the respondents' levels of agreement regarding the push factors of brain drain. In general, the teachers agreed that their context had push factors. This included limited access to new technologies and minimal facilities, which may indicate deeper systemic problems that can change the conditions of teaching and learning. Dissatisfaction with overall salary, perceived lack of recognition, and growth also scored in the agreement range. The high similar mean scores indicate that push factors do not operate in isolation but work together to shape migration considerations. The standard deviations suggest average variability; notably, there is moderate variance, suggesting that students have markedly different experiences within the same school or teaching assignment.

Table 3: Brain drain factors in terms of push factors

| Push Factors | Mean | SD | Interpretation | Rank |
|--|-------------|-------------|----------------|------|
| The workload in my school is too heavy. | 4.02 | 0.93 | Agree | 1 |
| My school has limited access to updated teaching technologies. | 4.01 | 0.95 | Agree | 2 |
| The school facilities and resources are inadequate. | 4.00 | 0.94 | Agree | 3 |
| My current salary is not enough to meet my needs. | 3.95 | 1.00 | Agree | 4 |
| Policies and management practices in my workplace are unsupportive. | 3.90 | 0.99 | Agree | 5 |
| There are few opportunities for professional growth in my current workplace. | 3.89 | 0.94 | Agree | 6 |
| I feel undervalued in my current teaching position. | 3.88 | 1.01 | Agree | 7 |
| Average | 3.95 | 0.97 | Agree | |

Legend: 1.00-1.79 Strongly Disagree; 1.80-2.59 Disagree; 2.60-3.39 Neutral; 3.40-4.19 Agree; 4.20-5.00 Strongly Agree

Table 4 indicates that the respondents agree on the pull factors of brain drain. Agreement among respondents was similarly evident for push factors promoting overseas teaching. The main factors that ranked higher were better job security and stability abroad, exposure to new cultures, and improved teaching techniques. The appeal of foreign opportunities was only further entrenched by access to better facilities and resources. Other contributing reasons included expected work-life balance, a better salary, and regular migration tracks. These results strengthen the view that intentions towards migration are not only economic but also a function of professional and personal aspirations.

Table 4: Brain drain factors in terms of pull factors

| Pull Factors | Mean | SD | Interpretation | Rank |
|--|-------------|-------------|----------------|------|
| Overseas employment offers better job security and stability. | 4.06 | 0.88 | Agree | 1 |
| I will have exposure to new cultures and teaching methods. | 4.02 | 0.88 | Agree | 2 |
| Overseas schools have better facilities and resources. | 3.96 | 1.02 | Agree | 3 |
| I expect a better work-life balance abroad. | 3.89 | 0.94 | Agree | 4 |
| Teaching abroad offers higher salaries and better benefits. | 3.84 | 0.98 | Agree | 5 |
| There are opportunities for permanent residency or migration abroad. | 3.83 | 0.89 | Agree | 6 |
| Working abroad provides greater career advancement opportunities. | 3.71 | 1.02 | Agree | 7 |
| Average | 3.90 | 0.94 | Agree | |

Legend: 1.00-1.79 Strongly Disagree; 1.80-2.59 Disagree; 2.60-3.39 Neutral; 3.40-4.19 Agree; 4.20-5.00 Strongly Agree

Table 5 shows the level of agreement on intention to teach abroad. A general high level of intention to teach abroad was reported for teachers. The most telling signs were that they actively sought overseas opportunities and planned to apply for or

accept jobs abroad. Interviewees even wrote about dedicating time and resources to prepare for migration, suggesting they would resign if opportunities opened. The distance of mean scores suggests consistency in readiness across behavioral intention indicators. Different responses imply that although several teachers have a strong tendency to migrate, others are unsure.

Table 5: Intention to teach abroad

| Statements | Mean | SD | Interpretation | Rank |
|--|-------------|-------------|----------------|------|
| I often explore opportunities to teach abroad. | 4.03 | 0.93 | Agree | 1 |
| I plan to apply for a teaching position abroad in the future. | 4.01 | 0.93 | Agree | 2 |
| I set aside time and resources to pursue overseas employment. | 3.99 | 0.93 | Agree | 3 |
| I am willing to resign from my current teaching post to work abroad. | 3.97 | 0.92 | Agree | 4 |
| I am preparing requirements for overseas employment. | 3.90 | 0.94 | Agree | 5 |
| Average | 3.93 | 0.93 | Agree | |

Legend: 1.00-1.79 Strongly Disagree; 1.80-2.59 Disagree; 2.60-3.39 Neutral; 3.40-4.19 Agree; 4.20-5.00 Strongly Agree

4.2 Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis Between Brain Drain Factors and Intention to Teach Abroad

Table 6 shows the Pearson product-moment correlation between factors of brain drains and intention to teach abroad. Correlation analysis shows that push factors, pull factors, and intention to teach abroad are strongly positively correlated. It appears that intention was a stronger predictor of pull than push factors, suggesting that overseas benefits are perceived as more influential on migration intentions than feelings of local poverty. The long-standing modest correlation between push and pull suggests that, under local pressure, teachers perceive an opportunity to use their skills elsewhere. Migration motivations were found to mutually influence each other. The correlation results provide evidence that the push-pull framework is both relevant and usable for explaining teachers' mobility intentions.

