ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 7| July 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

RETAINING TALENTS: SCHOOL HEAD LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND RETENTION OF TEACHERS IN NABUNTURAN

Jona M. Lagumbay[1], Maedel Joy V. Escote[2]
[1]Teacher – Mainit National High School
[2]Adviser – Assumption College of Nabunturan

ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate the impact of school head leadership skills on teacher retention specifically in Nabunturan East and West Districts, the significant relationship between school head leadership skills and teacher retention, and which leadership skill perceived to be greatly influential to teachers, thus strengthening the teacher retention. Grounded in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs which emphasizes the progression of human physiological and safety needs to higher-order needs such as self-actualization as the highest level. A quantitative descriptive - correlational study was employed utilizing a proportional stratified random sampling method to 150 public-school teachers in Nabunturan East and West Districts, Nabunturan, Davao de Oro with diversified school context and leadership experience. As a result, the statistical analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between school head leadership skills and teacher retention. Among the five leadership skills measured, delegation was found to be the most significant predictor of teacher retention, with the highest correlation value. The study concluded that effective school head leadership skills play vital role in retaining teachers to their respective local teaching positions. Furthermore, the information gain from this study will benefit the learners, teachers, school heads, Department of Education and policy makers.

KEY WORDS: *Educational Administration, Teacher Retention, School Head Leadership Skills, Quantitative descriptive - correlational, Hierarchy of Needs*

INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Its Background

As educators continue professional development and competence, many have chosen to seek international teaching opportunities, thus creating teacher shortage, decreasing numbers of quality educators tend to result to intellectual loss. A worldwide phenomenon that challenged education sectors in retaining of teachers across the globe. Data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) exposed that in a range of five years, specifically in the years 2013-2017, there has been about 1,500 Filipino teachers in each respective year, are leaving to pursue international teaching opportunities (Teachers Dignity Coalition, 2024). The teachers' decisions to pursue an international opportunity threatens the foundational stability of continuing educational system and the quality of teaching in the Philippines.

Retaining skilled teachers has become a global concern, many countries are also affected with this uprising trend to the quality of education and its sustainability. According to the results of a study by Gonzalez-Falcon (2019) among Andalusians, Spain, the poor support and leadership of teacher professional development can cause teacher burnout and displacement. The inability of school leaders to create positive working environment, sufficient support, clear communication and professional opportunities are known to be factors affecting teachers' decision in seeking chances for international employment (Guo-Brennan, 2020). In another research study, it is suggested that leadership can be enhanced, whose implementation of organized policies and institutional training of teachers are to deal with the rate of teacher turnover, with the implications being that leadership can play a considerable role impacting the retention of teachers (Redding & Henry, 2018). In the National Capital Region of the Philippines, teacher retention has notably become an emerging issue. Evidences show that leadership competency possessed by the school leaders greatly affects teacher satisfaction and teacher retention rate improvements (Arrieta & Ancho, 2020). Emphasis on leadership development concurs with the rising acknowledgment of the importance of effective school leadership in keeping teacher morale high and keeping migration levels low.

In Nabunturan East and West Districts of Davao de Oro, there were numerous teachers who quit for international teaching opportunity only within a span of five years. This significantly affect the quality of education for the children in said districts. Various factors are considered to be influential in the decision of the teacher to take a life-changing teaching career path abroad. Some of these factors involve practical compensation, professional development, personal growth and wellness; and school leadership that impacts motivation, commitment and persistence (Pitpit, 2020). In particular, the leadership competency of the school head can significantly affect the choice of teachers to persist in or leave the local teaching positions. Hence, this study attempts to fill this gap by exploring the influence of school leadership competencies on teacher retention in the locality.

