



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS' INFLUENCE ON TEACHER RETENTION IN THE DIVISION OF PANABO CITY

Chito L. Antonio Jr.¹

¹Student, Graduate School, Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between professional development programs and teacher retention among 116 Grade 8 teachers in the Division of Davao del Norte. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, validated survey instruments were administered, and data were analyzed using weighted mean, Pearson product-moment correlation, and regression analysis. The results revealed that the extent of both professional development programs and teacher retention was at an extensive level. All domains of professional development, including thematic knowledge, learning environment, cooperation, educational technology, research-based practices, educational planning, evaluation, and development of human resources, were significantly related to teacher retention. Furthermore, regression analysis showed that these domains significantly influenced retention, with the learning environment having the strongest predictive value. The findings confirmed that well-designed, relevant, and supportive professional development programs enhance teacher engagement and commitment, thus improving retention. The results align with social learning theory, experiential learning theory, and andragogy, which collectively emphasize learning through interaction, reflection, and practical application. The study concludes that comprehensive and continuous professional development is vital in maintaining a stable and high-performing teaching workforce. Recommendations were made for DepEd officials, school administrators, teachers, and future researchers to enhance professional development structures as a strategic approach to improving teacher retention.

KEYWORDS- Professional Development, Teacher Retention, Education, Davao Del Norte, Professional Growth, Learning Environment, Mentorship

INTRODUCTION

Teacher retention is a critical global issue, with many educational systems grappling with the challenge of retaining skilled and experienced educators. Factors such as heavy workloads, insufficient support, and limited career progression opportunities contribute to high attrition rates, disrupting workforce stability and student learning outcomes (Brookings Institute, 2019).

Internationally, countries like the United States report significant retention issues in low-income and underserved communities, where teacher turnover adversely affects student achievement and institutional consistency (National School Boards Association, 2020).

Nationally, the Philippines faces similar challenges, particularly in rural areas. Teachers in these regions encounter large class sizes, inadequate teaching resources, and limited professional development opportunities, which lead to job dissatisfaction and early exits from the profession (Mendoza, 2020). These challenges highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions, particularly in enhancing teacher capacity and resilience. The Department of Education (DepEd) emphasizes professional development as a critical component of teacher support, aligning with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), which advocates for lifelong learning and improved teaching practices to retain qualified educators (DepEd, 2018).

Locally, in the Division of Panabo City, teacher retention remains a pressing concern. Schools in this area face high turnover rates, especially among early 2 career teachers. Despite the implementation of professional development initiatives, there is limited empirical evidence on how these programs impact teacher retention. Understanding the specific needs of educators in Panabo City is crucial for designing interventions that address local challenges while aligning with the PPST framework.

While previous studies highlight the importance of professional development in mitigating teacher attrition, gaps remain in understanding its specific influence on teacher retention in the Philippine context, particularly at the regional level. Existing research often focuses on urban centers, leaving rural divisions like Panabo City underexplored (Mendoza, 2020; NCES, 2021).

Furthermore, there is a need to evaluate how professional development programs tailored to local needs can improve retention rates while addressing the competencies outlined in the PPST, such as collaboration, research-based practices, and teacher empowerment.

This study seeks to address the pressing question: How do professional development programs influence teacher retention in the Division of Panabo City? It investigates the relationship between professional development



initiatives and retention rates while considering the contextual challenges faced by teachers. The study also explores how these programs align with PPST domains, particularly those emphasizing professional growth, collaboration, and classroom effectiveness.

The findings of this research aim to provide actionable insights for policymakers and school administrators in designing professional development 3 programs that align with both global best practices and local needs. By addressing this research gap, the study contributes to the broader effort of enhancing teacher retention, ensuring that schools in Panabo City can maintain a stable and skilled teaching workforce, ultimately improving student learning outcomes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The related literature of this study provided inputs about professional development programs and teacher retention. Also, it presented varied studies showcasing the association of the involved variables in this study. The independent variable focused on in this study is professional development programs. It has eight indicators namely, thematic knowledge, learning environment, cooperation, educational technology, research base, educational planning, evaluation, and development of human resources (Ayyoobi et al., 2018). Meanwhile, the dependent variable is teacher retention. It has six indicators namely, work environment, work fit, compensation and benefits, leadership, performance management system, and mentorship (Phillips, 2019).

