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ECHOES OF DEPARTURE: LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS' DISENGAGEMENT AND ATTRITION AT RIZAL MEMORIAL COLLEGES, INC.

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores the lived experiences of school leaders at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. with regard to teacher disengagement and attrition. Amid mounting worries about the sustainability and quality of education, the study investigates how these leaders perceive, respond to, and are influenced by the rising trend of teacher turnover. Through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, the study reveals a complex interaction of emotional, organizational, and systemic factors that contribute to teacher disengagement, including workload stress, a lack of professional progress, insufficient support, and a misalignment of values. School administrators shared the emotional toll and practical challenges they encounter when attempting to maintain teaching quality and team morale during regular staffing changes. The findings highlight the critical need for responsive leadership, targeted retention initiatives, and structural improvements to promote teacher well-being and organizational stability. The study provides insights that can be used to inform policy, practice, and future research on educational leadership and teacher retention.

KEYWORDS: *Teacher Attrition, Teacher Disengagement, School Leadership, Phenomenological Study, Lived Experiences, Teacher Retention, Educational Management,*

INTRODUCTION

Existing studies have explored general causes of teacher turnover, such as low salaries, lack of professional development, and poor working conditions, limited attention has been given to the unique contextual factors influencing teacher disengagement and attrition within specific educational institutions, particularly in the context of private schools in the Philippines. Meaningfully, there is a lack of research focusing on how school leaders perceive and respond to these challenges, and how their leadership practices can either mitigate or exacerbate issues of teacher disengagement. Exploring these gaps would provide valuable insights into the institutional, leadership, and organizational factors that contribute to teacher retention and well-being at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc., and offer implications for broader educational policy and practice.

Companies in India and other countries face challenges in acquiring and retaining talent and managing employee attrition caused by industry downturns or voluntary turnover. The loss of employees can lead to performance declines and long-term negative impacts, especially if the departures create gaps in execution capabilities and strain human resource operations. According to Mishra and Subhasmita (2022), employee attrition is influenced by inadequate compensation, low market competitiveness, poor work environment, lack of integrity, insufficient support, strained relationships with colleagues, and limited growth opportunities. These issues reduce productivity, disrupt team cohesion, and diminish social goodwill.

In the United Arab Emirates, low organization support contributes to high teacher attrition factors (Mohammad & Borkoski, 2024). This sharp negative relationship between organizational support and the type of leadership underscores the growing issue of employee retention. Similarly, Oliva et al. (2023) identified two major contributors to employee attrition: supervision and working conditions.

Furthermore, Ramos (2023) noted that 45 percent of employees experienced a significant rise in their workload over the past year, while 62 percent observed an acceleration in the pace of change. Nearly half of the workforce is now dealing with heavier workloads, and this intensifying pace leads to feelings of overload. Ortega-Dela Cruz (2021) in Los Baños, Philippines, stated that teacher attrition imposes additional recruiting and hiring expenses on educational institutions. Worries about student and school performance also drive this issue forward. Detrimental school systems, negative self-perceptions, and personal environmental concerns were identified in Davao City, as studied by Cabigas (2019). This also supports the study in the University in Mindanao Main Campus that shows organizational and work commitment influence teacher attrition (Jordan & Oliva, 2022).

Attrition at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. (RMC) has been influenced by various factors, particularly during the pandemic. In response to the challenges posed by the pandemic, RMC implemented a flexible learning system, incorporating online, modular, and asynchronous modalities to ensure the continuity of education while prioritizing

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the safety of students and faculty. This transition required significant adjustments in curriculum design and teaching methods, as detailed in RMC's transition plan. Despite these efforts, the shift to remote learning presented challenges such as limited internet access and the need for self-directed learning, which may have contributed to increased attrition rates.