Table 6: Pearson product-moment correlation between brain drain factors and intention to teach abroad

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|------------------------------|--------|--------|---|
| 1. Push Factor | 1 | | |
| 2. Pull Factor | .490** | 1 | |
| 3. Intention to Teach Abroad | .209** | .385** | 1 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis, which show that pull factors are significantly related to teachers' intention to teach abroad, whereas push factors do not appear to meaningfully influence. The pull factors showed a positive and statistically significant coefficient ($\beta = 0.371$, $t = 6.460$, $p 0.000$), while push factors were non-significant ($\beta = 0.027$, $t = 0.471$, $p 0.638$), which implies that

unfavorable conditions in the home country alone cannot promote a positive intention to migrate. The model accounts for 15% of the variance in intention to teach abroad ($R^2 = 0.15$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.14$), indicating a modest amount of explanatory power, and suggesting that other variables not included in this analysis might also play a role on its own or through an interaction with decision making delay self-efficacy in predicting willingness to go teachers abroad. In conclusion, the results reveal that external opportunities abroad are more significant than domestic constraints in influencing teachers' migration intentions.

Table 7: Multiple regression analysis of brain drain factors on intention to teach abroad

| Predictor Variables | β | t-value | p-value | Decision |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| Push Factors | 0.027 | 0.471 | 0.638 | Not Significant |
| Pull Factors | 0.371 | 6.460 | 0.000 | Significant |
| R² | 0.15 | | | |
| Adjusted R² | 0.14 | | | |

Dependent variable: intention to teach abroad; significance level: $\alpha = 0.05$

5. Discussion

The results show that teachers' migration intentions are the outcome of multiple interrelated factors, unveiling how both workplace context and perceived global opportunities interact to influence teacher mobility intentions. The high workload, resource constraints, and lack of professional growth opportunities are consistent with prior research on the contributions of organizational climate and job satisfaction to turnover intentions and retention challenges (Gundlach et al., 2024; Lei et al., 2024). While push factors were strongly perceived, their reduced predictive power in regression analysis suggests that teachers should not be seen solely as people who migrate primarily to escape dissatisfaction. They also tend to see migration as a route toward advancement. This interpretation reinforces the push-pull migration theory, highlighting the importance of pull factors that climate-induced tremor conditions could affect in shaping subject mobility decisions (Urbański, 2022; Wanniarachchi et al., 2022).

Pull factors, including job security, improved facilities, and opportunities for professional development, play a significant role in reinforcing global education labor market competitiveness. Like previous studies, these studies explain that overseas teaching experiences provide greater independence, professional and personal development opportunities, and intercultural learning, which contribute to raising teachers' interest in working abroad (Bright & Heyting, 2024; Savicki, 2023). Increasing career mobility and exposure to diverse teaching practices reflect broader processes of globalization in education systems (Panagiotakopoulos, 2020). Such results imply that migration choices are not strictly economic but closely linked to professional identity and career ambitions.

It also suggests that simply thinking about teaching overseas has shifted from a passive engagement with the idea to a more active preparation. Intentions to change behavior are identified as a strong predictor of real-world mobility decisions, particularly in the context of structural opportunities (Hagger &

Hamilton, 2024). The timing of teachers' allocation of time and resources to overseas employment, if anything, highlights a shift from consideration to action, signaling that timely retention interventions are essential. Research on teacher turnover likewise finds that intractable workplace problems and good alternatives can hasten the decision to leave (Gundlach et al., 2024; Martinsone et al., 2024).

The regression results also indicate that opportunity-driven motivations dominate dissatisfaction-driven factors when both are included in the same model. This pattern aligns with the migration literature and suggests that perceived benefits abroad may exert a greater influence than local hardships when individuals, such as those in this study, make career choices (Urbański, 2022; Yeh, 2025). Although push factors have always been present, their effect may be mediated by overseas expectations of job recognition and career growth. Thus, retention strategies need to both mitigate adverse work environments and enhance home opportunities that would replicate the development benefits available abroad (Zhou & Ma, 2022; Shaoan et al., 2025).

The model's poor explanatory power indicates that, beyond push-pull dynamics, other psychological, organizational, and contextual variables influence teachers' intention to teach abroad. Previous studies highlight the significance of organizational commitment, leadership climate, and professional identity in influencing regulators' decisions about whether an educator migrates (Costan et al., 2022; Baluyos et al., 2019). Mediating variables, such as job satisfaction, may be included to strengthen future models, and moderating factors, such as family considerations (e.g., having children) or tenure, may help explain discrepancies that emerge. The findings, therefore, add to global conversations about teacher brain drain by demonstrating how aspirational motivations interact with local structural conditions (Wanniarachchi et al., 2022) to shape teacher career decisions.

6. Conclusion

This study explored brain drain factors as determinants of the intention of Philippine basic education teachers to teach abroad. It showed that most teachers are open to traveling abroad to teach. Results indicate that pull factors are stronger predictors of intention to teach abroad than push factors, such as job security, professional growth, and improved working conditions overseas. The evidence clearly demonstrated the pull factors, but differentiating push from opportunity would be better done when push factors are included in an equation alongside one another, rather than treating them separately.

A small amount of variability was explained by the regression model, indicating that teachers migrate through distinct, multifaceted organizational, personal, and contextual decision processes. The study also points to an urgent re-evaluation of the local and immediate incentive structures, and educator labor force conditions globally, among education stakeholders, regarding teacher retention.

This study recommends that education policymakers and school leaders need better domestic pull-equivalents, provided by clearly disclosed career progression pathways wherever feasible; and improved job security, resulting in predictable instructional practice outcomes dependent on skilled teachers with proven track records of effective professional development. The push factors, such as especially high workload and a lack of resources or perceived low value, should be addressed simultaneously through broader system reforms to working conditions, as well as targeted activities in specific schools. They may also utilize additional factors, such as family considerations, self-efficacy, and organizational climate, that better account for the contextually fluid and dynamic nature of teachers' intentions to teach abroad, while facilitating mixed-methods and longitudinal designs.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare and report no conflict of interest during the conduct of this study.

7. Acknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge the respondents of this study, as well as the Research and Development Office and the Graduate School Office of Cebu Technological University-Danao Campus, for their full support.

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