

Navigating the Contractual Teaching Dynamic: Chronicles of Private School Teachers

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Abstract. This study explored and documented the experiences of private school teachers working under contractual agreements, focusing on how they navigate the challenges of their roles at the Polytechnic College of Davao City. The research focused on teachers with contractual employment status, aiming to understand the realities they face in their professional lives. Utilizing a qualitative research design grounded in phenomenology, this paper examined the various struggles encountered by these educators, including job insecurity, limited opportunities for professional growth, and the need to quickly adapt to shifting institutional demands. In addition, the study delved into the psychosocial impacts of contractual teaching, highlighting how unstable employment affects teachers' mental well-being, motivation, and classroom performance. These effects also influence the educational experiences of students and the overall school environment. The research further explored strategies employed by contractual teachers to manage instability while maintaining the quality of instruction. These strategies demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and a profound commitment to the teaching profession, despite challenging circumstances. The findings of this study aim to support ongoing policy discussions on improving the working conditions of contractual teachers and promoting sustainable employment practices in private educational institutions. By giving voice to the often-overlooked experiences of contractual educators, the research seeks to influence decision-makers and stakeholders in education. The insights gained may contribute to efforts in increasing teacher retention and enhancing educational quality. With its relevance and academic rigor, this paper may be considered for submission to a distinguished journal in education or social sciences.

KEY WORDS

1. Contractual Teacher 2. chronicles of challenges 3. Davao City
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1. Introduction

Contract teaching is a prevalent employment practice in the current education system of different institutions. On the other hand, contractual teaching involves short-term, non-permanent employment, which some teachers may encounter for the following reasons. These educators work under conditions of job insecurity, limited opportunities for professional de-

velopment, and the need to quickly adapt to changing school contexts. At the same time, schools face challenges such as maintaining consistency and quality of instruction when teachers are frequently changed. In contrast with tenured teachers, contractual educators do not have a clear prospect of their employment, and many teachers cannot predict whether their con-

tract will be renewed. This can create tension, especially when outlining future strategic professional and financial development. They are typically given limited time and resources to fulfill these tasks, which increases their burden and stress. Regardless, they are held to the same criteria and outcomes as their permanent counterparts. Furthermore, contractual teachers are often expected to wear multiple hats, offering instruction while simultaneously fulfilling other responsibilities, administrative tasks, or serving in different capacities. More to the point, they are usually given different protection and favorable terms offered to permanent teachers. On a global scale, Griffo et al. (2023) describe how contracts typically include clauses that allow contracted parties to adjust their contractual positions over time, such as relieving another party from duty or granting new permission. This is especially important in long-running service relations, which require contracts to be adjusted to accommodate new or unforeseen circumstances. Despite this, the representation of dynamic aspects of contractual relations has not received enough attention in the literature. In this study, we address this gap by employing the notions of legal power and legal subjection. We propose an ontological analysis of unilateral contractual changes based on a well-founded legal core ontology that adopts a relational perspective for legal positions. We present a case study to show the significant impact of representing different types of contractual changes and how these changes can profoundly influence contractual dynamics. This is based on recent changes to WhatsApp's terms of service. Contractual teaching in higher education presents unique challenges for faculty members, including job insecurity, integration difficulties, and limited resource access (Singh, 2024). These issues often lead to experiences of precarity, such as financial hardships, feelings of inferiority, and anxiety about potential transfers. The effects of contractual employment extend beyond in-

dividual concerns, influencing the broader educational environment and impacting teacher-student relationships. Contract conditions play a crucial role in shaping teachers' professional relationships, self-understanding, and socialization into the profession. Despite these challenges, contractual teaching continues to be a common approach to addressing teacher shortages in developing countries due to financial constraints. To address these concerns, emphasizes the need for further research to inform policies aimed at improving working conditions and job satisfaction among contractual faculty members. Uztemur et al. (2022) provide an in-depth examination of the ethical dilemmas encountered by private school teachers. These dilemmas were categorized into four main themes: parents, learners, school administration, and co-workers. The findings suggest that ethical challenges in private schools differ in several ways from those in public institutions. A notable concern among private school teachers was the fear of job loss, which often influenced how they navigated moral dilemmas. The study highlights how these issues reflect broader professional and workplace challenges specific to the private education sector. Furthermore, frequent faculty turnover was observed, as many teachers, after gaining experience in private schools, transitioned to public schools in search of better opportunities. In the national context, some teachers in the Philippines have chosen to serve in private schools for many years. Private school teachers in the country face moderate levels of internal and external job stress, influenced by factors such as employment status, years of service, gender, and salary. Despite the generally low pay, intrinsic motivational factors—particularly job satisfaction—play a significant role in teacher retention. National education reforms, such as the implementation of the senior high school program, have also shaped teachers' attitudes toward continuing professional development (CPD). Perceived de-

mands related to job requirements and career planning are associated with varying attitudes toward CPD, reflecting teachers' adaptive responses to evolving professional expectations. Using a transcendental phenomenological approach, the study interviewed nine teachers who had served in private schools for over ten years. These educators shared their reasons for staying, which included contentment with their work, a healthy working environment, adequate compensation and benefits, a passion for teaching, and the opportunity to pursue further studies while working (Naparan et al., 2023). The findings emphasize the importance of institutional support in encouraging long-term teacher retention in private schools. In addition, the dynamic landscape of contractual teaching in the Philippines presents a range of challenges and lived experiences. Female teachers often struggle to balance professional responsibilities with domestic duties, all while facing limited opportunities for career advancement despite the feminization of the teaching profession. Contractual educators also experience various forms of precarity, including financial instability, workplace discrimination, and persistent anxiety over job security factors that contribute to feelings of demoralization and disempowerment. Moreover, novice lecturers face significant difficulties in classroom instruction, managing student behavior, and adjusting to evolving expectations, particularly during disruptions such as the pandemic (Abenes, 2019). These experiences underscore the need for supportive policies and professional development tailored to the realities of contractual teachers in the country. Furthermore, private school teachers in the Philippines face numerous challenges, including high turnover rates and financial insecurity. Many educators transfer to public schools in search of better compensation, despite experiencing emotional difficulties and apprehension during the transition. Nevertheless, some teachers choose to remain in private institutions due to oppor-

tunities for professional development, spiritual growth, and practical instructional experiences. Mid-career teachers often struggle with workload balance and classroom management but continue to find fulfillment in their teaching roles (Pendon, 2024). Contractual teachers, particularly those with limited experience, face additional challenges in instruction, managing student behavior, and adapting to the school environment. To enhance teacher retention, Pendon (2024) emphasizes the need for private schools to reevaluate their salary structures and offer greater support. Understanding the motivations and lived experiences of teachers was crucial for enhancing both job satisfaction and long-term retention in the private education sector. A study on out-of-field teaching in private senior high schools revealed several challenges, particularly a lack of teaching experience and insufficient administrative support (Orville, 2024). These findings underscore the pressing need for targeted professional development programs to equip educators with the requisite competencies. Additionally, Orville (2024) examined classroom interaction issues and coping mechanisms among teachers in public elementary schools, finding a significant relationship between student-related challenges and the strategies employed by teachers. The study recommends implementing comprehensive training focused on classroom management and social-emotional learning. Collectively, these findings underscore the crucial importance of teacher support systems, ongoing professional development, and adaptable strategies in effectively navigating the evolving educational landscape in Davao City.

1.1. Purpose of the Study—The title “Navigating the Contractual Teaching Dynamic: Chronicles of Private School Teachers” sums up the core objective of this study: to delve into the realities of contract teachers as they cross the unpredictable and often challenging terrain of temporary employment within private

schools. This study seeks to explore and document the lived experiences of these educators, shedding light on how they manage job insecurity, career limitations, and shifting responsibilities. By capturing their personal narratives and professional strategies, the study not only chronicles their day-to-day realities but also examines how they sustain their passion and commitment to education amidst structural disadvantages. Through this lens, the study offers insights into the broader contractual teaching dynamic, aiming to inform institutional practices and promote more supportive and equitable conditions for contract teachers in the private school setting. Furthermore, this study intends to provide insights into how private school institutions handle contractual teaching dynamics, including balancing cost-efficiency and staffing flexibility with the need for consistent educational quality.

By presenting the voices and stories of teachers in these roles, the research will offer valuable perspectives on the broader implications of contractual teaching, both for educators and the schools they serve. These insights can inform contractual teaching for both educators and the school. The findings aim to contribute to discussions about improving contractual employment conditions and supporting teachers in creating sustainable and fulfilling careers, even within non-permanent roles.

1.2. Research Questions—To gain a deeper understanding of the realities faced by educators under non-permanent employment arrangements, this study seeks to explore the lived experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of contractual teachers in private schools through the following research questions:

- (1) What are lived teachers' experiences in contractual employment in the private school?
- (2) What are the challenges encountered by contractual teachers?
- (3) How do contractual teachers cope with the challenges?