In the emergence of this trend concerning teaching professionals from the school districts of Nabunturan, Davao de Oro, the need to investigate school-level factors influencing teacher retention has become more important. Although

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 7| July 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

international employment means financial wellness which drive teachers to take the risk for foreign opportunities, the presence of evidences that leadership abilities most significantly influence the decision of teacher are considerable. In such school districts where educational continuity is associated to the community development, the leadership potential of school heads can have an immediate impact on teacher morale, motivation, and commitment. This study therefore seeks to explore how the leadership competencies of school heads in the districts of Nabunturan affect the retention of teachers. The research, through developing the localized insights would contribute towards developing responsive leadership strategies and retention frameworks that can respond to the specific challenges that schools are facing or encountering within the Davao de Oro Province.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to examine how the leadership skills of school heads in the educational districts of Nabunturan affect the retention of teachers. By generating localized insights, the research aims to support the formulation of responsive leadership strategies and retention frameworks that address the unique challenges faced by schools in Davao de Oro Province that could be beneficial for learners to benefit a stable, high-quality education through the retention of competent teachers; teachers to gain in-depth understanding of leadership practices that affect their job satisfaction and career decisions; school administrators and DepEd to utilize findings to improve leadership training and support systems that encourages teacher retention while policymakers are guided in crafting data-driven strategies that address teacher emigration. Finally, this study lays the groundwork for future research on effective school leadership and teacher retention.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research design, research instrument, statement of the problem, the geographical area where the study was conducted.

Research Design

The research design used was quantitative descriptive-correlational. The approach taken was quantitative as the purpose of the research was to quantify the influence of school head leadership on teacher retention in the Nabunturan East and West Districts. The approach became applicable to the research as it had enabled the researcher to define and to measure such aspects as leadership skills and teacher retention factors enabling the identification of the patterns and trends within the given context. Creswell (2012) pointed out that a quantitative approach is most appropriate whenever a problem requires establishing factors that affect an outcome so that leadership skills affect the teacher retention.

The correlational method was also employed, given the study aimed of exploring the relationship between school head leadership skills (Communication, Delegation, Emotional Intelligence, Empathy, and Resolving Conflicts) and teacher retention. The study investigated the correlation between these leadership skills and key variables such as career advancement, working conditions, perceived support, work-life balance, and job satisfaction through correlation coefficients. Correlational research as Creswell (2012) proposed serves to describe how and quantify the strength of relationship between two or more variables. This design enabled the researcher to establish whether there are any significant relationships between the leadership skills of school head and teacher retention in the districts of Nabunturan.

Research Instrument

The survey questionnaire prepared in this study is targeted on two central points: The initial part evaluates leadership skills of school heads as perceived by the teachers in the Nabunturan East and West Districts, which based on a sequence of statements on the models introduced by Van Jaarsveld (2019). The indicators used for this section include Communication, Delegation, Emotional Intelligence, Empathy, Resolving Conflicts, with each category consisting of five statements. These respondents based their judgment of the leadership skills of their school head on a four-point Likert scale which ranged between the strong disagree (1) and strongly agree (4). Such systematic methodology was conducted in order to obtain the perceptions of teachers on the ability of their school heads to provide leadership in the school, which is very significant in explaining the dynamics of the place that teachers work in.

The second part of the questionnaire is borrowed based on the research of Petrus van der Vyver (2020). The purpose of this survey questionnaire is to capture the feedback on the main factors affecting teacher retention, such as the career advancement opportunities, working conditions, perceived support, work-life balance, job satisfaction. The indicators are each composed of ten statements indicating the different aspects of the experiences and attitudes of teachers to their profession. By considering various aspects of the teaching experience, this questionnaire was expected to give a full picture of the factors which may have an impact on teacher retention in the two districts. Respondents utilized the same four-point Likert scale to express their level of agreement with each statement. Subsequently, to aid the statistical interpretation of the research questionnaire, the four-point Likert scale was used.

Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to evaluate the impact of school head leadership skills on teacher retention:

1. What is the level of leadership skills of school heads in terms of:
    a. Communication
    b. Delegation
    c. Emotional Intelligence
    d. Empathy
    e. Resolving Conflicts
2. What is the level of teacher retention in terms of:
    a. Career advancement opportunities
    b. Working conditions

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 7| July 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

c. Perceived support
d. Work-life balance
e. Job Satisfaction

3. Is there a significant relationship between School Head Leadership Skills and Teacher Retention?
4. Which leadership skills most significantly influenced teacher retention?

Geographical Area

The study was conducted in East and West Districts Nabunturan, Davao de Oro. The districts were selected based on its accessibility and the diversity of the educational context or setting which are in the category of small, medium, large and mega- Elementary, Junior High School/Senior High School and Integrated Schools with its level of teaching resources and teaching learning dynamics at different level. The diversity in school setting that different leaders of schools use diverse leadership skills will challenge the study with a wide view of analyzing the effects of the leadership skills on the teacher retentions. Then, the readiness of district educators to contribute to the research aided to sufficient quality and pertinent information can be gathered. The geographical location of the said districts practically represents the educational condition in the division, where the issues of teacher retention are common. Having conducted the study in such district, the researcher managed to get good information on the role of school head leadership skills in retaining teachers in various school environments.