Nationally, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) reported a significant rise in attrition rates during the pandemic, with figures reaching 41.16% in the 2022–2023 academic year. Factors contributing to this trend included financial difficulties, mental health concerns, and academic challenges. While specific data for RMC is not publicly available, it is reasonable to infer that the institution faced similar challenges, given its student demographic and the broader context of higher education in the Philippines during this period.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The phenomenon of teacher attrition and disengagement represents a significant challenge in educational institutions worldwide, with private schools facing particularly unique circumstances that influence teacher retention rates and institutional stability (Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2019). As stated by Aulia and Haerani (2023), this complex issue has garnered increasing attention from educational researchers, policymakers, and school administrators as they seek to understand and address the factors contributing to teacher turnover and its impact on academic quality and institutional sustainability.

Recent studies have highlighted the concerning trend of teacher attrition in private educational institutions, with research indicating higher turnover rates compared to public schools (Solano, 2024). Peck (2024) found that private school leaders need help hiring new personnel. More than 61 percent of them find it hard to find and fill new positions once there are teachers who will resign from their posts.

One of the primary factors identified in the literature is the issue of compensation and benefits. Despite comparable qualifications and responsibilities, Mabaso and Dlamini (2017) conducted an extensive study that revealed significant salary disparities between private and public-school teachers. This compensation gap often leads to financial stress among private school teachers, potentially contributing to reduced job satisfaction and an increased likelihood of seeking alternative employment opportunities (Ryu and Fan, 2022). The study further indicated that teachers who perceive their compensation as inadequate are likelier to experience decreased motivation and engagement in their professional roles.

The quality of the work environment and administrative support emerges as another crucial factor in teacher retention (Lopez, 2023). Through their research, Tosun and Bostancı (2024) demonstrated that teachers who perceive strong administrative support are likelier to remain in their positions. This finding underscores the critical role of school leadership in creating and maintaining a supportive professional environment. Their study emphasized that clear communication channels between administration and faculty and opportunities for professional development and mentorship significantly enhance teacher engagement and commitment to their institutions.

Workload management presents unique challenges in private school settings, where teachers often face additional responsibilities beyond their core teaching duties (Pacaol, 2021). These may include extensive involvement in extracurricular activities, heightened parental expectations, and more intensive documentation requirements. The smaller staff sizes typical in private schools frequently result in teachers assuming multiple roles, leading to increased stress and potential burnout if not correctly managed.

The perspective of school leadership provides crucial insights into teacher retention and engagement challenges. David and Naparan (2023) explored the complex balancing act that school leaders must perform in addressing teacher attrition while maintaining educational quality and institutional stability. School administrators often navigate budget constraints while offering competitive compensation packages, creating supportive professional environments within institutional limitations, and addressing individual teacher needs while ensuring organizational sustainability.

Teacher disengagement and attrition impact beyond immediate staffing concerns, affecting various aspects of school operations (Tarraya (2023). Research has shown that high teacher turnover rates can disrupt educational continuity, increase recruitment and training costs, and strain relationships within the school community. Moreover, the additional burden placed on remaining faculty members can create a cycle of stress and potential further attrition if not correctly addressed by school leadership (Gebhardt, 2020).

Research has identified several successful retention strategies that school leaders can implement to address teacher disengagement (Gleason, 2024). Professional development opportunities enhance teacher capabilities and demonstrate institutional investment in faculty growth. Recognition and reward systems, when properly implemented, can help compensate for salary limitations by acknowledging teacher contributions and achievements (Cahilog et al. (2023).

Implementing work-life balance initiatives has become an increasingly important factor in teacher retention, as studied by Shuls and Flores (2020). Studies indicate that schools that actively support teachers in maintaining

healthy work-life boundaries experience lower rates of burnout and higher levels of teacher satisfaction. This support can take various forms, from flexible scheduling options to mental health resources and wellness programs.

Leadership approaches are crucial in maintaining teacher engagement and preventing attrition. Distributed leadership models, which involve teachers in decision-making processes and provide opportunities for professional leadership roles, have positively enhanced teacher commitment to their institutions (Samancioglu et al. (2019).