The study titled "Navigating the Contractual Teaching Dynamic: Chronicles of Private School Teachers" can serve as a valuable resource in understanding the real-world implications of contractual employment and offers several potential benefits for various stakeholders:

1.2.1. Teachers—This research offers important insights into the experiences of contractual teachers in private schools. In that light, this paper uses narratives to discuss some challenges, such as job insecurity, workload, and implications of contractualization on the professional self and job satisfaction among these teachers. Knowledge of these dynamics can help teachers talk about the relational contingencies of their labor and ways of managing the shifting and fluidity of their neoliberal subject positions to support contractual teachers in creating a culture of sharing.

1.2.2. Administrators—This paper provides meaningful findings that are important to school administrators regarding contractual teaching, the overall school culture, and teacher job satisfaction. The needed information can be used to formulate policies to help contractual teachers improve their working conditions and offer them more professional development. Managers and leaders should communicate with contractual teachers to create an understanding environment. It allows administrators to make data-informed decisions that have a direct impact on teacher morale and retention. By addressing the unique problems that contractual teachers experience, schools may create a more inclusive and supportive teaching environment.

1.3. Review of Significant Literature—

1.3.1. Experiences of Contractual Teachers—Contractual teachers face diverse challenges including job insecurity, financial stress,

discrimination, and professional isolation (Apat Swain, 2023; Kasap Gönüldaş, 2022). Many feel inferior to regular staff and are often burdened with non-teaching tasks (Castro Lombrio, 2023). They seek support through self-learning, mentoring, and peer collaboration. Despite these hurdles, they demonstrate commitment and adapt to evolving educational demands, especially in resource-limited settings (Kis Altay, 2019; Palma West, 2023).

Global studies reflect similar issues: in India, Japan, and Indonesia, contract teachers struggle with instability, large class sizes, limited resources, and minimal influence in decision-making (Sobari Hartini, 2020; Long Zhang, 2024; Rather Sofal, 2022). Even in elite schools, teachers experience tension between privilege and educational inequality (Variyan, 2019). These underscore systemic weaknesses that call for better employment practices, professional development, and policy reforms (Çolak Altinkurt, 2022; Kanwal et al., 2023).

In the Philippine context, teachers face added stress from digital transitions, modular learning, and lack of research support (Ulla Acompanado, 2021; Herrera Caballes, 2022). In Nueva Ecija and Davao City, teachers report job burnout, lack of administrative support, and difficulty balancing workload with professional growth (Esteban et al., 2022; Lopez et al., 2024). Yet, many remain resilient and committed, drawing strength from family, spirituality, and aspirations for recognition (Elmido, 2022; Legaspi Fernandez, 2022).

1.3.2. Challenges Across Educational Contexts—Contractual teachers encounter widespread precarity—unstable employment, limited advancement, and emotional exhaustion—amplified during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic (Castillo Astorga, 2021; Abel, 2020). Those in public, multigrade, and Indigenous education face difficulties adapting to modular and blended learning, lacking digital tools and professional training (Carreon, 2021;

Tac-on Musico, 2024). The demand for educational equity and quality highlights the urgent need for systemic reform and tailored support structures.

1.3.3. Coping Mechanisms and Resilience—Teachers cope using both problem-focused (e.g., time management, problem-solving, support-seeking) and emotion-focused strategies (e.g., positive reframing, prayer) (Soria Naparan, 2022; Rajesh et al., 2022). Interns and junior teachers rely on mentoring, online resources, and collaboration to build confidence (Duldulao et al., 2023; Ledesma et al., 2024). In Japan and India, emotional regulation techniques like deep acting, social support, and religious coping are widely used (Taylor, 2020; Hussain et al., 2019).

In Philippine regions such as Nueva Ecija and Davao City, teachers employ strategies such as self-reflection, physical activity, and peer collaboration to manage stress (Santos De Jesus, 2020; Albores Baguio, 2024). Educators also highlight the importance of continuous learning, advocacy for better policies, and institutional support to sustain motivation and effectiveness (Naparan Castañeda, 2021; Toñacao Oliva, 2023).

1.4. Synthesis—Contract teaching occurs when teachers are hired temporarily, rather than being permanent employees. Schools often use this to quickly fill in gaps or adjust to changing student numbers without making long-term commitments. For many teachers, it is an opportunity to begin their careers or work in areas that lack sufficient educators. While this setup can be beneficial, it also has its downsides. Contract teachers usually do not have the same job security or benefits as permanent teachers. This can make it hard for them to feel fully motivated or confident in their roles. They might also miss out on training opportunities and important school decisions, which affects how much they grow professionally. Because of these challenges, experts suggest that schools

and policymakers should find ways to support contract teachers better. This could include fair pay, chances to learn new skills, and ways to become permanent staff if they want. Supporting contract teachers well can improve their work and, in turn, help students learn better. In short, contract teaching is a useful approach but needs to be managed carefully so teachers are treated fairly and education quality stays strong.

1.5. Theoretical Lens—This study is grounded in Contract Theory, which was first explored by Oliver Hart and Bengt Holmström in 1982 (as cited in Schmidt, 2017). Their research explores how individuals and organizations create and develop legal agreements, including employment contracts. In the context of contract teachers, Contract Theory analyzes how these formal and informal agreements are structured between private schools and teachers, often with conflicting interests at play. It examines how these contracts are designed to ensure that both parties fulfill their obligations while managing potential risks, such as information asymmetry and incentive misalignment. The theory is particularly relevant in understanding the unique dynamics of contractual teaching, where the terms of employment, such as salary, duration, and responsibilities, are clearly defined but often come with expectations and limitations that influence a teacher's behavior and motivation. By applying Contract Theory, this study will explore how these employment contracts shape contract teachers' decision-making, job satisfaction, and their ability to navigate the challenges associated with temporary teaching roles. This theory also sheds light on the power dynamics between private schools and their contract teachers. Schools often have more leverage in setting contract terms, while teachers, especially those with limited job security, may face uncertainty or instability in their roles. Contract Theory can thus be used to explore the various "chronicles" or recurring issues that private school teachers face, such as job insecurity, workload manage-

ment, and the search for better incentives within the constraints of their contractual agreements. It offers a lens through which to understand how contract teachers manage their professional lives and adapt to the opportunities and limitations of their employment terms. Contracts are crucial for the functioning of modern societies, as they enable cooperation and trust where there might otherwise be mistrust. Employment contracts govern employees, credit contracts for borrowers, and insurance contracts for property owners. Contracts can range from a single page to hundreds of pages. A critical purpose of a contract is to regulate future actions, such as outlining rewards for good performance and conditions for dismissal. Contracts also serve other purposes, such as sharing risk among the parties involved. Contract theory offers an understanding of contract design, aiming to explain why contracts take various forms and to help create more effective contracts, ultimately shaping societal institutions. Another theory this study is anchored in is Labor Process Theory (LPT), developed by Harry Braverman in 1974 (as cited in Omid Zotto, 2022). This theory, rooted in Marxist thought, examines the control, conditions, and commodification of labor, especially relevant in analyzing contractual employment. It helps explore how contractual teachers experience job insecurity, power relations with management, and the structural constraints of private institutions. This theory critically examines how labor is organized, controlled, and commodified within capitalist systems, making it particularly relevant to the context of private school education, where contractual employment is often driven by institutional cost efficiency and managerial control. LPT enables the researcher to examine the precarious working conditions faced by contractual teachers—such as a lack of job security, limited benefits, and minimal professional autonomy—by situating these conditions within broader systemic and institutional contexts. It highlights the power

imbalances between employers and workers. It helps uncover how contractual teachers are managed, how their labor is valued, and how their professional identities may be shaped or undermined by de-skilling processes and institutional constraints. Moreover, LPT provides insight into how these educators navigate, resist, or adapt to these dynamics, offering a critical framework to interpret their lived experiences not just as isolated cases but as part of a larger pattern of labor commodification in education. Therefore, this theory serves as a powerful tool for understanding the deeper social, economic, and organizational forces influencing the lives of contractual teachers in private schools. Moreover, this study is also grounded in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation (Herzberg et al., 1959, as cited in Nickerson, 2025), which provides valuable insights into the work-related factors that influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The theory divides these factors into two categories: motivators (intrinsic elements such as achievement, recognition, meaningful work, and personal growth) and hygiene factors (extrinsic elements such as salary, job security, policies, and working conditions). In the context of contractual teaching in private schools, this theory is particularly relevant because it helps explain how the lack of stable employment, limited benefits, and insecure contracts (hygiene factors) can contribute to dissatisfaction, while the presence or absence of intrinsic motivators influences how teachers perceive their role and commitment to the profession. The above topics are about the life of contractual teachers' experiences, challenges, and their coping strategies, and their insights that explain their everyday life. Contractual teaching is a widespread practice in the education sector, often driven by institutional needs for flexibility and cost-efficiency. However, this employment model presents significant challenges for teachers, including job insecurity, limited access to benefits and professional development, and the constant pressure to adapt to new environments. Many contractual teachers operate under uncertain conditions, with no guarantee of contract renewal, which affects their ability to plan for long-term personal and professional goals. These experiences often lead to emotional stress, feelings of instability, and a lack of recognition within the academic community. Despite these challenges, contractual teachers exhibit notable resilience. They develop various coping strategies such as fostering strong peer relationships, engaging in self-directed learning, and drawing motivation from their passion for teaching and commitment to student success. Contractual teachers have shared their personal experiences and perspectives regarding their roles and challenges. Their insights reflect a desire for more inclusive and supportive policies that acknowledge their contributions, and promote career growth.

