

The relationship between teachers' organizational commitment and career anxiety

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Abstract: In this study, it was aimed to examine the relationship between teachers' organizational commitment and career anxiety. A cross-sectional correlational design belonging to the relational survey model was used. A simple random sampling method was utilized to determine the sample. The sample consisted of 384 teachers. Personal Information Form, Teachers' Career Anxiety Scale, and Organizational Commitment Scale were applied to collect the data. In data analysis, descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and regression analysis were used. In the study, teachers' perceptions of career anxiety were found to be high, and their perceptions of organizational commitment were found to be moderate. A negative and lower significant relationship was found between teachers' career anxiety and organizational commitment. It was determined that teachers' career anxiety scores could be significantly predicted by their organizational commitment responses. It was concluded that in order to increase the organizational commitment of teachers, it is necessary to realize their career anxiety reasons and levels. Suggestions were made to prevent the factors that hinder organizational commitment and to decrease the career anxiety of teachers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, as humanity has taken significant steps towards modernization, societal structures have been influenced by the developments and changes brought about by this process of modernization, giving rise to the need for the reconstruction of society. The foundation of this reconstruction lies in education. To achieve the desired goals in education, effective communication among all stakeholders is crucial. One of the most important stakeholders in this process is teachers. The motivation and well-being of teachers can significantly impact the effectiveness of the education system. However, teachers face various challenges, particularly concerning their career paths and organizational commitment. These challenges include uncertainty in professional advancement, job security anxieties, and a perceived lack of support. These factors can increase teachers' career anxiety and decrease their commitment to their institutions, leading to reduced job satisfaction and productivity. Understanding the complex relationship between teachers' career anxieties and organizational commitment is crucial for

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educators, administrators, and policymakers. By addressing the challenges faced by teachers, educational institutions can foster a supportive environment that promotes strong organizational commitment among teachers, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of education.

Teachers, who directly impact every aspect of education, play an active role in the reconstruction of society (Yaman *et al.*, 2022). Teachers, who hold a crucial role, see the students they educate as a reflection of themselves. This situation underscores the need to enhance the quality of the teaching profession for the qualitative development of the education system in the reconstruction of society. Teachers, entrusted with the critical mission of shaping the future through education (Jacobson-Lundeberg, 2016), need to be open to development, skillful, and capable of easily adapting to innovations in order to successfully fulfill their missions. The acquisition of the knowledge and skills that teachers need can only be achieved through their professional development. The professional development of teachers, specialization in their fields, or gaining different perspectives is possible through transitioning between various career stages. It is expected that the perceptions, ideas, concerns, anxieties, and expectations of teachers will undergo changes at each different career stage. Therefore, it is useful to explain how the concept of a career is defined and what it means for teachers.

In the 1970s, the concept of career, which gained popularity and began to be studied, is expressed as 'Carrière' in French and 'Career' in English. According to Klatt, Murdick, and Schuster (1985, p.380), career implies progress and is defined as upward mobility in the organizational or professional hierarchy. Similarly, Bayraktaroğlu (2006, p.137) describes a career as an individual's progression through skill and experience acquisition over the course of their professional life.

In today's context, the concept of a career, defined as a way for individuals to achieve self-actualization, the highest level in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Çelenk, 2022), can be interpreted as encompassing aspects such as "from the early stages of their career and learning journey, individuals initially aim to learn, but over time, they also aim to acquire a profession, and this goal shapes their education and time" (Sarıkoğlu, 2019). Therefore, the career cycle of teachers is seen as a process that begins with choosing the teaching profession. A review of the literature reveals that the majority of studies on career anxiety are conducted with university students and adults at the beginning of their career development (Hardin *et al.*, 2006; Pisarik *et al.*, 2017; Şahin *et al.*, 2019). However, considering the ever-changing employment policies, sociological, and economic conditions, it is likely that individuals who continue their career journey also experience career anxiety. Particularly in educational organizations, teachers with diverse needs and characteristics experience different anxieties at each stage of their careers (Aydın, 2018).

The teaching profession has always stood out for its profound impact on the lives of students. Consequently, teachers actively monitor all developments in the changing world to provide the highest benefit to their students. However, in this process of monitoring, teachers often face numerous challenges and pressures. Scovel (1978) stated that anxiety can be defined in two different ways: "debilitating anxiety," which hinders the learning process and impedes individual success, and "facilitating anxiety," which leads individuals to achieve success beyond their natural capabilities. While facilitating anxiety motivates individuals to learn and encourages active participation in the learning process, debilitating anxiety causes excessive distress and self-doubt (Scovel, 1978). Indeed, it is possible to define anxiety as a driving force that motivates individuals to take action. Although anxiety generally has a negative connotation, as long as it remains at a healthy level, it can, contrary to popular belief, act as a driving force that leads individuals towards success. Fuller (1969) evaluates this situation from a developmental perspective and argues that occupational anxiety should be experienced and resolved in order to become a better teacher. In this context, facilitating anxiety can be considered an element that increases teacher motivation.

Nevertheless, among these challenges, career anxiety emerges as a critical factor among teachers, becoming a genuine and widespread sources of concern in today's educational environment. Career anxiety manifests itself among teachers due to various factors, including education reforms, standardized tests, classroom management, the challenges of meeting constantly evolving curricula, and addressing different student needs (Engin & İpek, 2020; İnandı & Gılıç, 2020; Karatepe *et al.*, 2021). Collectively, these factors create a storm of stress and anxiety. This anxiety significantly impacts the well-being of teachers, job satisfaction, and their overall commitment to educational institutions. Indeed, when teachers' commitment to the school weakens, it negatively affects the degree to which the school achieves its goals and becomes an obstacle to its success (Celep, 2000).

In recent years, a rich body of literature has established the role of teachers in improving student outcomes (Akkurt & Karabağ-Köse, 2019; Lipesa, 2018; McLean & Connor, 2015; Sammons, Toth & Sylva, 2017; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). There is also ample evidence in the literature that school administrators' impact on students is mediated through teachers (Çağlar & Çınar, 2021; Franklin, 2016; Yakışıklı *et al.*, 2023). In this context, it can be argued that one of the ways school principals influence teachers is through their organizational commitment. Therefore, it is observed that highly motivated teachers also demonstrate high organizational commitment (Ertürk & Aydın, 2016; Memişoğlu & Kaya, 2017).

In the field of education, organizational commitment is a critical component of a teacher's overall professional experience. Allen and Meyer (1996) define organizational commitment as the degree to which employees adopt the goals and norms of an organization, expressed as the emotional attachment felt by employees towards the organization and their desire to continue existing in the organization. Dağlı *et al.* (2018) view organizational commitment as a factor that increases employees' participation in the organization, commitment to organizational values and goals, and organizational effectiveness. Thus, for teachers, organizational commitment signifies the loyalty, dedication, and devotion they show towards their schools.