As studied by Song et al. (2023), the cultural context of private schools adds another layer of complexity to teacher retention efforts. Private institutions often have distinct organizational cultures and expectations that can either support or hinder teacher engagement (Nehez & Blossing, 2020). Understanding and shaping these cultural elements can help school leaders create environments that promote teacher satisfaction and longevity

As educational landscapes continue to evolve, particularly in response to global changes and technological advancement, teacher retention in private schools requires ongoing attention and adaptation of strategies. Future research should focus on developing a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between various factors affecting teacher engagement and identifying innovative approaches to supporting and retaining quality educators in private school settings.

Role of Leadership in Teacher Retention

Effective school leadership plays a crucial role in retaining teachers, as leadership behaviors and practices can directly impact job satisfaction, professional growth, and overall teacher engagement. According to Leithwood and Jantzi (2020), transformational leadership is particularly important in fostering an environment where teachers feel supported and valued. Leaders who demonstrate clear vision, support professional development, and actively engage in building positive relationships with staff contribute significantly to teacher retention. Teachers who perceive their leaders as supportive are more likely to remain in the profession, especially when they are provided with opportunities to develop and contribute to decision-making processes. In contrast, ineffective leadership that fails to address teachers' professional needs or creates a negative school climate can exacerbate burnout and increase turnover rates.

One of the primary leadership actions influencing teacher retention is providing emotional and professional support. Ingersoll (2018) underscores that a lack of administrative support is one of the key reasons for teacher attrition. Teachers who feel isolated, underappreciated, or unsupported are more likely to leave their positions. In contrast, leaders who offer mentorship, acknowledge teachers' contributions, and encourage open communication contribute to a more supportive school environment. These actions help create a sense of community among teachers, which can reduce feelings of burnout and disengagement. Research has shown that providing teachers with timely feedback and ongoing encouragement not only boosts morale but also enhances their professional growth, leading to greater job satisfaction and reduced turnover.

Leadership also plays a significant role in fostering a positive school culture, which is directly linked to teacher retention. A school culture that emphasizes collaboration, mutual respect, and shared responsibility contributes to a work environment where teachers feel more invested in their school community. Robinson (2020) found that transformational leadership, which emphasizes collaboration and participative decision-making, is closely linked to higher teacher job satisfaction and retention. When teachers feel included in decision-making processes, they are more likely to develop a sense of ownership and commitment to their work. Collaborative leadership practices, such as creating teacher-led committees or encouraging team teaching, further promote a culture of collaboration that can help reduce feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction.

The impact of leadership on teacher retention is also shaped by the extent to which leaders provide opportunities for professional development. According to Maslach et al. (2020), one of the leading causes of teacher attrition is burnout, often resulting from a lack of growth opportunities or professional engagement. School leaders who actively support continuous learning and skill development can help mitigate burnout by offering teachers the tools they need to manage classroom challenges and stay motivated in their work. Professional development initiatives that are tailored to teachers' needs and interests, such as workshops, coaching, or peer observations, can enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover rates. When teachers feel that their professional growth is a priority, they are more likely to stay with the school for the long term.

Building trust is another essential component of leadership in teacher retention. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2021) emphasize that trust between teachers and school leaders is crucial for fostering a positive work environment. Teachers who trust their leaders are more likely to feel secure in their positions and confident in the leadership's ability to address their concerns. Trust is developed through transparency, consistency, and fairness in leadership actions, such as equitable distribution of resources and clear communication regarding school goals and expectations. When teachers perceive their leaders as trustworthy, they are more likely to feel committed to the school and its mission, leading to greater retention rates.

Finally, a leader's ability to manage workload and ensure work-life balance for teachers is integral to retention. Teachers often experience high levels of stress due to heavy workloads and long hours, which can lead to burnout and eventual attrition. Hughes and O'Reilly (2021) found that school leaders who actively work to reduce excessive

administrative tasks, provide planning time, and promote a balanced workload can significantly decrease teacher turnover. Leaders who model healthy work-life balance and encourage their teachers to prioritize their well-being create an environment where teachers are more likely to feel supported both professionally and personally. This, in turn, can lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and, ultimately, teacher retention.