2. Methodology

This chapter will outline the processes and steps involved in conducting the study. This will encompass selecting the study's design, identifying the respondents and the sampling method, choosing the research instruments for data collection, and delineating the data analysis process. The researcher employed artificial intelligence methods to proofread this work meticulously during its preparation. Artificial Intelligence (AI) enhanced the manuscript's quality, coherence, and precision. This methodology is being openly communicated to adhere to ethical norms in research. Leveraging AI for proofreading underscores a commitment to the responsible use of cutting-edge technologies and acknowledges AI's growing role and potential in professional and academic writing.

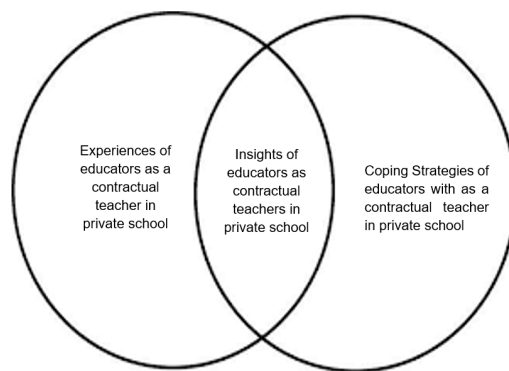


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

The researcher used qualitative research. Using phenomenology as the research methodology, this study aims to understand the phenomenology of teachers teaching under contractual terms. This approach allows for a rich, in-depth exploration of their lived experiences. It prioritizes the subjective realities and emotions of the participants. The study depicts the various aspects of their daily problems and goals. It also gives them a forum to express themselves and have their voices validated. Therefore, by targeting the problematization of contract teachers it is possible to acknowledge their particular position and study their opportunities, perspectives and ways of coping with the demands of their work relationships within private schools. According to Delve and Limpaecher (2024), phenomenology is a method of studying the experiences, interpretations, and consciousness of people. This study aims to gain a better understanding of the personal and working lives of contract teachers. By doing so, the researcher will be interested in gathering diverse views that can be used in the development of policies and practices to enhance the lives of educators in similar employment situations. The most common qualitative methods include focus groups, in-depth interviews, and participant observation, each of which is best suited for gathering specific types of data. Participant observation is well-suited for capturing data on naturally occurring behaviors in their authentic settings. In-depth Interviews (IDIs) are ideal for eliciting data on individuals' experiences, histories, and perspectives, particularly when delving into sensitive subjects. Focus group discussions are a valuable tool for generating data on the cultural norms of a group and providing broad insights into the issues and concerns of the cultural groups or subgroups they represent. Moreover, the study of Alhazmi and Kaufmann (2022) describes the qualitative method of phenomenology as providing a theoretical tool for educational research. It allows researchers to engage in flexible activities that describe and help understand complex phenomena, such as various aspects of human social experience. This article explains how to apply phenomenological qualitative analysis to educational research. The discussion within this article is relevant to researchers interested in conducting cross-cultural qualitative research and adapting phenomenological investigations to understand learners' cross-cultural lived experiences in different social and educational contexts. Furthermore, Phenomenology, as a qualitative research approach, delves into the essence of lived experiences and phenomena (Koirala, 2023). The research process typically involves portraying, understanding, and examining experiences (Stephen, 2023). As Alhazmi and Kaufmann (2022) noted, using phenomenology in educational research is widespread for gaining insight into complex human experiences. Phenomenology allows researchers to understand human experiences and interpret participants' perspectives, as

Mc Coog (2021) highlighted.

2.1. Philosophical Assumptions—The study's philosophical assumption framework is used to collect, analyze, and interpret data within a specific research field, providing the context for the ensuing results and conclusions. The succeeding paragraphs further explain the different categories of standard philosophical assumptions. Foundational ideas that guide research development and methodology in social sciences, including communication and education, are known as philosophical assumptions (Khalifa Khalifa, 2024). These assumptions typically cover ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological educational perspectives, as Khalifa and Khalifa (2024) stated.

2.1.1. Ontological Assumption—The concept of ontology deals with the fundamental nature of reality and its connection to the topic under investigation. It involves the beliefs about the nature of existence and reality (Rahman, 2024). In this regard, qualitative research acknowledges the existence of multiple ontological realities, as noted by Khalifa and Khalifa (2024). Furthermore, their study also mentioned that researchers accept the idea of multiple realities when conducting qualitative research, aiming to document these varied realities. The article also asserts that researchers use quotes and themes from participants' responses to present evidence of different perspectives and realities. The researcher plans to collect evidence from different viewpoints using extensive quotes and themes from the participants' voices and interpretations. Furthermore, the participants' responses will be coded and examined to uncover the interconnectedness and uniqueness of their various reactions. As the research study progresses, the researcher meticulously codes the participants' responses to maintain the reliability of the results, thus ensuring the authenticity of the responses and their independence from

personal biases.

2.1.2. Epistemological Assumptions—The role of epistemological assumptions is significant across various academic disciplines, highlighting the importance of placing humans at the center of research and integrating brain function with physical-body interaction (Su Luvaanjalba, 2021). The discussion delves into the relationship between the subject and the researcher. Additionally, it is crucial to comprehend how knowledge claims are strengthened by maintaining close interaction with research participants to obtain firsthand data. Khalifa and Khalifa (2024) stated that in qualitative research, An epistemological assumption is that acquiring information depends heavily on the quality of interaction with the research subjects. This perspective also emphasizes that knowledge is derived from people's individual experiences. In this study, the researcher is assumed to interact closely with the participants to obtain firsthand information about the inquiry. Axiological Assumption

The concept of axiology pertains to the significance of values in research, specifically highlighting what is deemed suitable (Khalifa Khalifa, 2024). Additionally, Khalifa Khalifa (2024) assert that in qualitative research, the axiological presumption is that the researcher's beliefs and values significantly shape the design and inquiries of the research study. It also contends that the researcher acknowledges the value-laden nature of a research study and the presence of biases within it. The researcher pledges to respect and uphold the dignity and importance of all data acquired from the participants. Additionally, the researcher acknowledges the subjective and value-driven aspects of the gathered data. Furthermore, the researcher will honor and thoughtfully evaluate the participants' feedback from their perspectives.

2.1.3. Rhetorical Assumption—This assumption describes reality from the perspectives of research participants, which is the definition of rhetoric. Instead of focusing on internal validity, external validity, and objectivity, the researcher employs personal voice and qualitative concepts such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. The researcher employed the qualitative research method of phenomenology to explore the experiences, challenges, and insights of school staff and employees in implementing crisis management strategies. This method is advantageous for addressing complex issues and understanding real-life experiences (Neubauer et al., 2019; Badil et al., 2023). It enables researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of phenomena, broaden their perspectives, and interpret meanings from the participants' viewpoints. Phenomenological research typically involves conducting in-depth interviews, with simultaneous data collection and analysis to illuminate specific experiences (Delve Limpaecher, 2022). Neubauer, Witkop, and Varpio (2019) argue that phenomenology focuses on understanding the world from the viewpoint of those who have directly experienced a phenomenon. Phenomenology seeks to uncover the meaning of these experiences, considering what is experienced and how it is experienced.

2.2. Qualitative Assumptions—The research employs a qualitative phenomenological approach and utilizes the in-depth interview method for gathering data. Rutledge and Hogg (2020) states that in-depth interviews are a qualitative research technique commonly used in the social sciences to provide comprehensive insights into participants' viewpoints, experiences, and comprehension of their social environments. This method entails conducting extensive, open-ended discussions with a limited number of participants, allowing for an exploratory approach (Rutledge Hogg, 2020). Interviews can be structured, semi-structured,

or unstructured, with a preference for semi-structured interviews. Qualitative research interviews are crucial for gathering data across various disciplines, particularly in the social sciences (Tenny et al., 2022). These interviews involve posing questions to participants to delve into their perceptions and experiences (Hinton Ryan, 2019). They enable detailed examination from relatively small participant groups and concentrate on the participants' viewpoints (Henink Kaiser, 2022). Interviews are essentially social exchanges where researchers pose questions to gather social research data (Robinson, 2023). They are treasured for their ability to investigate intricate scenarios involving diverse perspectives and values (Hillman, 2022).