RESULTS

The findings of the statistical tests established strong relationship between school head leadership skills and teacher retention in Nabunturan. It presented the measures of the degree of leadership skills and teacher retention, and the outstanding connections between the same. Specifically, the study shows that delegation is the most prominent leadership behavior, and that school leadership plays a crucial role in fostering teacher retention.

Results on the level of relationship between School Head Leadership Skills and Teacher Retention in terms of each specific domain- Communication, Delegation, Emotional Intelligence, Empathy and Resolving Conflicts:

The results of the research revealed that effective leadership, especially when considered in the domains- delegation, communication, empathy, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution, has a crucial impact on enhancing the retention of teachers in the places where they work in rural schools. **Delegation** was regarded as the most powerful influencing factor which underscores the power of empowerment and trust in minimizing turnover. These findings are congruent with the conceptual framework used in the study, among others, affirming the assertion, that when teachers emotional, professional, and psychological needs are addressed effectively using effective leadership, their loyalty to stick to their schools or institutions is greatly boosted.

Results on the Significant relationship between School Head Leadership Skills and Teacher Retention

The Pearson's r calculated of 0.708 indicates that there is a stronger positive correlation between the leadership ability of the head of the schools and their capability to retain their staff ($p < 0.001$). This proves that delegative, empathetic, communicative, and emotionally intelligent school leadership increases teacher commitment. In consonance with the Maslow theory, the conclusions relate to the idea that fulfilment of professional and psychological needs of the teachers in terms of strong leadership would improve retention in Nabunturan.

Results on the leadership skills most significantly influenced teacher retention

Delegation forms the most positive correlation of teacher retention ($r = 0.707$, $p < .001$), which implies the following: when school heads delegate duties depending upon the strong suits of the teachers and encourage self-efficiency, the retention yields better results. This justifies the research structure of the study because collective responsibility enhances teacher participation and loyalty. Effective delegation allows school heads to avoid overloading teachers and achieving working environments encouraging retention, thus, is a central mechanism of enhancing the retention in Nabunturan.

Conclusion

Statistical analysis revealed a strong positive link between school heads' leadership skills and teacher retention, with delegation emerging as the most influential domain. Teachers viewed their leaders as supportive, fair, and empowering—key factors that foster trust and long-term commitment. Especially in rural areas like Nabunturan, effective leadership that promotes autonomy and shared responsibility is crucial in addressing teacher turnover. The study underscores the vital role of strong, empowering leadership in improving teacher retention and supporting overall school success.

Recommendations

The research study revealed that the school heads can facilitate leadership development initiatives founded on communication, delegation and emotional intelligence since they are statistically strong correlates of teacher retention. Constructive feedbacking as the mechanism that enables consideration of teacher views in the decision-making process should be institutionalized in the school and teachers should also be attended the professional development opportunities which include trainings, seminars which are subject aligned and teacher of interest to reinforce their intentions to continue teaching in the local teaching environment. Potentially as well, School Heads can reinforce positive workplace culture where teachers feel valued and feel trusted and empowered to pursue professional development and delegate rewarding loads and responsibilities and establish support system and establish transparent recognition systems. The Policy makers and Department of Education (DepEd) may develop and adopt policies which centers around the welfare of teachers to ensure retention. Future scholars may widen similar research, adding

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 7| July 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

teacher retention dynamics to more people, and compare or otherwise review results. and carry out strategies that can target teachers' welfare. Other researchers in the future might extend the studies to a larger population and compare results and findings.