School Leadership and Job Satisfaction

The relationship between school leadership and teacher job satisfaction is crucial in fostering a positive school environment and enhancing teacher retention. Effective leadership plays a significant role in creating conditions that either promote or hinder teachers' satisfaction with their work. According to Leithwood and Jantzi (2020), transformational leadership, which involves motivating and inspiring teachers through shared goals and professional development, positively impacts job satisfaction. When school leaders are seen as supportive, transparent, and visionary, teachers are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. These leaders provide a sense of purpose and foster an environment where teachers feel valued, contributing to their overall satisfaction with their roles and their decision to remain in the profession.

One key element that affects job satisfaction is the degree of support and recognition provided by school leaders. Ingersoll (2018) found that administrative support is one of the most significant factors influencing teacher satisfaction. Teachers who feel their efforts are acknowledged and that their professional needs are met by their leaders report higher job satisfaction. This support can take various forms, including providing resources, offering emotional support, and ensuring that teachers have a manageable workload. When school leaders make an effort to recognize teachers' hard work, whether through praise, professional development opportunities, or addressing challenges in the classroom, teachers are more likely to feel content in their roles and stay in the profession.

Another important aspect of leadership that affects job satisfaction is the creation of a positive school culture. Robinson (2020) highlights that a school's culture, which is shaped largely by the leadership style of the school head, plays a crucial role in teacher satisfaction. A positive school culture that emphasizes collaboration, mutual respect, and shared responsibility can create a supportive environment for teachers. School leaders who foster an inclusive, collegial atmosphere help build a community of educators who feel valued and supported. Teachers who experience a strong sense of camaraderie with their colleagues, facilitated by their leaders, are more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction and engagement in their work.

Leadership also impacts job satisfaction through the provision of professional development opportunities. According to Maslach et al. (2020), teachers who feel that their professional growth is being prioritized by their leaders tend to experience higher job satisfaction. School leaders who invest in professional development programs, whether through workshops, coaching, or collaborative learning communities, demonstrate their commitment to teachers' ongoing growth. These opportunities not only help teachers improve their skills but also increase their sense of competence and value within the school. As a result, professional development contributes significantly to job satisfaction, as teachers feel empowered to meet the challenges of their profession.

In addition to professional support, the leadership style adopted by school leaders can also influence teachers' sense of autonomy and decision-making. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2021) argue that leaders who involve teachers in decision-making processes or give them autonomy in the classroom tend to enhance teacher satisfaction. When teachers feel that they have a say in the direction of their school or in how their classrooms are managed, they experience greater job satisfaction. This sense of ownership over their work fosters a greater connection to the school and to their students. By promoting a participatory leadership style, school leaders can create an environment where teachers feel their professional judgment is trusted and respected, thereby enhancing their job satisfaction.

Finally, a school leader's approach to workload management is critical for job satisfaction. Hughes and O'Reilly (2021) emphasize that excessive workloads and burnout are significant contributors to low job satisfaction among teachers. School leaders who understand the importance of work-life balance and actively work to reduce unnecessary administrative burdens can significantly improve teachers' satisfaction. Providing teachers with adequate planning time, delegating administrative tasks, and ensuring reasonable expectations for after-hours work can prevent burnout and enhance teachers' well-being. When teachers feel that their workloads are manageable and that they are supported in balancing their professional and personal lives, their job satisfaction improves, which in turn can lead to greater teacher retention.

Impact of Leadership on Teacher Retention

The impact of leadership on teacher retention is a critical area of research, as school leaders play a central role in shaping the work environment and influencing teachers' decision to remain in or leave the profession. Effective school leadership is linked to a positive school climate, where teachers feel supported, valued, and empowered. Leithwood and Jantzi (2020) emphasize that transformational leadership, which involves creating a shared vision, fostering a collaborative culture, and providing professional development opportunities, is particularly effective in enhancing teacher retention. Leaders who demonstrate these qualities are more likely to inspire teachers to stay, as they feel a sense of purpose and ownership over their work. This type of leadership also helps in establishing trust and strong relationships, which contribute significantly to reducing teacher turnover.