2.3. Design and Procedure—The study used a qualitative research design, specifically phenomenology, to interpret the participants' experiences. Depending on the conditions, participants were invited to participate in a focus group discussion conducted either virtually or in person. Afterward, common themes and patterns were identified and analyzed in the participants' responses. The researcher chose this design to focus on educators' experiences and challenges in contractual arrangements. Furthermore, the data collected were analyzed using the thematic analysis method in phenomenological research. Importantly, participants signed an informed consent form before the data collection process began, ensuring that they understood the risks associated with the study and were willing to participate. Additionally, they had the option to withdraw as participants at any point if they felt uncomfortable. Lastly, ethical considerations and health safety protocols were adhered to throughout the study. Qualitative research is an iterative process that aims to understand complex human experiences and behaviors by getting closer to the phenomenon studied (Aspers Corte, 2019). It encompasses various data collection methods, including interviews, observations, and focus groups, with

the researcher serving as a crucial instrument in this process (Awasthy, 2019). The approach emphasizes making new significant distinctions and improving understanding within the scientific community (Aspers Corte, 2019). I used a semi-structured interview guide in this study to conduct more in-depth interviews. This tool served as a manual for interviewing suitable participants. I used audio recorders to easily transcribe and interpret the interviews. The interview questions were designed to address the research questions and gather additional insights from the participants to help identify themes and meanings for this study. To address validity concerns regarding the design and methodology, I consulted research specialists. Expert validators also reviewed and validated the interview guide. The sampling method for selecting research participants was based on the recommendations of the research panel. The researcher will use a referral system based on specific criteria to identify qualified educators to participate in the study. This sampling method, or purposive sampling, is a non-probability technique used in qualitative research to select participants based on characteristics relevant to the study's objectives (Campbell et al., 2020). In other words, participants are chosen deliberately. The identity of the participants will be treated with utmost respect and importance in line with research ethics. The researcher will maintain professionalism when interacting with the research participants.

2.4. Ethical Considerations—My study was built on ethical principles and adhered to the Data Privacy Act of 2012 to safeguard the confidentiality of participant information. I strictly followed ethical guidelines regarding informed consent, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw. To protect their identities, I assigned pseudonyms to all participants. I carefully considered any ethical issues concerning the participants, as ethical considerations were integral to the research process. Adhering to these ethical

standards was essential in fulfilling the study's objective of presenting factual knowledge and truth without personal biases.

2.4.1. Social Value—This study has the potential to enhance life in society. This study explores educators' teaching value and effectiveness in contractual agreements by exploring educators' experiences, challenges, and insights. The researcher was particularly interested in understanding teachers' perceptions and the difficulties of being contractual employees. The findings of this study could serve as a basis for developing programs and policies to support teachers.

2.5. Research Participants—This study's participants were school teachers from Samson Polytechnic College of Davao. The researcher purposively selected ten contractual teachers who had at least two years of experience in the said educational institution. These participants were chosen for their direct involvement in the teaching environment, ensuring they possessed the necessary qualifications and insights related to the study's focus. Andrade (2020) suggested that purposive sampling was suitable because it enabled the selection of participants with direct experience in the investigated topic, guaranteeing the collection of rich and relevant data. I utilized a purposive sampling design since the participants were chosen based on the criteria or purpose of the study. In qualitative research, purposive sampling—also referred to as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling—was a non-probability sampling technique that was frequently employed. Using preset criteria pertinent to a specific research goal, participants were chosen using this technique (Etikan et al., 2022). Purposive sampling was beneficial when the study's goal was to fully comprehend a particular experience, occurrence, or setting (Campbell et al., 2020).

2.5.1. Research Instruments—Qualitative analysis established the study's credibility, transferability, and dependability. The participants'

experiences were audio-recorded during a semi-structured focus group discussion interview. Each participant was asked to participate in a focus group discussion, which was expected to last about three hours.

2.6. Data Collection—To guarantee institutional support and ethical compliance the following was the step-by-step process of gathering the data the researcher needed. The first step I took was to secure an ethics clearance certificate from the appropriate review board. This certificate ensured that the study complied with ethical standards and protected the rights and welfare of the participants. It also demonstrated the researcher's commitment to conducting responsible and respectful research. It provided guidance on obtaining informed consent and maintaining confidentiality throughout the study. I provided an Ethics Compliance Certificate from the ethics committee issued by the Dean of the Graduate School of Rizal Memorial Colleges to secure approval for conducting the study. This endorsement was obtained during the second week of December 2024, specifically on December 12, 2024, allowing me to formally begin the research process within the institution. The approval served as a step in ensuring that all ethical and procedural requirements were in place before the actual data gathering.

A letter was written to the Principal, attaching chapters 1 and 2 and the research instrument. The letter also explained the study's objectives and identified the participants. The researcher then waited for the School Administrators' and Principal's responses before conducting the study. The researcher requested the participants' permission, and they received a formal orientation about the study and the process as participants. The researcher led a focus group discussion using a semi-structured interview guide. The participants' demographics were recorded. The researcher also took notes with the participants' consent and recorded the conversations using a cell phone for easy transcrip-

tion. The researcher actively listened and engaged during the session. Clarifying questions were asked as needed to deepen the discussion and ensure an accurate understanding. Participants were encouraged to share freely, creating a relaxed and open atmosphere. This technique increased trust and resulted in more detailed and meaningful responses. Since the participants were encouraged to use a language with which they were comfortable, the researcher translated any non-English responses into English. Care was taken to preserve the original meaning and context of the participants' statements. The data was categorized and coded. Subsequently, themes were extracted, and the participants' data were compared and contrasted to identify patterns and trends. This enabled the identification of repeating themes and substantial variances in the individuals' experiences. The thematic analysis provided a clear framework for evaluating qualitative data in light of the research objectives.

2.7. Data Analysis—I utilized thematic analysis to examine the collected data and assess the responses of the interview participants. Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative research method for identifying patterns and themes in data (Fuchs, 2023). It focuses on identifying patterns and generating themes (Lochmiller, 2021). This method offers flexibility and theoretical freedom, providing rich and detailed analytical accounts (Majumdar, 2019).

The framework for this study allows for flexibility, enabling data collection and analysis to coincide. Data gathered from Contractual teachers will be reviewed and organized according to recurring topics and themes related to their experiences, challenges, and insights. Drawing from the steps outlined by Fuchs (2023), The process typically involves six steps: getting familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing the themes, defining and naming the themes, and producing a report. This process ensures that the analysis focuses

on capturing teachers' experiences and struggles to work in a contractual arrangement. It is also useful for arranging complex qualitative data into comprehensible patterns and ensure that the analysis is consistent and credible. This systematic strategy improves the validity and depth of the study's findings.

2.7.1. Familiarizing—In this stage, the researcher familiarizes themselves with the data, reading and re-reading it, and noting any initial analytic observations.

2.7.2. Coding—It is widely used in various qualitative analysis methods. It involves creating brief labels for significant data features relevant to the overall research question guiding the analysis. Coding is not merely a data reduction technique but also an analytical process. Therefore, codes represent a semantic and conceptual interpretation of the data. The researcher will assign a code to each piece of data and conclude this stage by organizing all the codes and relevant data extracts.

2.7.3. Searching for themes—In this stage, the researcher will identify coherent and meaningful patterns in the data that directly relate to the research question. This process involves examining the data in depth to uncover recurring elements and categorize them according to each theme, ensuring that only the most relevant information is included. Data segments will be continuously compared to ensure consistency

and alignment within each category. This careful organization helps build a solid foundation for interpreting the findings accurately and meaningfully. Reviewing themes

At this point, the researcher will assess whether the identified themes effectively capture the essence of the data and provide insight into the research question. The researcher will begin refining the themes, exploring their underlying meanings how they interconnect to form a comprehensive narrative.

2.7.4. Defining and naming themes—In this stage, the researcher will analyze each theme in detail, identifying its core elements and ensuring that the theme reflects its central idea. The researcher will then create concise and impactful titles for each theme, aiming for clarity and precision in conveying their significance.

2.7.5. Producing a report—This final stage involves combining the analytical narrative and data extracts into a cohesive and persuasive story. The researcher will present the findings in a clear, organized manner, ensuring that themes, their interconnections, and their relevance to the research question are effectively communicated to the reader. Figure 2 shows that the framework offers a systematic approach to analyzing qualitative data, ensuring that the results are extracted in an organized manner and interpreted in a meaningful way.

3. Results and Discussion

The study findings and their connection to the research objectives are presented in this chapter. The research investigates the workplace realities of private school contract teachers by examining the dominant patterns within their data collection. The research data reveal important information about the career situations that contract teachers encounter, both positively and negatively. All participants received assigned pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality. The analysis positions the findings through a literature review to enhance comprehension of contract teachers' experiences in private educational institutions.

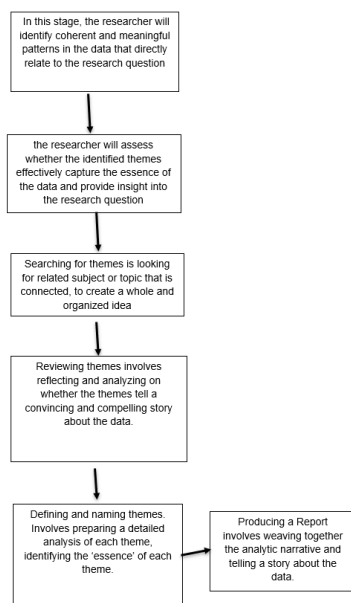


Fig. 2. Analytical Framework of the Study

3.1. Lived Experiences of Contractual Teacher In Private Schools—It was a roller-coaster journey for contract teachers in teaching in every private school. There were happy and sad moments, as well as positive and negative perspectives, which they experienced and will always be part of their lives. The working environment of private school contract teachers comprises both positive and negative aspects, stemming from job instability, high workload expectations, and insufficient institutional backing. Contract teachers experience high levels of stress because their short-term contracts require them to work as much as permanent teachers, albeit for less money and with reduced job benefits. Some teachers use contractual positions to advance their careers, while others believe this practice exploits their labor force by preventing them from securing stable employment. The quality of institutional backing significantly influences teacher experiences, as schools with mentoring programs and equitable treatment create an environment of recognition and support. In contrast, other institutions isolate their teachers and fail to provide recognition. The mixed teacher opinions about their work environment underscore the need to develop poli-

cies that create clear career tracks, offer better pay, and provide stronger support networks to boost both morale and retention rates. Private schools should implement measures to establish fairness in their work environment because this approach will value contract teachers while improving educational standards.