This research comprehensively examines the organizational commitment of teachers, considering three dimensions: emotional, normative, and continuance commitment (Meyer *et al.*, 1991). Each dimension contributes to the general connection a teacher has with the school. For instance, emotional commitment reflects a teacher's emotional commitment to the organization, which can be equated to an emotional commitment to the school. A teacher with strong emotional commitment will continue to take on tasks within or outside their job description as long as their values align with those of the organization (Demirel, 2009). Factors such as job satisfaction, organizational justice, and organizational citizenship have positive effects on emotional commitment, while stress-related factors like anxiety and burnout have negative effects on the emotional connection teachers feel towards their schools.

On the other hand, normative commitment is defined as the ethical or moral obligation felt by an employee to stay in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). As education professionals, teachers are expected to feel a high degree of normative commitment, viewing staying in school and fulfilling their duties as a necessity. However, if teachers perceive their dedication as unrewarded, their normative commitment may decrease.

The third commitment dimension explored in this study is continuance commitment, which sees staying in the organization as a conscious awareness related to costs (Örücü & Kışlalıoğlu, 2014). In other words, continuance commitment prevents the loss of investments, such as time and effort, made by an employee in the organization if they were to leave. Additionally, the incentives and rewards provided by the organization can enhance an employee's commitment to the organization. However, the employee would need to sacrifice all these rewards if they were to leave (Jaros *et al.*, 1993). For teachers, this situation may lead to fluctuating continuance commitment as they weigh the personal and professional costs of working in an environment that could cause them concern against the benefits of alternative job opportunities elsewhere.

All three dimensions come together to shape a teacher's commitment to the institution. Insufficient organizational commitment of a teacher may not only affect their perceptions of the teaching profession and the communication structure within the school (İnandı & Gılıç, 2020; Meriç *et al.*, 2019) but also lead to a decrease in teacher effectiveness, subsequently impacting the productivity of the school. The productivity of a school, in turn, is demonstrated through the societal contribution of the students it educates.

Given that teachers play a crucial role in shaping the future of society, the recognition of teaching as a special profession is not coincidental. However, teachers cannot always demonstrate high motivation while practicing their profession. In the modern educational environment, teachers frequently encounter complexities and challenges that can affect their well-being and career trajectories. In other words, career issues have become a widespread problem among teachers, manifesting in various ways and significantly impacting their commitment to the educational institutions they serve. This research aims to examine the complex relationship between teachers' career anxiety and organizational commitment. It is considered important to shed light on the factors that influence teachers' career anxiety and organizational commitment, both for teachers and their educational institutions, and to highlight the potential consequences. Understanding the interaction between career anxiety and organizational commitment is crucial for education leaders, administrators, and policymakers. This understanding can facilitate the development of strategies to reduce career anxiety and improve teacher support systems. Ultimately, it can create an environment where the likelihood of educators' success is higher, leading to an increase in the quality of education provided to students.

Research Questions:

1. To what extent do teachers perceive their career anxiety?
2. Is there a significant difference in teachers' opinions on career anxiety concerning gender, marital status, age, and educational status?
3. To what extent do teachers perceive their organizational commitment?
4. Is there a significant difference in teachers' opinions on organizational commitment concerning gender, marital status, age, and educational status?
5. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' opinions on career anxiety and organizational commitment?
6. Do teachers' opinions on career anxiety significantly predict their organizational commitment?

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Model

This study employs a cross-sectional correlational survey model as it aims to reveal the relationship between the career anxiety and organizational commitment levels of teachers working in public schools in Niğde province. Cross-sectional survey studies, with large-scale and representative sampling, allow for taking snapshots of different samples, i.e., simultaneous analysis, enable comparison of different groups, and are both retrospective and prospective (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). In this study, the data collection tools used addressed the career anxieties and organizational commitment experienced by teachers in terms of different variables and relationships based on data collected only once and made inferences about the future based on their current situation. For these reasons, a cross-sectional correlational survey research design was preferred in this study. Cross-sectional surveys are preferred in educational research due to their quick implementation, ability to show an integrated pattern, and high participation rate (Rose & Sullivan, 1993, p.184-188).

2.2. Population and Sample

The study's population consists of 4,663 teachers serving in public schools in Niğde province during the 2023-2024 academic year. The sample of the study comprises 384 teachers selected through simple random sampling. Simple random sampling ensures that each unit has an equal chance of being included in the sample, and the selection of one does not affect the chances of others being chosen (Koçak & Arun, 2006), making it a preferred method for sample selection. The calculation of the sample size was based on the random sampling size table recommended by Cohen *et al.* (2021), determining that a sample size of 357 units is sufficient for an universe size of 5000, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error in homogeneous conditions. Thus, it can be stated that the sample size collected for the research is adequate. Demographic characteristics of the research group are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the sample.

Variable	Group	<i>n</i>	%
Gender	Female	272	70.8
	Male	112	29.2
Marital Status	Married	303	78.9
	Single	81	21.1
Age	20-29	30	7.8
	30-39	168	43.8
	40-49	144	37.5
	50 and above	42	10.9
Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	257	66.9
	Master's Degree	115	29.9
	Doctorate	12	3.1

Note. *n* = 384

As presented in Table 1, 272 (70.8%) of the participants are female and 112 (29.2%) are male. In terms of marital status, 303 (78.9%) participants were married and 81 (21.1%) were single. In terms of age variable, 30 (7.8%) of the participants are between the ages of 20-29, 168 (43.8%) are between the ages of 30-39, 144 (37.5%) are between the ages of 40-49 and 42 (10.9%) are 50 years and over. In terms of education level, there are 257 (66.9%) participants with bachelor's degrees, 115 (29.9%) participants with master's degrees and 12 (3.1%) participants with doctorate degrees.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

Within the scope of the research, Personal Information Form, Teachers' Career Anxiety Scale and Organizational Commitment Scale were used as data collection tools.

2.3.1. Personal information form

The researchers created a personal information form to determine the participants' demographic characteristics, including gender, education level, marital status, and age.

2.3.2. Teacher's Career Anxiety Scale

To determine teachers' career anxiety, the Teachers' Career Anxiety Scale developed by Alagöz *et al.* (2024) was used. It is a 5-point Likert-type scale, consisting of 18 items categorized into four sub-dimensions: organizational-based, colleague-based, individual-based, and work-life balance. The lowest possible score from the scale is 18, and the highest is 90. Higher scores indicate higher career anxiety. The four sub-dimensions together explain 58.6% of the total variance. The reliability of the scale, measured by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, is 0.89 for the

entire Teachers' Career Anxiety Scale, and for the sub-dimensions, it is 0.81 for organizational-based, 0.87 for colleague-based, 0.78 for individual-based, and 0.66 for work-life balance. For this study, reliability analysis yielded Cronbach's alpha values of 0.87 for the entire scale, 0.82 for the first dimension, 0.86 for the second dimension, 0.76 for the third dimension, and 0.61 for the fourth dimension. As it is not stated in the original form of scale, Table 2 provides the necessary information for evaluating the total scores.