Administrative support is another crucial element of leadership that directly impacts teacher retention. Ingersoll (2018) notes that a lack of administrative support is one of the main factors leading to teacher attrition. Teachers who feel unsupported by their administrators, whether in terms of professional development, resources, or day-to-day classroom challenges, are more likely to leave. In contrast, school leaders who provide ongoing support through mentorship, constructive feedback, and the provision of adequate teaching resources can mitigate stress and burnout. Effective leaders also play an essential role in addressing issues like discipline and classroom management, making teachers feel that they have the necessary backing to succeed in their roles.

School leaders also influence teacher retention through their ability to foster a positive school culture. Robinson (2020) highlights that leadership behaviors significantly impact the overall culture of a school, which in turn affects teacher morale and retention. Leaders who promote a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, and inclusivity help create an environment where teachers feel valued not only by their administrators but also by their colleagues. A supportive school culture reduces isolation, increases job satisfaction, and encourages long-term commitment to the school. Conversely, a negative school culture marked by lack of collaboration, poor communication, and low morale can lead to teacher disengagement and higher turnover.

Professional development is another key area where school leadership plays a significant role in teacher retention. Maslach et al. (2020) argue that burnout, often stemming from a lack of professional growth opportunities, is one of the leading causes of teacher attrition. Leaders who invest in professional development programs demonstrate a commitment to teachers' career growth, thereby enhancing job satisfaction and retention. Providing teachers with opportunities for skill enhancement, leadership training, and collaborative learning experiences not only improves their teaching practices but also signals that the school values their professional growth. Teachers who feel empowered and supported in their ongoing development are more likely to stay in the profession, reducing turnover rates.

The leadership style of school heads is another important factor influencing teacher retention. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2021) found that leaders who engage in participatory and inclusive decision-making processes tend to foster higher levels of teacher satisfaction and retention. Teachers who feel involved in decisions that affect their classrooms and school policies are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and commitment to their work. This participatory approach helps teachers feel respected and heard, creating a sense of professional autonomy that is crucial for job satisfaction. On the other hand, top-down, authoritarian leadership that limits teacher input can lead to dissatisfaction, disengagement, and, ultimately, attrition.

Finally, work-life balance and workload management are important areas where school leadership has a profound effect on teacher retention. Hughes and O'Reilly (2021) suggest that one of the primary causes of teacher attrition is burnout caused by excessive workloads. Leaders who recognize the importance of balancing professional responsibilities with personal well-being and make efforts to reduce teacher stress can significantly impact retention. This can include offering flexible working conditions, reducing unnecessary administrative tasks, and providing time for planning and collaboration. When school leaders are proactive in addressing workload issues and supporting teachers' well-being, they help prevent burnout and promote long-term retention.

Teacher attrition, particularly in private schools, is often driven by compensation disparities, heavy workloads, and limited administrative support. These challenges lead to financial stress, burnout, and reduced job satisfaction, creating a cycle of turnover that disrupts educational continuity and burdens remaining staff. Successful retention strategies include professional development opportunities, recognition of contributions, and work-life balance initiatives. Teachers who perceive institutional investment in their growth and well-being experience higher satisfaction and lower turnover rates.

Also, effective leadership, especially transformational leadership, plays a key role in retaining teachers by fostering supportive environments, mentorship, and collaboration. Leaders who build trust, involve teachers in decision-making, and address workload management promote a positive school culture that reduces isolation and dissatisfaction. By mitigating burnout and creating opportunities for professional growth, leadership directly contributes to teacher retention and long-term commitment.

Moreover, job satisfaction is strongly linked to the quality of school leadership. Supportive leaders recognize teachers' efforts, provide essential resources, and prioritize professional development, empowering teachers to grow and feel valued. A collaborative school culture, built on mutual respect and shared responsibility, enhances satisfaction and engagement. Leadership styles promoting autonomy and decision-making involvement further strengthen teachers' sense of agency and connection to their work. Effective workload management and work-life balance initiatives are critical in creating sustainable, satisfying work environments.