3.1.1. Developing Skills and Values—Private school contract teachers have consistently employed various strategies to engage their students in class. As time passed, they developed skills and values that would fit into their everyday lives in teaching. A contractual school teacher's development requires the acquisition of professional competencies, alongside personal attributes, that enhance their teaching effectiveness and connections within the school community. The development of skills and values enables contractual teachers to handle their temporary employment status and job insecurity while delivering high-quality education. Working in education develops patience and empathy in individuals as they interact with students from diverse backgrounds, thereby affecting their personal and professional growth. Classroom management develops leadership competencies and organizational abilities that serve both educa-

tional and professional objectives. The process leads to ongoing development, which motivates people to learn more technical skills and understand the requirements for technical education. The experience fosters essential interpersonal development, including patience and empathy, while driving individual growth toward professional excellence in the field.

Teachers reflect that their teaching experiences have a significant impact on both their personal and professional growth. Teacher 4 emphasizes how managing diverse students enhances patience, empathy, leadership, and organizational skills. Teacher 8 shares that the role motivates them to pursue further knowledge and skills in the field of technical education. Meanwhile, Teacher 10 highlights the development of patience and empathy as key personal takeaways from the experience. These include using diverse teaching methods to enhance learning, implementing critical thinking, collaboration, and communication, and integrating values into teaching while providing space for reflection (Hasanah et al., 2023). Effective classroom management is crucial, with pre-service teachers applying strategies such as improving self-confidence, careful lesson preparation, and handling student heterogeneity (Purwanti Vania, 2021). However, some areas require improvement, particularly in the use of digital technology and the management of virtual environments. Regular in-service training and workshops are recommended to enhance teachers' competencies (Mustapa Miskon, 2023). Overall, private school teachers demonstrate a positive attitude towards student learning and employ various observation techniques to assess students' affective domain. The statements demonstrate how education should develop skills and values, such as empathy, patience, leadership, and organizational abilities, because these competencies enhance both professional settings and individual growth, as well as interpersonal understanding. The speaker

dedicates themselves to acquiring additional technical education, knowledge, and skills to advance their professional development. These reflections demonstrate that, despite their contractual status, teachers actively embraced growth, utilizing their roles as avenues for ongoing learning.

3.1.2. *Achieving a Sense of Fulfillment—*

Teachers find fulfillment through means that extend beyond their responsibility to deliver lessons and skills, as well as values, to students. Educators derive immense pride from observing their students achieve success, as they believe their teaching roles extend to providing personal guidance and support. The satisfaction stems from the pleasure of watching students develop their abilities and effectively apply classroom knowledge in real-life settings. Several schools of thought equate teachers with "second parents" since they provide their students with developmental care that extends beyond classroom teachings. A teacher experiences deep satisfaction whenever their students succeed academically or personally because teachers understand they contributed significantly to the students' life direction. Teachers find fulfillment in witnessing student growth and success. Teacher 1 highlights the joy of seeing their first batch pass the National Assessment and graduate. Teacher 2 views teaching as a rewarding opportunity to share knowledge and experience. Teacher 4 finds meaning in building relationships with students and seeing their progress, mainly when former students express gratitude and apply lessons in real-life situations. Study tours can enhance teachers' sense of fulfillment, primarily through skill improvement, as well as factors such as social status, career development, and interpersonal relationships (Chen et al., 2024). Teachers' motivation and sense of responsibility influence their classroom management style, with intrinsic value predicting responsibility for teaching quality and endorsement of adaptive management approaches (Berger Girardet,

2020). However, teachers often face challenges in balancing academic content with the development of non-cognitive skills, experiencing stress from an "over-subscribed" curriculum (Ras Ravindranath, 2022). While teachers generally believe they have good rapport with their students, students often perceive this rapport differently, highlighting the importance of teacher-student relationships in fostering student fulfillment (Chang Hall, 2022). These studies emphasize the multifaceted nature of teacher fulfillment, encompassing professional development, classroom dynamics, and broader educational responsibilities. Teachers find fulfillment through various means beyond traditional classroom instruction. While bureaucratic responsibilities can be overwhelming, combining artistic and teaching skills can inspire students and create a sense of community. Friendships, opportunities for personal creativity, and work environments that align with deeply held values contribute to teacher satisfaction. Engaging in students' ethical development, rather than solely focusing on academics, allows teachers to flourish and overcome professional challenges. Furthermore, teachers are increasingly taking on leadership roles that extend beyond the classroom, catalyzing change at the school, district, and national levels. This expanded role enables teachers to leverage their passion and expertise to shape the future of education. Recognizing and nurturing these diverse aspects of teacher fulfillment is crucial for creating dynamic and effective learning environments that benefit both educators and students.

3.1.3. Attaining Personal and Professional Development—The teaching profession within private schools is a fundamental element in fostering personal and career growth. Emotional intelligence stands as a primary area affected by teaching because teachers need to handle different conflicts and student behavior problems. Self-awareness, along with empathy and a calm demeanor under pressure, helps develop

emotional understanding, which encompasses both your own emotions and those of others. The process of dealing with these challenges teaches essential interpersonal skills, which enable teachers to address student needs more effectively and create strong connections with their students. Educating in a private institution allows teachers to encounter a range of teaching challenges and successes that shape their educational perspectives and instructional methodologies. Experiences in private education help teachers develop their teaching methods while steering their career path toward growth, learning, and professional achievement. The integration of emotional intelligence with practical classroom knowledge motivates teachers to pursue extensive personal and professional development. Contractual teachers find meaning in their profession, especially when witnessing student success. Teaching experiences have a significant impact on teachers' personal and professional growth. Teacher 4 emphasizes the development of emotional intelligence through managing student behavior and resolving conflicts. Teacher 6 shares that teaching in a private school brought both challenges and achievements, which profoundly influenced their teaching philosophy, relationships, and overall career direction. Studies show that teachers in private schools are intrinsically motivated to pursue professional development (PD) opportunities, primarily to enhance their instructional abilities and stay current in their field. Professional development (PD) in private schools is often tailored to each institution's specific context and utilized as a tool to maintain a qualified workforce and increase profitability (Özkeskin Yıldız, 2024). Teachers' perceptions of professional development (PD) are generally positive, with private school teachers showing more concern for PD principles than their state school counterparts. However, perceptions may differ between urban and rural private school teachers (Haque, 2020). Workshops are the pre-

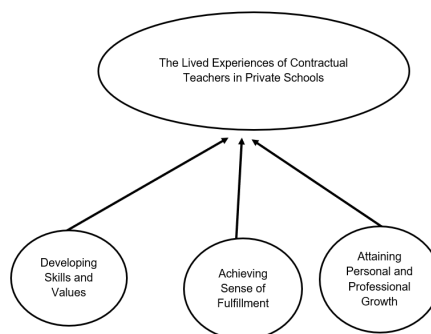


Fig. 3. Emerging Themes on The Experiences and Perceptions of Contract Teachers in Private Schools

ferred professional development (PD) model for many teachers. Reflection is crucial in enhancing teachers' awareness of personal and professional growth, cultivating a reflective learning environment, and promoting a positive affective

state. While many teachers prefer workshops. Experiences in private schools encompass a variety of models and approaches, contributing to teachers' development as lifelong learners and text developers.

Figure 3 illustrates the main themes that emerged from the experiences and perceptions of contract teachers in Private Schools. One central theme is "Developing Skills and Values," which highlights how contract teaching fosters professional competencies such as classroom management, adaptability, and leadership, while also nurturing core values like patience, empathy, and dedication. These teachers continuously learn and grow through their daily challenges and interactions with students. Another key theme is "Achieving a Sense of Fulfillment," reflecting the deep emotional rewards teachers experience when witnessing their students' success. Moments like seeing students pass national assessments, graduate, or express gratitude make the teaching journey profoundly meaningful. The third theme, "Attaining Personal and Professional Growth," shows how teaching shapes a teacher's character and career path. Managing student behavior, overcoming setbacks, and adapting to varying school environments contribute to their emotional intelligence, teaching philosophy, and long-term development. Together, these themes capture the resilience, passion, and growth-oriented mind-

set of contract teachers in private educational institutions.

3.2. Chronicles of Challenges a Contract Teacher Faces—Contract teachers often face a unique set of challenges that shape their professional journey in significant ways. These challenges include job insecurity, lower compensation, and limited access to benefits compared to regular or tenured teachers. Contract teachers must deal with three primary difficulties which consist of unstable employment status alongside reduced pay and restricted benefit access when compared to regular or tenured teachers. The same work responsibilities of contract teachers do not prevent them from experiencing undervaluation and lack of recognition in their educational environment. Teaching professionals must rapidly adjust their workload while managing big student populations and different student requirements with minimum institutional backing or materials. Contract teachers face difficulties between personal development and work requirements since their short-term employment status affects their drive and future career development strategies. The combination of emotional stress and uncertainty exists

frequently in contract teaching but many educators choose to stay due to their dedication for teaching and their students. Contract teachers experience challenging situations that develop their personal resilience and deepen their empathy while creating a strong sense of purpose through these difficult circumstances. Below are the emerging themes that describe the challenges encountered by the contract teachers in school.