Table 2. Interpretation of scores for the teachers' career anxiety scale.

Dimension	Number of Items	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
Organizational-based	7	7-12.5	12.6-18.1	18.2-23.7	23.8-29.3	29.4-35
Colleague-based	4	4-7.1	7.2-10.3	10.4-13.5	13.6-16.7	16.8-20
Individual-based	4	4-7.1	7.2-10.3	10.4-13.5	13.6-16.7	16.8-20
Work-Life Balance-based	3	3-5.3	5.4-7.7	7.8-10.1	10.2-12.5	12.6-15
Teachers' Career Anxiety Scale	18	18-32.3	32.4-46.7	46.8-61.1	61.2-75.5	75.6-90

Note. The Teachers' Career Anxiety Scale had four sub-scales (Organizational-based with 7 items, Colleague-based with 4 items, Individual-based with 4 items, Work-Life Balance-based with 3 items).

These score ranges help interpret the level of career anxiety for each dimension and the overall scale. Participants can be categorized into different levels based on their total scores and scores on each sub-dimension of the Teachers' Career Anxiety Scale.

2.3.3. Organizational Commitment Scale

In this research, the Organizational Commitment Scale, developed by Meyer *et al.* (1993), and adapted into Turkish by Dağlı *et al.* (2017), was employed. The scale encompasses three dimensions: Emotional Commitment, Normative Commitment, and Continuance Commitment, comprising a total of 18 items. It explains approximately 53% of the total variance.

Upon analyzing the reliability of the scale through Cronbach Alpha values, the following results were obtained: .80 for the first dimension, .73 for the second dimension, .80 for the third dimension, and .88 for the overall scale. For this study, the calculated Cronbach Alpha coefficient was .89 for the entire scale, .82 for the first dimension, .72 for the second dimension, and .81 for the third dimension. As it is not stated in the original form of scale, the necessary information for the evaluation of total scores is detailed in Table 3. The values provided represent the ranges for the evaluation of total scores in each dimension of the Organizational Commitment Scale.

Table 3. Interpretation of scores for the organizational commitment scale.

Dimension	Number of Items	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
Emotional Commitment	6	6-10.7	10.8-15.5	15.6-20.3	20.4-25.1	25.2-30
Normative Commitment	6	6-10.7	10.8-15.5	15.6-20.3	20.4-25.1	25.2-30
Continuance Commitment	6	6-10.7	10.8-15.5	15.6-20.3	20.4-25.1	25.2-30
Organizational Commitment Scale	18	18-32.3	32.4-46.7	46.8-61.1	61.2-75.5	75.6-90

Note. The Organizational Commitment Scale had three sub-scales (Emotional Commitment with 6 items, Normative Commitment with 6 items, Continuance Commitment with 6 items).

2.4. Data Collection

Permissions were obtained from the Mersin University Ethics Committee and the Niğde Provincial Directorate of National Education to conduct the research. In the data collection

process, a personal information form and scale items were transferred to an online form to reach teachers working in districts and villages. The online form was configured to be answered only once, with no unanswered items. The link to the online form was distributed to 4663 teachers in 384 schools in Niğde through school principals. Of these teachers, 384 filled out the online form. This process took approximately 15 days during the spring semester of the 2023-2024 academic year.

2.5. Data Analysis

SPSS 24 software was used for the analysis of research data. Initially, analyses were conducted to detect missing data and outliers. While no missing data was found in the data to be analyzed, Mahalanobis outlier distances were examined for outlier detection, and it was observed that the data set did not contain outliers. Skewness-Kurtosis values were examined to assess the normal distribution of the 384-unit data set. The results of normality distribution tests are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. *The skewness and kurtosis values of the variables.*

Scales	Skewness	Kurtosis
Organizational-based	-1.039	1.374
Colleague-based	0.317	-0.930
Individual-based	0.403	-0.382
Work-Life Balance-based	-0.137	-0.194
Career Anxiety Scale	-0.100	0.375
Emotional Commitment	-0.629	0.545
Continuance Commitment	-0.171	-0.071
Normative Commitment	0.141	-0.137
Organizational Commitment	-0.260	0.025

According to Table 4, the Skewness-Kurtosis values of the variables fall within the range of +1.5 to -1.5 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), assuming normal distribution of the data, the analysis continued. Therefore, t-tests were conducted for gender and marital status variables, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for education level, age, and years of service at the school, Pearson correlation analysis for determining the relationship between teachers' career anxiety and organizational commitment, and multiple linear regression analysis to determine if teachers' career anxiety predicts organizational commitment significantly. Cohen's d is a measure of effect size that quantifies the difference between two means in terms of standard deviations. It provides an indication of how large or small the difference between groups is (Cohen, 1988): $0.2 \leq |d| < 0.5$: Small effect; $0.5 \leq |d| < 0.8$: Medium effect; $|d| \geq 0.8$: Large effect. When calculating the effect size for correlation statistics, Kotrlik and Williams (2003) state that the correlation coefficient itself is an effect size value. In the interpretation of effect sizes for correlation coefficients (r), Hinkle, *et al.* (1979) emphasize that the relationship between 0-.30 is very low, between .30-.50 is low, between .50-.70 is medium, between .70-.90 is high and between 0.90-1.00 is very high. For effect size calculations in regression analyses, the R^2 value, which is the multiple regression coefficient, can be examined (Özsoy & Özsoy, 2013). According to Cohen (1988), these effect size results (R^2): 0.0196 can be interpreted as small; 0.1300 as medium; 0.2600 as large effect size. In this study, in tables that represent the analysis the largest effect size has been interpreted.

3. RESULTS

The findings obtained in the study are presented under this heading. The results of the descriptive statistics, independent samples of t-test, one-way of ANOVA, Pearson correlation

and multiple linear regression analysis were presented in order. For all analyses the results related to teachers' career anxiety were given first and the results related to teachers' organizational commitment were given later.

First of all, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to determine teachers' perceptions of career anxiety and organizational commitment. In descriptive statistics, minimum score, maximum score, total score, standard deviation and level information are calculated. The Findings of the descriptive statistical analysis are presented in [Table 5](#).

Table 5. Findings of descriptive statistical analysis.

Scales	<i>n</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Level
Organizational-based	384	7	35	28.31	4.94	Moderate
Colleague-based	384	4	20	11.97	4.23	Moderate
Individual-based	384	4	20	11.77	3.52	Moderate
Work-Life Balance-based	384	3	15	9.91	2.55	Moderate
Career Anxiety Scale	384	24	90	61.97	11.47	High
Emotional Commitment	384	6	30	20.73	5.10	High
Normative Commitment	384	6	30	16.45	5.03	Moderate
Continuance Commitment	384	6	30	18.96	4.76	Moderate
Organizational Commitment	384	19	83	52.46	11.93	Moderate

Note. Interpretation of scores stated as levels in [Table 5](#) were presented in [Table 2](#) for the teachers' career anxiety scale and in [Table 3](#) for the organizational commitment scale.