Clearly, leadership significantly influences teacher retention by shaping supportive, collaborative, and growth-focused school environments. Transformational leadership practices, including mentorship, constructive feedback, and workload management, alleviate stress and burnout while enhancing job satisfaction. Leaders who prioritize teachers' professional development and include them in decision-making foster a sense of value and commitment, reducing turnover. Overall, effective leadership creates conditions that support teacher satisfaction, engagement, and long-term retention.

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Research Questions

The primary goal of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of employee attrition among private school from the perspective of school teachers. Therefore, it specifically aims to answer the following questions:

1. What challenges and issues do school and department heads face about employee attrition within private schools?
2. What coping strategies that school and department heads employing to manage high attrition rates and mitigate problems that arise?
3. What insights do school and department heads provide regarding the causes and effects of employee attrition within private schools?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

I employed a qualitative research design, specifically a phenomenological approach, in this study. A qualitative research method was used to gather real-world data in verbal form without predetermined responses after interpreting the significance individuals attributed to specific societal or personal issues through interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Additionally, Brink (2018) referenced Creswell (2018), stating that phenomenology investigates a real-life, bounded system through comprehensive, in-depth data collection utilizing lived experiences and information sources.

Research Participants

Echoes of Departure: Teachers' Lived Experiences of Teachers Disengagement and Attrition at RMC. The participants in this study were invited using nonrandom sampling. The target was eight (8) participants who served as teachers, school heads, or department heads at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc.

Participant 1 graduated from Holy Cross of Davao College (2017). Was a male coordinator at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. A licensed professional teacher, he has nearly eight years of teaching experience. He earned his Master of Arts in Educational Management in 2021 and is pursuing his second Master's Degree at Davao del Norte State College (complete academic requirements).

Participant 2 graduated from Holy Cross of Davao College (2018) with a degree of Bachelor of Secondary Education Majoring Biological Science. A licensed professional teacher, and now she is pursuing her Master of Arts in Educational Management at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc.

Participant 3 graduated from Holy Cross of Davao College with a degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, majoring in Marketing Management (2019) and completed 18 units in Secondary Education at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. (2020). And she is currently pursuing her Master's Degree in Educational Management at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc.

Participant 4 graduated from University of Mindanao with a degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, majoring in Marketing Management (2019) and completed 18 units in Secondary Education at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. (2020). A licensed professional teacher, she is pursuing her Master's Degree at Holy Cross of Davao College (complete academic requirements).

Participant 5 graduated with a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Mathematics and holds a Master of Arts in Education major in Mathematics. As a Licensed Professional Teacher (LPT), this individual brings 23 years of experience as a classroom teacher.

Participant 6 was a graduate of Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Filipino (2007). A licensed professional teacher, she has eight years of teaching experience. She earned her Masters of Arts in Teaching Filipino at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. (2021).

Participant 7 is one of the Deans at Rizal Memorial Colleges and has been a professor since 2009. He holds a PhD in Organizational Development and an MBA in Enterprise Development from the University of Southeastern Philippines. Their academic background also includes degrees in Secondary and Business Education, with earned units in Elementary and Educational Management.

Participant 8 was a graduate of Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Filipino at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. (2020). A licensed professional teacher, she has 3 years of teaching experience. She is currently pursuing her Masters of Arts in Teaching Filipino at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc.

Research Instruments

The participants in this study will be invited using nonrandom sampling. The target will be eight (8) participants serving as school heads or department heads in a private school institution.

The participants will be chosen using purposive sampling based on their availability and willingness to participate. On the other hand, this is a sampling technique that qualitative researchers use to recruit recoveries who can provide in-depth and detailed information about the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2018). I will determine the