3.2.1. Facing Work Insecurity—Work insecurity stands as the most critical challenge that contract teachers must confront. Contract teachers face job insecurity because their employment status remains temporary which depends on budget availability student demand and administrative decisions for contract renewals. The unstable employment situation creates substantial stress because teachers never know if the upcoming academic year will be their final one in the position. Teachers report feeling uncertain about their teaching careers because they lack assurance of tenure or long-term teaching prospects. The constant danger of retrenchment which means being dismissed without notice creates additional emotional and professional challenges for teachers. The uncertainty about job retention at the school creates professional vulnerability which prevents teachers from planning ahead or establishing themselves in their roles. Contract teachers demonstrate dedication through their work yet they remain in constant uncertainty because their system fails to deliver stability. Contract teachers face job insecurity as a major challenge in their professional journey. Teacher 3 and Teacher 5 express stress from the uncertainty of contract renewals and the ongoing need to search for new positions. Teacher 6 adds that temporary hiring based on budget, institutional demand, and administrative decisions worsens the instability. Meanwhile, Teacher 10 highlights the constant threat of retrenchment, emphasizing that even long-time teachers remain unsure

about the continuity of their service. This insecurity has adverse effects on organizational commitment, perceived performance, and intention to quit. Research indicates that a majority of teachers perceive moderate to high levels of both explicit and implicit job insecurity, leading to social, psychological, and educational impacts (Çolak Altınkurt, 2022). The precarity in teaching is particularly acute for teachers of color, stemming from neoliberal restructuring such as privatization and deregulation (Castro, 2022). To address these issues, recommendations include employing all teachers on permanent contracts, increasing teacher autonomy, improving employment benefits, and providing economic. These measures could help mitigate the negative effects of job insecurity on teachers and the education system. The above statements are descriptions and related studies of job or work insecurity that that would explain the context of this theme. Educators maintaining unclear contracts alongside a little benefits and facing unstable working arrangements experience negative consequences for their career development and general health conditions. Low job security leads to educational institutions and students bearing long-term negative outcomes because of employee teaching quality decline and weakened commitment. To address job insecurity, contract teachers need multiple strategies. One solution is to implement clear and fair contracts that outline job expectations, benefits, and renewal terms. Providing pathways to regularization or permanent employment based on performance can also help reduce uncertainty. The government must establish policies that defend non-permanent staff interests through fair employment practices. Schools should allocate funds to professional development programs that enhance teacher qualifications, thus making them more valuable and improving their prospects for long-term employment. Performance-based incentives function to enhance contract teacher motivation and play a

role in providing them with better job stability and recognition opportunities.

3.2.2. Handling a Heavy Work Load—Contract teachers handle workloads which sometimes match those of regular and tenured teachers. Contract teachers maintain a temporary position yet must execute multiple duties including lesson planning, material preparation, grade evaluation, student supervision and school participation. The additional responsibilities that extend past normal teaching hours take up evenings and weekends thus creating difficulties for contract teachers to achieve work-life balance. Contract teachers often receive multiple subject and grade level assignments without any decrease in their workload requirements. The combination of performing at full-time staff standards while lacking their job security and benefits and recognition creates additional mental and emotional challenges. The demanding workload of contract teaching becomes even harder to manage because teachers must constantly worry about their contracts not being renewed or being terminated. This creates a situation where the job of a contract teacher is both exhausting and uncertain. Contract teachers also struggle with maintaining a healthy work-life balance due to demanding workloads. Teacher 1 shares that lesson planning, grading, and administrative duties often extend beyond school hours. Teacher 4 adds that despite their contractual status, they are still expected to fulfill the same responsibilities as regular teachers. Teacher 7 highlights the pressure of managing an 8-hour workload daily, while Teacher 9 emphasizes the difficulty of sustaining productivity without a full teaching load. Research indicates that contract and temporary teachers often face workloads comparable to permanent staff, but with added pressure to prove themselves (Stacey et al., 2021). Heavy workloads negatively impact teachers' quality of life, particularly for less physically active educators. During the pandemic, private school teachers in developing

countries experienced below-average resilience in facing workload challenges, affecting their performance and well-being. At the university level, excessive workloads can lead to stress and burnout among teachers, ultimately impacting student academic achievement (Kanwal et al., 2023). However, teachers who effectively manage their workloads are better able to support their students, resulting in improved learning outcomes. These findings highlight the importance of addressing teacher workload issues to enhance both educator well-being and student performance across various educational settings. Contract teachers must balance their extensive workload with their personal life. Contract teachers face the challenge of performing all teacher responsibilities, even though their employment is temporary, while regular teachers maintain these duties. The duties assigned to contract teachers often exceed regular school hours, leaving them with minimal time for rest or personal activities. The daily routine of contract teachers can become overwhelming because they need to verify their work duration against eight-hour limits and the total number of assigned tasks. The situation becomes even more demanding because they must meet their obligations while lacking job security and support. Contract teachers face challenging circumstances because they receive no guaranteed full workload, yet often face excessive workloads without appropriate pay, which creates physical and mental health problems. Professional duties face daily battles with personal life but teachers persist due to their student-focused passion and responsibility.

3.2.3. Dealing with Salary Problems—Salaries represent the main challenge that contract teachers must overcome. Contract teachers earn less pay than permanent teachers even though they perform equivalent work tasks. Their compensation fails to match their experience level and does not arrive on time or at the appropriate amount. Contract teachers re-

ceive compensation only during their teaching months because they do not receive payments during school breaks or summer vacations. The lack of regular benefits, including health insurance, bonuses, and leave credits, creates additional financial instability for contract teachers. Their restricted income prevents them from fulfilling both personal and family requirements and saving money for the future or establishing stability in their teaching career. The low and unpredictable salary structure in teaching continues to discourage educators because it makes them feel unrecognized and undervalued in their profession. Contract teachers often face financial instability due to low salaries and lack of benefits. Teacher 2 points out that pay is generally lower compared to other industries. Teacher 3 experienced unpaid summer breaks due to a "no work, no pay" policy. Teacher 6 highlights common issues such as job insecurity, reduced compensation, and limited benefits. Teacher 7 notes that fewer teaching loads result in lower pay. Meanwhile, Teacher 9 emphasizes the added difficulty of low income combined with insufficient support and benefits. In developing countries like India, the rapid expansion of primary education has led to increased hiring of contract teachers to meet demand amid fiscal constraints. Contract teachers in many countries face significant salary challenges compared to permanent teachers, despite performing equivalent work (Sobari Hartini, 2020). This wage disparity can negatively impact teacher performance and productivity (Rosmanida et al., 2022). In Indonesia, the compensation system for contract teachers often falls short of expectations, with only work environment factors perceived positively (Apriliyani Meilani, 2021). However, a study of 15 African countries presents a more nuanced picture, finding that while teachers' monthly earnings may be lower in some countries, their hourly earnings are generally comparable when accounting for fewer reported working hours. Additionally, teachers

often receive more non-pecuniary benefits and are more likely to hold second jobs than other workers (Evans et al., 2022). These findings highlight the complexity of teacher compensation issues and the need for context-specific solutions to address salary disparities and improve overall working conditions for contract teachers. One of the most problems faced by contract teachers stem from their salary issues. The increasing educational needs in developing nations have resulted in widespread employment of contract teachers through cost-saving initiatives. Contract teachers earn substantially less money than regular teachers while facing worse working environments. The wage gap between regular teachers and contract teachers leads to reduced motivation and decreased morale and professional commitment which negatively impacts educational quality. To address this, government should have started to propose policies which aim to solve salary problems and recruitment challenges and professional development issues. The implementation of contract teachers has expanded educational opportunities in underprivileged areas yet it has generated doubts about teaching quality and educator professional standards. Figure 4 highlights the key challenges faced by contract teachers in private schools, revealing the complexity of their professional experiences. The theme "Job Insecurity" expresses uncertainty about renewal deals and job instability alongside fear of unexpected termination. This lack of security not only affects their career plans but also causes emotional stress and a sense of instability. Another prominent theme, "Heavy Workload," shows that despite their temporary status, contract teachers are expected to carry the same responsibilities as regular staff including lesson planning, grading, and student supervision often without the same support or benefits. The theme "Salary Problems" also emerged, revealing concerns about low and inconsistent pay, lack of benefits, and financial strain. Contract teach-

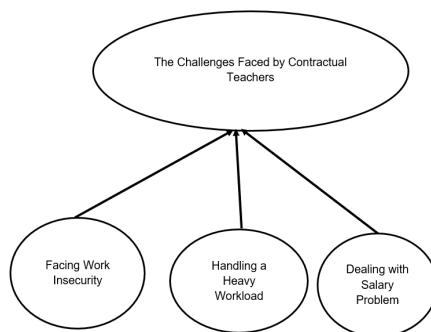


Fig. 4. Emerging Themes on Challenges Encountered of Contract Teachers

ers experience undervalues from their peers although they carry out the same responsibilities as their permanent teaching colleagues. The combination of demanding challenges becomes

clear to demonstrate daily struggles faced by contract teachers which requires the teaching profession to create more stable system-wide support policies.