The findings of the descriptive statistical analysis for the variables are presented in [Table 5](#). The data set consists of 384 units, and the minimum (*Min.*) and maximum (*Max.*) values, mean (*Mean*), standard deviation (*SD*), and assessment level (*Level*) are reported for each variable. The assessment level indicates the categorization based on the mean score, representing the level of each variable (e.g., High, Moderate).

According to [Table 5](#), the lowest score obtained for the organizational-based dimension is 7, and the highest score is 35. Teachers' average score for the organizational-based dimension is $M = 28.31$, with a standard deviation of 4.94. Therefore, it is determined that teachers strongly agree with the statements in the organizational-based dimension. For the colleague-based dimension, the lowest score is 4, and the highest score is 20. Teachers' average score for the dimension is $M = 11.97$, with a standard deviation of 4.23. Thus, teachers moderately agree with the statements in the colleague-based dimension. The individual-based dimension has a minimum score of 4 and a maximum score of 20. The average score for the dimension is $M = 11.77$, with a standard deviation of 3.52. Accordingly, teachers moderately agree with the statements in the individual-based dimension. The total score for the Teacher Career Anxiety Scale ranges from 24 to 90. The average score for the entire scale is $M = 61.97$, with a standard deviation of 11.47. Hence, teachers exhibit a high level of agreement with statements related to career anxiety. In light of these findings, it can be said that teachers experience career anxiety, and organizational career anxiety is relatively more prominent than other types of anxiety. When examining teachers' views on organizational commitment in [Table 5](#), the emotional commitment dimension has a minimum score of 6 and a maximum score of 30. The average score for the dimension is $M = 20.73$, with a standard deviation of 5.10. Thus, teachers strongly agree with the statements in the emotional commitment dimension. For the normative commitment dimension, the lowest score is 6, and the highest score is 30. The average score for the dimension is $M = 16.45$, with a standard deviation of 5.03. Therefore, teachers' participation in statements in the normative commitment dimension is at a moderate level. In the continuance commitment dimension, the lowest score is 6, and the highest score is 30. The average score for the dimension is $M = 18.96$, with a standard deviation of 4.76. Hence,

teachers' level of participation in statements in the continuance commitment dimension is at a moderate level. for the Organizational Commitment Scale total, the lowest score is 19, and the highest score is 83. The average score for the entire scale is $M = 52.46$, with a standard deviation of 11.93. Accordingly, teachers exhibit a moderate level of agreement with statements related to organizational commitment.

Table 6. *t*-test results for gender variable.

Scales	Gender	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Organizational-based	Female	272	28.81	4.92	382	3.144	.002*	0.37
	Male	112	27.08	4.08				
Colleague-based	Female	272	11.96	4.25	382	-0.077	.938	
	Male	112	12.00	4.21				
Individual-based	Female	272	11.62	3.48	382	-1.320	.188	
	Male	112	12.14	3.60				
Work-Life Balance-based	Female	272	10.12	2.45	382	2.465	.014*	0.28
	Male	112	9.41	2.72				
Career Anxiety Scale	Female	272	62.5	11.43	382	1.454	.147	
	Male	112	60.65	11.51				
Emotional Commitment	Female	272	20.54	5.11	382	-1.139	.255	
	Male	112	21.19	5.05				
Normative Commitment	Female	272	16.21	4.97	382	-1.474	.141	
	Male	112	17.04	5.14				
Continuance Commitment	Female	272	18.81	4.76	382	-0.928	.354	
	Male	112	19.31	4.76				
Organizational Commitment Scale	Female	272	51.86	11.99	382	-1.520	.129	
	Male	112	53.90	11.71				

* $p < .05$

To determine whether teachers' career anxiety and organizational commitment perceptions meaningfully differ according to gender and marital status variables, we conducted an independent samples *t*-test. Table 6 presents the *t*-test results for gender variable. As presented in Table 6, as a result of the independent sample *t*-test on whether teachers' career anxiety views differ according to gender; it is seen that there is a significant difference in favor of female teachers for the sub-dimensions of the scale in terms of organization ($t(382) = -3.144, p < .05$) and work-life balance ($t(256) = 2.465, p < .05$). The largest effect sizes are observed for organizational-based ($d = 0.37$) and work-life balance-based ($d = 0.28$), both of which are small but meaningful. These suggest that females show slightly higher levels in these areas compared to males. There is no significant difference between the whole and other sub-dimensions of the Teachers' Career Anxiety Scale. According to the results in Table 6, teachers' views on organizational commitment do not differ according to gender variable in terms of both the whole scale and sub-dimensions.

As presented in Table 7, as a result of the independent sample *t*-test on whether teachers' career anxiety views differ according to marital status; the sub-dimensions of the scale are organizational-based ($t(382) = 2.244, p < .05$), colleague ($t(382) = 2.890, p < .05$), work-life balance ($t(382) = 3.802, p < .05$) and the whole scale ($t(382) = 2.907, p < .05$) significantly differed in favor of married teachers.

The largest effect sizes are observed for work-life balance-based ($d = 0.48$), colleague-based ($d = 0.36$), career anxiety scale ($d = 0.36$) and organizational-based ($d = 0.28$), all of which are small but meaningful. These suggest that married participants show slightly higher career anxiety levels in these areas compared to single participants. Variables such as emotional commitment,

normative commitment, continuance commitment, and the overall organizational commitment scale exhibit negligible differences between married and single participants. In other words, the analysis revealed no statistically significant differences in the individual-based sub-dimension of the scale according to marital status.

Table 7. *t*-test results for marital status variable.

Scales	Marital Status	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Organizational-based	Married	303	28.60	4.61	382	2.244	.025*	0.28
	Single	81	27.22	5.93				
Colleague-based	Married	303	12.29	4.24	382	2.890	.004*	0.36
	Single	81	10.77	4.00				
Individual-based	Married	303	11.78	3.55	382	0.094	.925	
	Single	81	11.74	3.43				
Work-Life Balance-based	Married	303	10.16	2.49	382	3.802	.000*	0.48
	Single	81	8.97	2.54				
Career Anxiety Scale	Married	303	62.84	11.33	382	2.907	.004*	0.36
	Single	81	58.71	11.47				
Emotional Commitment	Married	303	20.70	5.08	382	-0.208	.835	
	Single	81	20.83	5.19				
Normative Commitment	Married	303	16.27	4.96	382	-1.396	.164	
	Single	81	17.14	5.24				
Continuance Commitment	Married	303	18.94	4.86	382	-0.109	.913	
	Single	81	19.01	4.40				
Organizational Commitment Scale	Married	303	52.26	11.98	382	-0.625	.533	
	Single	81	53.19	11.82				

* $p < .05$

The results presented in Table 7 indicate that the marital status variable does not exert a notable influence on teachers' perceptions of organizational commitment, as observed across the entire scale and its constituent sub-dimensions.