REFERENCES

1. *Arrieta, G. S., & Ancho, I. V. (2020). Ready or Not: The Experiences of Novice Academic Heads in School Leadership. International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 19(5), 78–98.*
2. *Creswell, J. W. (2018). Key Point Chapter Summaries for John Creswell's Research Design Textbook on Qualitative, Quantitative, & Mixed Methods Approach*
3. *González-Falcón, I., García-Rodríguez, Ma. P., Gómez-Hurtado, I., & Carrasco-Macías, Ma. J.. (2019). The importance of principal leadership and context for school success: insights from "(in)visible school." School Leadership & Management, 40(4), 1–18.*
4. *Guo-Brennan, L., & Guo-Brennan, M. (2020). Global Citizenship Education and Social Justice for Immigrant Students: Implications for Administration, Leadership, and Teaching in Schools. Handbook on Promoting Social Justice in Education, 2203–*
5. *McLeod, S. (2007). Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Simply psychology, 1(1-18), 3-4.2222.*
6. *Petrus van der Vyver, C. (2020). The relationship between teachers' professional wellbeing and principals' leadership skills to improve teacher retention. Perspectives in Education, 38(2).*
7. *Pitpit. (2020). Elementary School Principals' Instructional Leadership Practices to Retain Novice Teachers in the Philippines - ProQuest. Www.proquest.com.*
8. *Redding, C., & Henry, G. T. (2018). Leaving School Early: An Examination of Novice Teachers' Within- and End-of-Year Turnover. American Educational Research Journal, 56(1), 204–236.*
9. *Teachers Dignity Coalition. (2024, August 22). TDC warns of potential brain drain as teachers leave for overseas jobs. Human Rights Online Philippines. Retrieved from https://hronlineph.com/2024/08/22/statement-tdc-warns-of-potential-brain-drain-as-teachers-leave-for-overseas-jobs/*
10. *Van Jaarsveld, L., Mentz, P.J.(K). and Ellis, S. (2019), "Implementing the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) in a challenging context: Results from a large-scale quantitative study", International Journal of Educational Management, Vol. 33 No. 4, pp. 604-613*

Tables

Table 1. Level of Leadership Skills of School Heads in terms of Communication.

INDICATOR *My school head…*	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
Clearly articulates the goals and vision of the school.	3.66	Strongly Agree
Effectively communicates expectations and tasks to teachers.	3.66	Strongly Agree
Listens to the concerns and feedback of the staff.	3.60	Strongly Agree
Ensures transparency in decision-making and information sharing.	3.55	Strongly Agree
Provides timely feedback and constructive criticism to teachers.	3.54	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.60	Strongly Agree

Table 2. Level of Leadership Skills of School Heads in terms of Delegation

INDICATOR *My school head…*	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
Assigns tasks based on individual strengths and skills.	3.72	Strongly Agree
Trusts staff to complete their responsibilities without micromanaging.	3.56	Strongly Agree
Ensures that tasks are delegated evenly and fairly among staff members.	3.58	Strongly Agree
Provides the necessary resources and guidance when delegating tasks.	3.61	Strongly Agree
Monitors progress without interfering and steps in only when necessary.	3.61	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.62	Strongly Agree

Table 3. Level of Leadership Skills of School Heads in terms of Emotional Intelligence

INDICATOR *My school head…*	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
Remains calm and compose during stressful situations.	3.36	Agree
Recognizes and responds appropriately to the emotions of staff members.	3.42	Agree
Is aware of how their decisions and actions affect the emotional well-being of the team.	3.41	Agree
Fosters a work environment where staff feel comfortable expressing their feelings.	3.45	Agree
Effectively manages their own emotions when dealing with staff issues.	3.46	Agree
Weighted Mean	3.42	Agree

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 7| July 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Table 4. Level of Leadership Skills of School Heads in terms of Empathy

INDICATOR *My school head…*	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
Shows genuine concern for the personal and professional challenges faced by staff.	3.59	Strongly Agree
Actively listens and provides support when staff are experiencing difficulties.	3.64	Strongly Agree
Demonstrates an understanding of the pressures and stressors affecting teachers.	3.54	Strongly Agree
Is approachable and makes time to discuss concerns on a personal level.	3.61	Strongly Agree
Shows compassion in resolving conflicts among staff members.	3.65	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.60	Strongly Agree

Table 5. Level of Leadership Skills of School Heads in terms of Resolving Conflicts

INDICATOR *My school head…*	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
Handles conflicts among staff in a fair and impartial manner.	3.58	Strongly Agree
Actively seeks solutions that are acceptable to all parties involved in a conflict.	3.62	Strongly Agree
Encourages open communication to resolve disagreements.	3.65	Strongly Agree
Ensures that conflicts are addressed promptly and effectively.	3.59	Strongly Agree
Fosters a school environment where staff feel comfortable discussing conflicts without fear of retribution.	3.54	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.59	Strongly Agree