3.3. Coping Strategies of Contractual Teachers—Contract teachers have encountered numerous challenges in their roles, from job insecurity to heavy workloads, and to address these difficulties, they often rely on various coping strategies. One common strategy is time management, where teachers prioritize tasks, set clear boundaries, and create efficient schedules to manage their responsibilities, even if it means extending work hours. To deal with emotional stress and the pressure of uncertainty, many contract teachers turn to peer support or mentor relationships within their schools, finding strength in collaboration and shared experiences. Outside of their professional duties teachers practice self-care through recreational activities which enable them to relax and restore their energy by working out and participating in their personal interests or connecting with dear ones. The process of adapting to current circumstances depends largely on the levels of resilience teachers demonstrate. The experience develops within them a mentality to persevere while keeping their thoughts on their positive contributions. students' lives, which helps them remain motivated despite challenges. Lastly, some contract teachers embrace professional development opportunities, continuously improv-

ing their skills and knowledge as a way to gain more job security and future prospects. These strategies help contract teachers navigate the complexities of their roles, maintaining their commitment to teaching and their students. Below are the following emerged sub-themes that allow the reader to easily understand the coping strategies of participants in their challenges as contract teachers.

3.3.1. Strengthening Positive Mindset—

As mentioned above, contract teachers surely experience challenges in their professional lives. The ability to maintain a positive outlook functions as an effective tool for contractual teachers who need to handle their job instability and professional obstacles. Educators who dedicate attention to their personal growth alongside maintain optimistic attitudes and show resilience achieve better results in stress and uncertainty management. Contractual teachers view every teaching assignment as a chance to develop professionally while inspiring students and improving their abilities. Such an outlook enables teachers to maintain their drive and self-assurance as well as their readiness to address challenges in their professional lives. Through professional relationships with students and colleagues they experience professional fulfilment

even though their contracts remain limited. It is not impossible to have a positive mindset in life, especially amidst challenges. As teachers stated below, it shows that even when they are at their lowest, they still see the brighter side of themselves and of life in general.

To manage the challenges of contract teaching, educators adopt a positive mindset and focus on their strengths. Teacher 3 handles difficulties by focusing on the positive aspects of the job and requesting subjects aligned with their expertise. Teacher 7 emphasizes the importance of staying optimistic and ignoring negativity from the administration or colleagues. Teacher 9 copes by stepping out of their comfort zone and avoiding stress. Research suggests that teachers' mindsets play a crucial role in their professional well-being and effectiveness, especially during challenging times. A growth mindset, the belief that abilities can improve through effort, is associated with higher life satisfaction and self-efficacy when facing teaching innovations or adapting to online teaching during the pandemic (Lee et al., 2023). Similarly, a positive stress mindset is associated with lower job stress and reduced turnover among preschool teachers (Kim et al., 2020). Factors influencing a teacher's mindset include internal elements, such as background and success experiences, as well as external factors, including the learning climate and principal support (Zilka et al., 2019). The pandemic has significantly impacted teachers' mindsets, necessitating a progressive approach to overcome challenges and convert threats into opportunities (Bharati Pandey, 2021). These findings highlight the importance of fostering growth mindsets and positive attitudes among teachers to enhance their resilience and effectiveness in the face of professional challenges. The above study demonstrates that teachers' psychological attitudes significantly impact their educational success and professional satisfaction during stressful teaching situations. Teachers who

embrace a growth mindset develop self-efficacy, along with enhanced life satisfaction and improved adaptability, particularly during times of teaching reforms or transitions to online learning during a pandemic. A positive outlook towards stress and challenges helps teachers manage their job stress and lowers their risk of burnout, together with turnover. A teacher's mindset is shaped by either their background and past achievements or external factors influenced by the school environment and administrative support. The pandemic has highlighted the need for progressive thinking, motivating educators to transform challenges into new opportunities. Professional growth, combined with positive thinking, is a fundamental requirement for teachers who want to establish resilience and maintain their effectiveness in the face of workplace challenges. These enable educators to adapt to changing demands and maintain a high level of motivation. Long-term job happiness and professional fulfillment are also influenced by ongoing learning and a positive outlook on life. Such growth-oriented attitudes can help teachers navigate challenges more effectively.

3.3.2. Sustaining Resiliency and Adaptability—Contract teachers often work under uncertain and challenging conditions, experiencing job instability, minimal benefits, and excessive workload demands. Under difficult working circumstances, numerous teachers prove their resilient nature by maintaining their commitment and returning to stability. The ability to maintain high-quality work despite receiving no permanent status support is evident in the performance of these teachers. Contract teachers also develop the essential quality of adaptability. Contract teaching professionals must routinely change teaching positions, often moving between different schools and adapting to changing student profiles. Contract teachers utilize resourcefulness to address management challenges and acquire teaching strategies, while remaining responsive to school policies and ed-

educational technology. Their ability to adapt and their openness to change enable them to face obstacles while continuing their focus on student education. Contract teachers survive through flexibility and maintain a thriving status because these two traits work together in unpredictable educational settings. The combination of these traits enables teachers to develop both personally and professionally when they face the challenges of their role. To overcome the challenges of contractual teaching, teachers emphasize the importance of adaptability, resilience, and a proactive mindset. Teacher 5 remains flexible by quickly adjusting to new school settings, teaching strategies, and diverse student needs. Similarly, Teacher 1 highlights how becoming more resilient and adaptable helps them persist in teaching and stay committed to their students despite difficulties. Adaptability, defined as the ability to adjust thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in response to new or uncertain situations, is crucial for teachers working in dynamic environments. Fostering adaptability in pre-service teacher education programs is recommended to prepare teachers for the ever-changing educational landscape (Granziera et al., 2019). These findings underscore the importance of cultivating adaptability and resilience in teachers to enhance their effectiveness and well-being. Research indicates that adaptability and resilience are essential for teachers, particularly those working in challenging conditions. Early career teachers require cognitive, behavioral, and emotional adaptation to navigate classroom and staffroom challenges, with self-reflection and supportive relationships enhancing these capacities (Sheridan et al., 2022). Out-of-field teachers teaching English demonstrate adaptability and resilience in overcoming professional demands. School-level teacher adaptability is positively associated with teacher self-efficacy and, consequently, with student self-efficacy across multiple nations (Collie et al., 2020). Adaptability and resilience are es-

sential qualities for teachers, especially those working under challenging or uncertain conditions. Educators utilize these traits to modify their thinking, emotional responses, and behavioral patterns when working in changing environments while handling teaching responsibilities. The strength of these capacities increases through supportive personal connections and self-reflective practices. Teaching professionals who demonstrate adaptable behavior by adjusting instruction methods or teaching challenging subjects often experience enhanced self-efficacy, which in turn leads to better educational outcomes for students. Early development of these traits within education training programs enables teachers to maintain readiness for the evolving learning environment. Managerial adaptability, together with resilience, represents key elements teachers need to maintain both their mental health and their educational performance during current difficulties. These traits help educators stay focused and resourceful in the face of uncertainty and rapid change. They foster a sense of control and confidence, even in an unpredictable work environment.

3.3.3. Gaining Colleague Support—One of the key coping strategies of contract teachers is seeking support and collaboration with colleagues and school staff. Teachers recognize that they need help beyond their own capacity, so they seek assistance to find better solutions and reduce their workload. Teachers who collaborate with colleagues can share ideas and resources, receive emotional support for their duties, and effectively manage complex scenarios. Strong professional relationships with colleagues, as well as administrators, build a sense of community and belonging, which benefits insecure full-time teaching professionals in particular situations. The ability to work together with colleagues through open discussion enables educators to master hurdles that lead to individual and professional development. To manage challenges, contract teachers rely on collaboration

and support from colleagues and administrators. Teacher 10 emphasizes the importance of working together with fellow educators and staff to address challenges. Teacher 8 shares that asking for help provides more time and effective ways to cope with work-related issues. Teachers 5 and 6 stress the importance of building strong relationships and seeking support from peers and school leaders to overcome obstacles and succeed in their roles. Educators often experience high levels of stress and low overall well-being due to the demanding nature of their work. To manage these challenges, they adopt various coping strategies, with support from colleagues and family serving as a common and effective approach that provides both emotional relief and practical guidance. Teachers implement various techniques, including stress-management skills, as well as strategies to avoid stress and methods to adjust workload through better planning and lowered expectations. The methods yield different results in stress mitigation because some strategies build resilience, while maladaptive tactics tend to exacerbate stress and reduce well-being. Studies indicate that educators face significant stress and challenges in their work, with findings showing low well-being scores and high perceived stress levels among educators. To cope with these challenges, teachers employ various strategies. Seeking support from colleagues and family is a common approach, providing emotional support

and problem-solving resources (Varghese Selvasundaram, 2024). Other coping methods include shielding and escape, learning established stress-management techniques, and adjusting work practices through planning and lowering ambitions (Bjørndal et al., 2022). The effectiveness of coping strategies varies, with some educators using maladaptive methods that correlate with poorer well-being and higher stress. Gender differences in stress perception have been observed, with female educators reporting significantly higher stress levels than their male counterparts (Savage Woloshyn, 2022). These findings underscore the importance of developing effective stress-management strategies in teacher education and school settings. Research data reveals that female teaching personnel experience elevated stress compared to their male counterparts, thus necessitating strategic assistance programs. Educational institutions must establish both teacher welfare support programs and incorporate effective coping techniques into their training curriculum so teachers can maximize their productivity and wellness. Figure 5 highlights the key strategies contract teachers use to cope with the challenges in their professional lives. The core concept of "Strengthening Positive Mindset" demonstrates that optimistic thinking enables teachers to maintain their drive even when facing employment instability, excessive workloads, and various pressures.