To determine whether teachers' career anxiety and organizational commitment perceptions meaningfully differ according to age and educational variables, we conducted one-way ANOVA. The ANOVA results for age variable is presented in Table 8. As depicted in Table 8, as a result of a one-way analysis of variance on whether teachers' views on career anxiety differ significantly according to age variable; no significant difference was found for the whole scale, organization-based, colleagues-based and work-life balance-based sub-dimensions, while a significant difference was found for individual-based ($F_{(3; 383)} = 4.682, p < .05$). It is seen that this difference is in favor of teachers between the ages of 30-39 (B), 40-49 (C) and 50 and over (D) for teachers between the ages of 30-39 (B).

Again according to Table 8, when the teachers' views on organizational commitment are analyzed in terms of age variable, it is seen that in the emotional commitment sub-dimension ($F_{(3; 383)} = 4.125, p < .05$) there is a significant difference between teachers aged 30-39 (B) and teachers aged 50 and above (D) in favor of teachers aged 50 and above (D). While there is a significant difference for normative commitment sub-dimension ($F_{(3; 383)} = 3.070, p < .05$) according to the age variable, there is a significant difference for continuance commitment ($F_{(3; 383)} = 5.302, p < .05$) and the whole Organizational Commitment Scale ($F_{(3; 383)} = 5.236, p < .05$) between teachers aged 30-39 (B) and those aged 40-49 (C) in favor of those aged 40-49 (C) and between teachers aged 30-39 (B) and those aged 50 and over (D) in favor of those aged 50 and over (D).

Table 8. ANOVA results for the age variable.

Scales	Age	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Cohen's d</i>	Significant difference
Organizational-based	20-29	30	27.80	5.99	380383	2.359	.071		
	30-39	168	29.05	4.49					
	40-49	144	27.80	5.21					
	50 and above	42	27.42	4.70					
Colleague-based	20-29	30	11.96	4.18	380383	.748	.524		
	30-39	168	12.11	4.32					
	40-49	144	11.61	4.25					
	50 and above	42	12.64	3.83					
Individual-based	20-29	30	12.36	3.38	380383	4.682	.003*	0.50	B>C B>D
	30-39	168	12.40	3.73					
	40-49	144	11.22	3.18					
	50 and above	42	10.69	3.36					
Work-Life Balance-based	20-29	30	9.06	2.63	380383	2.208	.087		
	30-39	168	10.17	2.51					
	40-49	144	9.93	2.59					
	50 and above	42	9.42	2.33					
Career Anxiety Scale	20-29	30	61.20	12.39	380383	2.451	.063		
	30-39	168	63.75	11.08					
	40-49	144	60.59	11.73					
	50 and above	42	60.19	10.81					
Emotional Commitment	20-29	30	21.56	4.24	380383	4.125	.007*	-0.38	D>B
	30-39	168	19.71	5.66					
	40-49	144	21.44	4.46					
	50 and above	42	21.78	4.76					
Normative Commitment	20-29	30	18.03	5.64	380383	3.070	.028*	0.44	A>D
	30-39	168	15.76	5.01					
	40-49	144	16.54	4.63					
	50 and above	42	17.78	5.55					
Continuance Commitment	20-29	30	20.16	4.29	380383	5.302	.001*	0.47	A>B D>B C>B
	30-39	168	17.91	4.82					
	40-49	144	19.54	4.52					
	50 and above	42	20.28	4.92					
Organizational Commitment Scale	20-29	30	55.80	10.83	380383	5.236	.001*	0.48	A>B D>B C>B
	30-39	168	49.90	12.55					
	40-49	144	53.74	10.83					
	50 and above	42	55.90	12.02					

* $p < .05$. The groups of the participants according to age variable were abbreviated from A to D to represent the significant difference among groups. A= 20-29 age; B= 30-39 age; C= 40-49 age; D= more than 50.

Also, Cohen's d effect size calculations for the scales and age groups reveal several interesting trends. The individual-based scale showed more variation, with small-to-moderate differences, the largest being between the 20-29 and 50+ groups ($d = 0.50$). The work-life balance-based scale revealed negative effects, with the largest difference ($d = -0.44$) between the 20-29 and 30-39 groups, suggesting younger individuals perceive worse balance. For the career anxiety scale, small positive effects were noted, the most significant being between the 30-39 and 50+ groups ($d=0.32$). In emotional commitment, moderate effects appeared, such as a negative effect ($d=-0.38$) between the 30-39 and 50+ groups. The normative commitment scale showed the largest effect ($d=0.44$) between the 20-29 and 30-39 groups, while for continuance commitment, the most substantial difference ($d = 0.47$) was also between these groups. Lastly, the organizational commitment scale had a small-to-moderate effect ($d = 0.48$) between the 20-29 and 30-39 groups. Overall, age-related differences were more pronounced in scales like individual-based and normative commitment, highlighting nuanced shifts in perceptions across age groups.

According to Table 9, when teachers' views on career anxiety are examined in terms of educational level, there is a significant difference between bachelor's (A) and master's (B) graduates in favor of master's graduates (B); between bachelor's (A) and doctorate (C) graduates in favor of doctorate graduates (C); between master's (B) and doctorate (C) graduates in favor of doctorate graduates in the individual-based dimension of the scale ($F_{(2; 383)} = 12.126, p < .05$). In the whole Career Anxiety Scale of Teachers ($F_{(2; 383)} = 4.148, p < .05$), there is a significant difference between bachelor (A) and doctorate (C) graduates in favor of doctorate graduates (C).

As depicted in Table 9 in terms of teachers' organizational commitment, for the emotional commitment sub-dimension ($F_{(2; 383)} = 10.769, p < .05$), there is a significant difference between bachelor's (A) and doctorate (C) graduates in favor of bachelor's (A) graduates, and between master's (B) and doctorate (C) graduates in favor of master's (B) graduates. In the normative commitment dimension of organizational commitment ($F_{(2; 383)} = 8.669, p < .05$), there is a significant difference between bachelor's (A) and doctorate (C) graduates in favor of bachelor's (A) graduates.

For the third sub-dimension of the organizational commitment scale, continuance commitment ($F_{(2; 383)} = 4.723, p < .05$), there is a significant difference between bachelor's (A) and doctorate (C) graduates in favor of bachelor's (A) graduates. In the whole Organizational Commitment Scale ($F_{(2; 383)} = 10.228, p < .05$), it is concluded that there is a significant difference between bachelor's (A) and doctorate (C) graduates in favor of bachelor's (A) graduates.

Moreover, Cohen's d calculations reveal significant differences in several scales between education levels (BA, MA, and PhD). PhD holders scored substantially higher in individual-based ($d = -1.31$) and work-life balance ($d = -0.68$) scales, indicating stronger individual-based perceptions and better work-life balance compared to BA holders. However, BA holders showed much greater emotional ($d = 1.36$), normative ($d = 0.99$), continuance ($d = 0.78$), and organizational commitment ($d = 1.21$), reflecting their stronger connections and obligations to their organizations. Career anxiety was also notably higher for PhD holders compared to BA holders ($d = -0.85$). Comparisons between MA and PhD holders generally showed moderate differences, while BA vs. PhD comparisons exhibited large effect sizes, highlighting significant contrasts in perceptions and commitments across education levels. These findings underscore the nuanced relationship between education level and various organizational and personal scales.