Table 6. Level of teacher retention in terms of Career advancement opportunities

INDICATOR *My school head…*	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
There are sufficient opportunities for career advancement in my school.	3.50	Strongly Agree
I am encouraged to pursue professional development activities.	3.52	Strongly Agree
There are clear pathways for promotion within the school.	3.51	Strongly Agree
My school provides support for further education.	3.49	Agree
I receive guidance on how to advance my career from my school head.	3.50	Strongly Agree
Opportunities for leadership roles are accessible to all teachers.	3.49	Agree
The school recognizes and promotes staff for their contributions.	3.54	Strongly Agree
I feel that I have equal chances for advancement compared to my peers.	3.56	Strongly Agree
Professional development programs align with my career goals.	3.42	Agree
My school actively encourages teachers to apply for higher positions.	3.59	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.51	Strongly Agree

Table 7. Level of teacher retention in terms of Working Conditions

INDICATOR *My school head…*	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
My classroom is equipped with adequate resources for teaching.	3.51	Strongly Agree
The school environment is safe and conducive to learning.	3.38	Agree
I have access to necessary technology to enhance my teaching.	3.46	Agree
My workload is manageable.	3.55	Strongly Agree
I receive adequate support from administration to fulfill my teaching responsibilities.	3.49	Agree
The facilities of my school meet my teaching needs.	3.42	Agree
I have a good work-life balance due to my working conditions.	3.44	Agree
The administrative workload does not hinder my teaching effectiveness.	3.42	Agree
Communication between staff and administration is effective.	3.41	Agree
I feel comfortable discussing concerns about working conditions with my school head.	3.49	Agree
Weighted Mean	3.46	Agree

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 7| July 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Table 8. Level of teacher retention in terms of Perceived Support

INDICATOR *My school head…*	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
I receive adequate support from my school head.	3.44	Agree
I feel comfortable asking for help from my colleagues.	3.57	Strongly Agree
My school provides resources to support my teaching.	3.52	Strongly Agree
I have access to mentorship from experienced teachers.	3.46	Agree
My school values teacher feedback in decision-making.	3.48	Agree
There are opportunities for collaboration with peers.	3.52	Strongly Agree
I receive constructive feedback on my teaching practices.	3.62	Strongly Agree
I feel appreciated for my contributions.	3.56	Strongly Agree
I am provided with resources to develop my teaching skills.	3.52	Strongly Agree
I feel supported by my school administration.	3.56	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.53	Strongly Agree

Table 9. Level of teacher retention in terms of Work-life balance

INDICATOR *My school head…*	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
I have sufficient time to balance my personal and professional responsibilities.	3.59	Strongly Agree
I am able to spend quality time with family and friends due to my manageable workload.	3.50	Strongly Agree
I feel that the school respects my time outside of work hours.	3.40	Agree
I experience enough flexibility in my work schedule to meet personal needs.	3.50	Strongly Agree
I am not frequently expected to work beyond regular hours.	3.46	Agree
I receive support from my school to maintain a healthy work-life balance.	3.32	Agree
I am encouraged to take breaks or time off when needed.	3.43	Agree
I am able to manage stress effectively due to supportive working conditions.	3.41	Agree
I feel that my work demands do not compromise my personal life.	3.38	Agree
I am satisfied with the balance between my professional and personal life.	3.32	Agree
Weighted Mean	3.43	Agree

Table 10. Level of teacher retention in terms of Job satisfaction

INDICATOR *My school head…*	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING
I am satisfied with my teaching position.	3.43	Agree
I feel a sense of accomplishment in my work.	3.59	Strongly Agree
I enjoy working with my colleagues.	3.59	Strongly Agree
I feel respected by my school head and peers.	3.54	Strongly Agree
I believe my work is valued by the school community.	3.59	Strongly Agree
I feel motivated to contribute to my school's success.	3.57	Strongly Agree
I look forward to coming to work each day.	3.54	Strongly Agree
I feel that my work-life balance is respected.	3.48	Agree
I receive recognition for my efforts in teaching.	3.42	Agree
I feel fulfilled in my teaching career.	3.49	Agree
Weighted Mean	3.52	Strongly Agree