highly subjective and generate each participant's qualifying criteria. Guided by this approach, I will identify potential participants using predefined inclusion criteria. The inclusion-exclusion criteria are as follows: (1) school head or department head; (2) have served the institution for 5-10 years already (5) have experienced subordinates resigning in the course of their term as school teachers.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study employed the deductive thematic analysis approach, a structured method for analyzing qualitative data. Utilizing this approach provided a methodical framework for data analysis, ensuring that the findings were chronologically organized and resulted in insightful conclusions. The following step-by-step process was used for data analysis: (1) Became familiar with the data. (2) Generated initial codes. (3) Searched for themes. (4) Reviewed themes. (5) Defined themes. (6) Lastly, wrote up the findings. Conclusively, the data analysis allowed researchers to explore how their data aligned with existing theories or concepts, providing valuable insights and supporting or challenging existing knowledge. The use of the deductive thematic analysis approach, involving the step-by-step processes mentioned, aimed to help researchers gain a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences (Maguire & Delahunt, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study presents and interprets the findings derived from the lived experiences of teachers regarding teacher disengagement and attrition at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. Based on a qualitative phenomenological methodology, the data acquired through in-depth interviews reveals crucial themes that shed light on the complicated realities that school administrators encounter as they manage the issues of teacher turnover. The discussion links these findings to current literature and theoretical frameworks, providing a more nuanced view of the interactions between institutional dynamics, leadership practices, and the reasons that lead to teacher disengagement and final leave. The purpose of this chapter is to give participants' stories a voice while also deriving valuable insights for educational leadership policy and practice.

This study identified three major themes: retention challenges and compensation gaps, enhanced teacher support systems, and low compensation and burnout, each with four sub-themes revealing critical elements influencing teacher retention and school success. The first topic emphasizes how crises affect academic continuity, trust, and the necessity for adaptive leadership in the face of technological change. The second theme emphasizes the need of teacher-centered support, professional development, readiness, and open communication in building resilience and morale. The third topic underlines how low pay, exhaustion, a lack of recognition, and unfavorable workplace dynamics undermine both teacher satisfaction and school culture. Together, these themes highlight the critical need for comprehensive, supportive, and adaptive solutions to improve educational settings and ensure long-term teacher retention.

Implications

The study's findings provide insight on the deeply personal and organizational issues that school leaders face as teacher disengagement and attrition rise at Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc. Their lived experiences have provided a greater knowledge of the emotional impact, operational disruptions, and strategy inadequacies that contribute to the ongoing existence of these difficulties. These narratives not only illustrate systemic patterns of unhappiness and detachment among teachers, but they also highlight the importance of responsive leadership, supportive work environments, and long-term professional development frameworks. The study's implications go beyond anecdotal evidence, emphasizing the importance of leadership in affecting teacher retention and engagement.

In view of these findings, this chapter considers practical implications for educational leadership and institutional policy, with the goal of addressing the underlying reasons of disengagement and attrition. Furthermore, it suggests actionable techniques and future study directions to improve teacher well-being, organizational culture, and leadership development. These future directions are a call to action for stakeholders within and outside Rizal Memorial Colleges to reconsider present practices and commit to long-term, innovative solutions. This allows educational institutions to better retain committed professionals while also creating environments in which both teachers and students can thrive.

Future Directions

This study explores teacher attrition via the perspective of teachers' lived experiences, with the goal of informing effective institutional improvements and retention methods. It suggests conducting additional study to establish intervention programs, legislative changes, and leadership training to address the underlying causes of teacher disengagement. Expanding the scope of the study to include different institutions and educational levels may assist validate findings and provide broader viewpoints, resulting in more helpful and sustainable academic settings.

Moreover, to enhance educational systems, school administrators are encouraged to use innovative technologies, inclusive policies, and data-driven methods. Strengthening teacher support systems, encouraging community engagement, and investing in leadership development are all critical steps toward building resilient, adaptive schools. Teachers, in turn, must continue their professional development in areas like as digital literacy and student-centered education, as well as form good relationships with students and reflect on their teaching techniques, in order to support academic success in diverse and dynamic classrooms.

Lastly, learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their education by developing digital skills, self-directed study habits, and a mentality that values lifelong learning and cooperation. Future research should look on how technology trends such as artificial intelligence, equitable digital access, and hybrid learning models affect educational outcomes and well-being. Furthermore, research should address students' socio-emotional needs, culturally inclusive curriculum design, and the changing roles of instructors and students in learner-centered contexts. This holistic approach can help lead evidence-based improvements and promote more equitable, engaging, and effective educational experiences.

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