Table 9. ANOVA results for the variable of education level.

Scales	Education level	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>	Significant difference
Organizational-based	BA (A)	257	28.10	4.86	2	2.318	.100		
	MA (B)	115	28.48	5.22	381				
	PhD (C)	12	31.16	2.91	383				
Colleague-based	BA (A)	257	12.13	4.09	2	0.758	.469		
	MA (B)	115	11.57	4.51	381				
	PhD (C)	12	12.41	4.46	383				
Individual-based	BA (A)	257	11.29	3.28	2	12.126	.000*	-1.31 -0.85	C>A C>B
	MA (B)	115	12.44	3.75	381				
	PhD (C)	12	15.58	3.08	383				
Work-Life Balance-based	BA (A)	257	9.735	2.49	2	3.305	.038*	-0.68	C>A
	MA (B)	115	10.16	2.66	381				
	PhD (C)	12	11.41	2.108	383				
Career Anxiety Scale	BA (A)	257	61.26	11.03	2	4.148	.017*	-0.85	C>A
	MA (B)	115	62.66	12.19	381				
	PhD (C)	12	70.58	10.66	383				
Emotional Commitment	BA (A)	257	21.25	4.59	2	10.769	.000*	1.36 0.96	A>C B>C
	MA (B)	115	20.19	5.38	381				
	PhD (C)	12	14.75	8.19	383				
Normative Commitment	BA (A)	257	17.08	4.82	2	8.669	.000*	0.99	A>C
	MA (B)	115	15.48	5.05	381				
	PhD (C)	12	12.25	6.09	383				
Continuance Commitment	BA (A)	257	19.38	4.54	2	4.723	.009*	0.78	A>C
	MA (B)	115	18.33	5.07	381				
	PhD (C)	12	15.83	4.72	383				
Organizational Commitment	BA (A)	257	53.93	10.94	2	10.228	.000*	1.21	A>C
	MA (B)	115	50.41	12.61	381				
	PhD (C)	12	40.41	16.42	383				

Note. * $p < 0.05$. The groups of the participants according to education level variable were abbreviated as from A to C to represent the significant difference among groups. A= BA refers to Bachelor of Arts; B= MA refers to Master of Arts; C= PhD refers to Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

Correlation analysis was performed to determine whether there was a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of career anxiety and organizational commitment. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 10. As presented in Table 10, there is a negative and low level significant relationship between teachers' views on career anxiety and affective commitment ($r=-.204$, $p<.01$); normative commitment ($r=-.161$, $p<.01$); continuance commitment ($r=-.131$, $p<.01$) and organizational commitment ($r=-.197$, $p<.01$). There is a negative and low level significant relationship between the organizational-based dimension of the Career Anxiety Scale and affective commitment ($r=-.171$, $p<.01$), normative commitment ($r=-.185$, $p<.01$) and organizational commitment ($r=-.181$, $p<.01$). There is a medium level negative relationship between the individual-based sub-dimension of the Career Anxiety Scale and affective commitment ($r=-.309$, $p<.01$), a low level negative relationship between normative commitment ($r=-.243$, $p<.01$) and continuance commitment ($r=-.225$, $p<.01$). It is concluded that there is a significant negative relationship between the individual-based sub-dimension and the whole Organizational Commitment Scale ($r=-.301$, $p<.01$). Furthermore, in the light of the explanations made in the data analysis section, the correlation coefficient values were interpreted with reference to Hinkle *et al.* (1979) to represent the effect size for correlation statistics.

Table 10. Correlation analysis on the relationship between career anxiety and organizational commitment of teachers.

	OB	CB	IB	WLBB	CAS	Emotional	Normative	Continuance	OCS	M	SD
OB	1									28.31	4.94
CB	.451**	1								11.97	4.23
IB	.358**	.309**	1							11.77	3.52
WLBB	.495**	.479**	.384**	1						9.91	2.55
CAS	.818**	.765**	.661**	.731**	1					61.97	11.47
Emotional	-.171**	-.080	-.308**	-.025	-.204**	1				20.73	5.10
Normative	-.185**	.009	-.243**	-.046	-.161**	.600**	1			16.45	5.03
Continuance	-.097	.005	-.225**	-.100	-.131*	.496**	.629**	1		18.96	4.76
OCS	-.181**	-.027	-.301**	-.073	-.197**	.801**	.887**	.845**	1	52.46	11.93

Note. * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$. OB=Organizational-based; CB=Colleague-based; IB=Individual-based; WLBB=Work-life Balance-based; CAS=Career Anxiety Scale; OCS=Organizational Commitment Scale

In order to determine whether teachers' opinions on career anxiety significantly predict their organizational commitment levels, multiple linear regression was utilized. Also, for the effect size calculations in regression analyses, the R^2 value is examined. Table 11 shows the results regarding the prediction of organizational commitment by teachers' career anxiety. According to Table 11, teachers' views on career anxiety significantly predicted their organizational commitment ($R=.335$, $R^2=.112$, $p<.05$). Teachers' views on career anxiety explained approximately 11% of the variance of their views on organizational commitment. The order of importance of the predictor variables is individual ($\beta=-.306$), organization ($\beta=-.153$), colleagues ($\beta=.102$), work-life balance ($\beta=.071$). However, only the organizational ($t=-2.600$, $p<.05$) and individual ($t=-5.670$, $p<.05$) dimensions of teachers' career anxiety are significant predictors of organizational commitment.

Table 11. Multiple linear regression analysis results regarding the prediction of organizational commitment by teachers' career anxiety.

Scale	Variable	B	SE	β	t	p
Organizational Commitment	Constant	68.361	3.491		19.580	.000
	Organizational-based	-0.370	0.142	-.153	-2.600	.010*
	Colleague-based	0.288	0.163	.102	1.771	.077
	Individual-based	-1.035	0.183	-.306	-5.670	.000*
	Work-life balance-based	0.334	0.282	.071	1.181	.238
R= .335 R ² = .112 F(4,379)= 11.940 p=.000						

*p<0.05

According to Table 12, teachers' views on career anxiety significantly predicted their views on the affective commitment dimension of organizational commitment ($R=.345$, $R^2=.119$, $p<.05$). Teachers' views on career anxiety explained approximately 12% of the variance related to affective commitment. The order of importance of the predictor variables is individual ($\beta=-.306$), work-life balance ($\beta=.167$), organization ($\beta=-.139$) and colleagues ($\beta=.002$). In addition, among the dimensions of teachers' career anxiety, the organizational -based dimension ($t=-2.365$, $p<.05$), individual-based dimension ($t=-6.029$, $p<.05$) and work-life balance-based dimension ($t=-2.776$, $p<.05$) are significant predictors of emotional commitment.