Contract teachers demonstrate remarkable flexibility and strength through their ability to adapt to changing work dynamics, which forms the core theme "Sustaining Resiliency and Adaptability." They also demonstrate exceptional adaptability and resilience through their ability to handle new teaching positions, resource constraints, and method modifications, which allows them to maintain their teaching effectiveness. The last category, "Gain-

ing Colleague Support," highlights the importance of professional relationships between educators. Contract teachers build support networks with their colleagues and administrators, which provides them with shared resources, emotional backing, and collaborative opportunities. The support network enables teachers to handle their stress while finding solutions to problems and maintaining their role connections. These themes demonstrate how contract

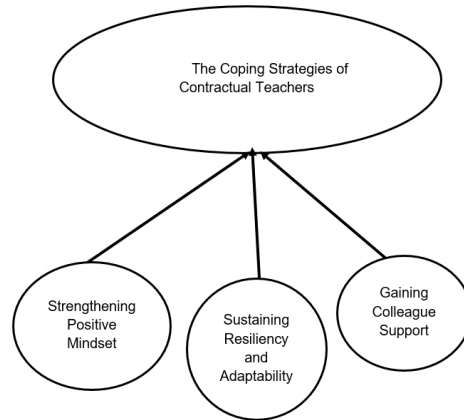


Fig. 5. Emerging Themes on Coping Strategies of Contract Teachers In Their Professional Lives

teachers demonstrate resilience while adapting strong community bonds to achieve student success to their professional challenges through their success.

4. Implications and Future Directions

In exploring the lives of private contract school teachers, it is essential to recognize their experiences, challenges, and the values they acquire in their everyday lives. Understanding the implications and future directions of this study is crucial for policymakers, school administrators, and teachers to gain insight into how contract teaching affects individuals and society. The findings indicate that contract teachers in private schools experience professional and emotional growth despite facing significant challenges, including job insecurity, a heavy workload, and low pay. Contract Theory explains their lack of stability and power, while Labor Process Theory highlights the intense demands placed on them. Still, they remain motivated through personal growth, student success, and peer support, aligning with the Two-Factor Theory of Motivation, which emphasizes the role of intrinsic rewards in job satisfaction.

4.1. Implications—This study highlights the complex realities faced by contract teachers, which can be better understood through the lens of Contract Theory and Labor Process Theory. According to Contract Theory, the employment relationship between schools and contract teachers is shaped by incomplete and temporary agreements, which often lead to uncertainty and reduced incentives for teachers to commit to their roles fully. This implies that improving the clarity and fairness of contract terms could enhance teacher motivation and performance. These theories suggest that addressing both the contractual arrangements and the everyday working conditions of contract teachers is crucial for enhancing their job satisfaction and teaching quality. This, in turn, will benefit the broader educational system by promoting a more stable and motivated teaching workforce. The teaching profession has a dual impact on both personal development and professional advancement for contract teachers. Teaching professionals achieve professional satisfaction by observing their students achieve success and by building essential skills, including patience and empathy, alongside developing their leadership skills. The teaching experiences guide their professional development while fostering relationships between teachers and students, creating an environment that enhances

both teaching skills and personal well-being. Contract teaching plays a crucial role in developing both professional competencies and educational values in educators, even though it is a temporary arrangement. However, while contractual teaching contributes meaningfully to a teacher's growth, its temporary nature often limits opportunities for long-term professional engagement and recognition. Many contract teachers find themselves excluded from institutional decision-making, professional training, or promotions that are typically reserved for permanent staff. This exclusion can create a sense of professional stagnation despite their active contributions to student success and school development. Still, through resilience and passion, many contractual educators continue to find purpose in their roles, using the experience as a stepping stone to refine their teaching philosophy, adapt to diverse learning environments, and affirm their commitment to the profession. The difficulties associated with contract teaching, including employment insecurity, excessive workloads, and salary issues, generate substantial job pressure and instability. Teachers find it more challenging to create career plans due to their uncertain status, often held through non-tenured contracts, and the unpredictable nature of reopenings. Long working hours, along with planning classes, grading students, and administrative responsibilities, often surpass traditional working hours, which diminishes the work-life balance for teachers. Contract teachers face increased stress because their salary benefits are lower than those of full-time teachers, and they earn less money, which creates ongoing financial concerns. Contract teachers address their professional challenges through positive thinking, resilience development, and by seeking support from their colleagues. Educators who maintain their love for teaching tend to choose a specialization in their favorite subjects to sustain their enthusiasm for the work. Staff members display adaptability and resilience in coping

with new teaching environments while developing a solid commitment to their students. Strong professional relationships between teachers and administrators, as well as with colleagues, create an essential support network that helps them manage the uncertainties of contract teaching. Better educational results would emerge from institutional backing and professional development support, as well as reasonable compensation packages for contract teachers. The themes above were collected to create a comprehensive idea that would fit the summary for every indicator, including their experiences, challenges, and insights in their daily lives. The experiences of contract teachers highlight the dual impact of their profession on personal and professional growth. Many teachers find fulfillment in witnessing student success, developing essential skills like patience and empathy, and enhancing their leadership abilities. Their teaching journey shapes their philosophy and career trajectory, demonstrating how meaningful relationships with students contribute to both instructional effectiveness and personal satisfaction. These experiences suggest that contract teaching, despite its temporary nature, plays a crucial role in shaping educators' skills and values. However, the challenges associated with contract teaching, such as job insecurity, heavy workloads, and salary issues, create significant stress and instability. The absence of job permanence and the uncertainty surrounding contract renewals hinder teachers from setting long-term career goals. Furthermore, the workload is often overwhelming, encompassing tasks such as lesson preparation, student assessments, and administrative responsibilities that frequently spill over into personal time, disrupting a healthy work-life balance. Compensation remains another pressing concern, as contract teachers are typically offered lower wages and limited benefits compared to regular faculty, leaving many struggling with financial insecurity. To cope with these difficulties, contract teachers employ vari-

ous strategies, including maintaining a positive mindset, developing resilience, and seeking support from colleagues. Many educators focus on their passion for teaching and choose to specialize in subjects they enjoy, which helps them stay motivated. Adaptability and resilience enable them to adjust to new teaching environments and methodologies, ensuring continued commitment to their students. Additionally, strong professional relationships with colleagues and administrators serve as a crucial support system, helping them navigate the uncertainties of contract teaching. These insights suggest that institutional support, professional development opportunities, and fair compensation could significantly enhance the experiences of contract teachers, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes.

4.1.1. Future Directions—To build on the insights of this study and ensure continuous improvement in understanding and supporting contractual teaching in private schools, the following future directions are proposed:

4.1.2. School Administrators—Private school administrators need to develop and execute reforms which will enhance the employment situation for their contractual teaching staff. The establishment of secure contracts combined with clear job expectations and better benefits and a framework for contract renewal or permanent employment should be implemented. School administrators need to support policies which guarantee better job stability and fair treatment for contractual teachers in private schools. Educators feel more secure and included, which might improve their dedication and performance. Fair treatment also helps reduce turnover rates and more cooperative learning environment.

4.1.3. Teachers—The institution should provide contractual teachers with possibilities to both develop professionally and advance their career. Private schools must establish formal professional development systems which pro-

vide training and career advancement opportunities to their contractual teachers even though they hold temporary positions. A proper appreciation system would enhance teacher career satisfaction along with encouraging longer teacher tenure and increased workplace happiness.

4.1.4. Future Researchers—Future studies should evaluate how contractual teachers maintain their work and personal life integration together with their job contentment. Research should analyze the difficulties contractual teachers encounter between work duties and home commitments and investigate the governmental impact on their job satisfaction and stress degrees along with general well-being. Research which clarifies these teacher dynamics will help develop improved policy measures for teacher support. Students

Research into contractual teaching settings must study teacher-student interactions because it helps explain how short-term contracts influence both educational quality and student achievement results. The school environment must maintain supportive structures which allow contractual instructors to develop student relationships because this connection promotes student participation and improved educational results.

4.1.5. Community and Stakeholders—School administrators together with policy makers need to work with educational stakeholders and community members to solve contractual teacher issues. Collaborations among professional groups and educational organizations and community members and active groups would enable shared resources and mentoring services and new policies supporting better contractual teacher conditions in private schools. These future directions offer actionable steps that can help address the challenges faced by contractual teachers in private schools, improve their working conditions, and ultimately contribute to a more sustainable and supportive teaching environment.

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