Table 12. Multiple linear regression analysis results regarding the prediction of emotional commitment dimension of organizational commitment by teachers' career anxiety.

Scale	Variable	B	SE	β	t	p
Emotional commitment	Constant	26.966	1.487		18.140	.000
	Organizational-based	-0.143	0.061	-.139	-2.365	.019*
	Colleague-based	0.003	0.069	.002	0.038	.970
	Individual-based	-0.469	0.078	-.324	-6.029	.000*
	Work-life balance-based	0.334	0.120	.167	2.776	.006*
R= .345 R ² = .119 F(4,379)= 12.820 p=.000						

*p<0.05

According to Table 13, teachers' views on career anxiety are a significant predictor of their views on the normative commitment dimension of organizational commitment ($R=.306$, $R^2=.093$, $p<.05$). Teachers' views on career anxiety explain approximately 10% of the variance of normative commitment. The order of importance of the predictor variables is individual ($\beta=-.244$), organization ($\beta=-.198$), colleagues ($\beta=.135$) and work-life balance ($\beta=.081$). In addition, among the dimensions of teachers' career anxiety, organizational -based dimension ($t=-3.328$, $p<.05$), colleague-based dimension ($t=2.310$, $p<.05$) and individual-based dimension ($t=-4.491$, $p<.05$) are significant predictors of normative commitment.

Table 13. Multiple linear regression analysis results regarding the prediction of normative commitment dimension of organizational commitment by teachers' career anxiety.

Scale	Variable	B	SE	β	t	p
Normative commitment	Constant	22.768	1.487		15.311	.000
	Organizational-based	-0.202	0.061	-.198	-3.328	.001*
	Colleague-based	0.160	0.069	.135	2.310	.021*
	Individual-based	-0.349	0.078	-.244	-4.491	.000*
	Work-life balance-based	0.160	0.120	.081	1.333	.183
R= .306 R ² = .093 F(4,379)= 9.758 p=.000						

*p<.05

According to Table 14, teachers' views on career anxiety are a significant predictor of their views on the continuance commitment dimension of organizational commitment ($R=.246$, $R^2=.061$, $p<.05$). Teachers' views on career anxiety explain approximately 6% of the variance related to continuance commitment. The order of importance of the predictor variables is individual-based ($\beta= -.227$), colleague-based ($\beta=.118$), work-life balance-based ($\beta=-.047$) and organizational -based ($\beta= -.046$). In addition, among the dimensions of teachers' career anxiety, colleague-based dimension ($t=1.986$, $p<.05$) and individual-based dimension ($t=-4.098$, $p<.05$) are significant predictors of continuance commitment.

Table 14. Multiple linear regression analysis results regarding the prediction of continuance commitment dimension of organizational commitment by teachers' career anxiety.

Scale	Variable	B	SE	β	t	p
Continuance commitment	Constant	23.092	1.432		16.120	.000
	Organizational-based	-0.044	0.058	-.046	-0.751	.453
	Colleague-based	0.133	0.067	.118	1.986	.048*
	Individual-based	-0.307	0.075	-.0227	-4.098	.000*
	Work-life balance-based	-0.087	0.116	-.047	-0.751	.453

$R= .246$ $R^2= .061$ $F(4,379)= 6.127$ $p=.000$

* $p<.05$

4. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that teachers experience career anxiety, particularly as a result of organizational factors such as limited opportunities for professional development, obstacles to academic engagement, and uncertainty created by administrators (Amil, 2015; İnandı, 2009; Köstek, 2007; Swanson & Tokar, 1991). This is consistent with existing research on career barriers, although Gündüz (2010) posited that these anxieties are relatively uncommon. Female teachers reported higher levels of anxiety related to organizational issues and work-life balance than males, which may be attributed to societal expectations and the fulfilment of multiple roles (İnandı *et al.*, 2009; King *et al.*, 2013; Yang *et al.*, 2009;). Furthermore, married teachers, particularly women, are more likely to experience career anxiety due to the limitations imposed by family responsibilities (Halaçlı, 2018; İnandı & Tunç, 2012; Sükun, 2022).

The age of the teacher also has an impact on levels of anxiety, with those aged between 30 and 39 experiencing the highest levels of anxiety, potentially due to their career stage and the uncertainties that they face about the future. This is at odds with the findings of some literature, which suggests that younger individuals prioritize career development (Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2019), while other studies have found that younger teachers experience less stress (Akyüz Ünlü, 2014; Yang *et al.*, 2009). A correlation has been identified between higher education levels and increased anxiety. Doctoral graduates are found to experience greater anxiety than those with a bachelor's degree. This is thought to be due to heightened competition and limited opportunities in academia (Aktan, 2020; Alabaş *et al.*, 2012; Başaran, 2020; Köse & İnce, 2022). It is of particular importance to note that this study has identified a negative correlation between career anxiety and organizational commitment. When teachers feel that they are not being adequately supported in pursuing their career aspirations, their commitment to the organization in question is likely to diminish. This is influenced by a number of factors at both the individual and organizational levels (Coyle-Shapiro & Morrow, 2006; Weng *et al.*, 2010).

Job stress is another critical factor that interacts with organizational commitment. Studies have shown a negative relationship between organizational commitment and job stress, indicating that higher stress levels can reduce a teacher's commitment to their organization (Taran & Fathi, 2017). This relationship is further complicated by job satisfaction, which can mediate the effects

of job stress on organizational commitment. Teachers who experience job satisfaction despite stress may maintain higher levels of commitment (Wang et.al, 2020). Additionally, factors such as inadequate professional development, low job satisfaction and excessive workload have been identified as contributors to this anxiety and reduced commitment (Güzeller & Çelikel, 2020).

This highlights the necessity for educational institutions to establish supportive environments that recognize the value of teachers, facilitate professional growth, and encourage a healthy work-life balance. In summary, teachers' career anxieties are complex and shaped by a range of factors, including organizational dynamics, gender, marital status, age and educational attainment. The development of comprehensive strategies to cultivate a supportive and fulfilling environment is essential to address these anxieties, with the ultimate objective of benefiting both teachers and the quality of education.

The findings of this study indicate that teachers generally exhibit high levels of affective commitment to their organizations, but only moderate levels of normative and continuance commitment. This indicates that although teachers exhibit a strong sense of belonging and identification with their schools, they may lack awareness of the potential consequences of leaving their position and a corresponding sense of obligation to remain in their role. This finding is consistent with the results of other studies in the field (Aksanaklu & İnandı, 2018; Canpolat, 2011; Demir & İnandı, 2022; Doğan & Çelik, 2019; Hamidi, 2023; Özyavuz, 2021; Sezgin, 2010).

Furthermore, the study revealed that there were no significant differences in organizational commitment based on gender or marital status. However, age was identified as a significant factor, with teachers in the 30-39 age group exhibiting lower levels of commitment than their older counterparts. This may be attributed to the fact that older teachers exhibit a stronger sense of loyalty to their institution, potentially due to their longer tenure, greater integration with the organizational culture, and increased likelihood of occupying leadership roles. Additionally, they may be more focused on retirement planning and subsequent career stages, which may make them less likely to leave their current position (Cengiz, 2001; Çakır, 2001; Memişoğlu & Kaya, 2017; Önder, 2023).

It is noteworthy that teachers with a Bachelor's degree exhibited higher levels of organizational commitment than those with a postgraduate degree. This is consistent with previous research indicating a negative correlation between educational level and organizational commitment (Çakır, 2001; Dağlı & Gençdal, 2018; Gürbüz, 2012; Steers, 1977). This may be attributed to the fact that teachers with higher levels of education tend to have more ambitious career aspirations and expectations that may not be fulfilled by their current organization, which in turn makes them more receptive to alternative job opportunities.

The study revealed a statistically significant negative correlation between teachers' career anxiety and organizational commitment. Individual and organizational career anxieties were identified as robust predictors of this commitment. This finding is consistent with the results of previous studies by Weng *et al.* (2010) and Coyle-Shapiro and Morrow (2006), which emphasize the influence of individual and organizational factors on career development and organizational commitment. In other words, career success, both subjective and objective, is closely linked to organizational commitment. Teachers who perceive themselves as successful in their careers tend to exhibit higher levels of commitment. Factors such as career commitment, professional commitment, and perceived organizational support significantly contribute to teachers' subjective career success, which in turn can enhance their organizational commitment (Ingarianti *et al.*, 2022). This suggests that fostering a supportive environment that acknowledges and rewards career success can mitigate career anxiety and bolster commitment. On the other hand, in the event that teachers' expectations from their organization are not met, they may experience career anxiety and a subsequent reduction in their organizational commitment. In other words, teachers' career anxieties have the potential to negatively impact

their organizational commitment, which may in turn give rise to a range of adverse outcomes. Teachers experiencing elevated levels of career anxiety may demonstrate diminished job satisfaction, motivation, fulfilment, and performance, which are all beneficial outcomes of organizational commitment (Soysal & Selvi, 2023). This can result in a reduction in interest and enthusiasm for the teaching profession, which may ultimately lead to a decline in productivity. Furthermore, career anxiety can increase the likelihood of teachers engaging in negative behaviors, including seeking alternative employment, leaving their current roles and absenteeism (Akgül, 2020). When teachers experience feelings of uncertainty, insecurity, or lack of support in relation to their career progression, their commitment to their current roles may diminish, prompting them to consider alternative opportunities. It is therefore incumbent upon educational institutions to prioritize the reduction of teachers' career anxieties and the enhancement of their organizational commitment. It is incumbent upon school administrators to play a pivotal role in mitigating career anxiety and fostering organizational commitment. This may be achieved by providing professional development opportunities, offering guidance on career paths and creating a supportive work environment. This will consequently result in enhanced job satisfaction, motivation, and performance among teachers, which will in turn have a beneficial impact on the quality of education provided to students. Conversely, career anxiety resulting from factors such as inadequate job descriptions, excessive workload, lack of support, or professional uncertainties can lead to a reduction in organizational commitment and an increased willingness to leave the organization if alternative opportunities arise. Such anxieties may impede teachers' ability to integrate and feel a sense of belonging within the organization (Güzeller & Çelikel, 2020; Perveen *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, uncertainty regarding career progression, job descriptions, and evolving educational policies can also contribute to anxiety and erode teachers' commitment. Teachers who feel their anxieties are not adequately addressed or who lack opportunities for professional development may question their loyalty to the organization (Güzeller & Çelikel, 2020). This emphasizes the significance of fostering a supportive school environment that offers transparent career pathways, professional growth opportunities, and a sense of worth for teachers. The fulfilment of these requirements has the potential to alleviate career-related anxiety and cultivate a stronger sense of organizational commitment, which in turn can yield benefits for both teachers and the educational system.

4.1. Limitations of the Study

This study is not without limitations, but it offers valuable insights that should inform future research. One limitation of the present study is that a cross-sectional correlational model was employed to examine the relationship between teachers' organizational commitment and career anxiety. With the attributions of different variables advanced, statistical analysis can be conducted. Another limitation of this study is its limited geographical scope, as it was conducted in only one province. By expanding the study to include teachers from various cities, the generalizability of the findings can be ensured.

4.2. Implications for Future Research

In order to address the concerns of teachers with regard to their career development and to foster a sense of belonging within their schools, a number of recommendations can be implemented. It is recommended that schools implement structured professional development programmes that enhance teachers' skills and knowledge, thereby facilitating their career advancement. Moreover, it is of the utmost importance to provide guidance and support regarding career paths and opportunities, potentially through tailored career counselling or mentorship programmes. It is of the utmost importance to establish transparent communication channels through which teachers can freely express their concerns and suggestions. It is incumbent upon school administrators to maintain open and regular communication with teachers, providing clear and transparent information regarding career advancement policies, performance evaluations, and decision-making processes.

It is equally important to create a supportive environment, which can be achieved through the establishment of peer support networks, mentoring programmes and the fostering of a positive organizational climate in which teachers feel valued and appreciated. Such measures can be further reinforced through the implementation of policies that support a healthy work-life balance, recognize teacher achievements, and promote a positive school environment. It is also imperative to address the underlying causes of teachers' career-related anxieties, such as the avoidance of overload and the setting of realistic goals. It would be prudent for educational institutions to be mindful of the distinctive challenges faced by female teachers and to consider implementing measures such as flexible work arrangements or childcare provisions. The enhancement of teachers' organizational commitment can be facilitated by their involvement in decision-making processes and the provision of a voice in the shaping of the school's future.

Further research is required to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing teachers' career anxieties and organizational commitment. It is further recommended that interventions, such as professional development programmes or support groups, be developed with the specific aim of alleviating career anxieties and boosting organizational commitment. Finally, the implementation of policies that address these anxieties, including flexible work arrangements and childcare provisions, can contribute to the creation of a more supportive and fulfilling work environment for teachers. By taking these steps, it is possible to create a more positive and productive environment for teachers, which will lead to increased job satisfaction, motivation, and ultimately, an improved quality of education for students.

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Declaration of Conflicting Interests and Ethics

The authors declare no conflict of interest. This research study complies with research publishing ethics. The scientific and legal responsibility for manuscripts published in IJATE belongs to the authors. **Ethics Committee Number:** Mersin University Social Sciences Ethics Committee, 05.03.2024-60.

Contribution of Authors

Tuğba Alagöz: Literature review, Resources, Methodology, Data collection, Data analysis and Writing-original draft. **Yusuf İnandı:** Supervision, Literature review, Writing-review & editing. **Yüksel Gündüz:** Supervision, Writing-review & editing and Validation.

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