Professional development programs for teachers are structured initiatives designed to improve educators' skills, knowledge, and instructional practices. These programs are critical in ensuring that teachers remain effective and adaptable to the evolving educational landscape, which is marked by rapid technological changes, curriculum shifts, and increasingly diverse student needs. 4 Professional development focuses on the continuous growth of teachers, ensuring they acquire the necessary tools to enhance their teaching practices and foster improved student learning outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the relationship between professional development programs and teacher retention. More specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of professional development programs in terms of:
 - 1.1. Thematic knowledge;
 - 1.2. Learning Environment;
 - 1.3. Cooperation;
 - 1.4. Educational technology;
 - 1.5. Research base;
 - 1.6. Educational planning;
 - 1.7. Evaluation; and
 - 1.8. Development of human resources?
2. What is the extent of teacher retention in terms of:
 - 2.1. Environment;
 - 2.2. Work Fit;
 - 2.3 Compensation and Benefits;
 - 2.4. Leadership
 - 2.5. Performance Management System
 - 2.6. Mentorship
3. Is there a significant relationship between professional development programs and teacher retention?
4. Which of the domains of professional development programs significantly influence teacher retention?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research approach, specifically utilizing a descriptive correlational design to investigate the relationship between professional development programs and teacher retention. Quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe, explain, and make predictions regarding specific phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the context of descriptive research, the goal is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the variables involved without manipulating them (Apuke, 2018). This approach is useful for identifying patterns or trends that occur naturally in a given population (Davis, 2021).

The descriptive correlational design was particularly suitable for this study, as it allowed for the examination of the relationships between the independent variable, professional development programs, and the dependent variable, teacher retention, without interfering in the natural setting. According to Kabir (2018), correlational research aims to determine if a relationship exists between two or more variables and whether this relationship is positive or negative. This method 53 enables the researcher to assess the degree of association between professional development initiatives and the ability of educational institutions to retain teachers.

By employing this research design, the study aimed to provide valuable insights into how professional development programs can influence teacher retention rates in educational institutions. This method also



ensured that the variables were observed in their natural settings, thus maintaining the integrity of the research environment while offering robust statistical data that can inform policy decisions related to teacher retention strategies in the Philippine context (Korrapati, 2018).’

Research Respondents

The respondents for this study are 116 Grade 8 teachers employed under the Panabo City Division. The selection of respondents was based on Slovin’s 58 formula to determine an appropriate and statistically significant sample size of teachers. Slovin’s formula, expressed as $n = \frac{1 + N}{N(e^2)}$, ensures that the sample size accounts for a specified margin of error, which in this study is 5% ($e = 0.05$).

This sample adequately represents the population while maintaining the desired precision and reliability of the findings. Teachers from various public schools within the Panabo City Division were included to ensure diversity in teaching experiences, professional development exposure, and contextual challenges, thereby increasing the generalizability of the study’s results.

The sampling method employed is stratified random sampling, ensuring that respondents are proportionately selected across different teaching levels and school categories. This approach supports the study’s objective to comprehensively assess the extent of professional development programs and their relationship with teacher retention. Stratified random sampling enhances the representativeness of the sample by addressing the variability across different strata of the teacher population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

This study’s focus on Panabo City Division contributes localized insights into the dynamics of teacher professional growth and retention, aligning with national efforts to improve educational outcomes through teacher capacity-building initiatives. References to Slovin’s formula and sampling methods can be found in Apuke (2018) and Davis (2021), emphasizing the validity and methodological rigor of this approach.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed to measure both, professional development programs and teacher retention. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions with Likert-scale items to quantify perceptions and experiences.

For data collection, this study utilized an adapted survey questionnaire. The questionnaire that was employed in this undertaking was divided into two sets. The first set focused on the extent of professional development programs. The second set focused on the extent of teacher retention.

Data Analysis

For the data analysis in this study, several statistical tools were employed to address the specific research questions and test the stated hypotheses. The following are the statistical methods that were utilized:

Weighted Mean. Mean was used to determine the extent of professional development programs and teacher retention. Mean was applied to present the 63 level of each domain in both variables. This will help summarize the data for each indicator, providing an overall picture of the participants’ perceptions.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to address the third research question. Pearson’s r will measure the strength and direction of the linear relationship between these two variables. This tool is appropriate because the study seeks to examine whether a relationship exists between the continuous variables of professional development programs and teacher retention (Kabir, 2018). A significance level (typically $p < 0.05$) was used to determine if the relationship is statistically significant.

Multiple Regression Analysis was employed to address the fourth research question: "Which of the domains of professional development programs significantly influence teacher retention?" Multiple regression will allow the study to examine the individual contributions of each domain of professional development programs to the prediction of teacher retention. This method will help identify which factors are the most significant predictors of teacher retention, thus offering more insight into the elements that affect retention rates (Davis, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between professional development programs and teacher retention. The study was conducted with the selected teachers from the Division of Davao del Norte. There were one hundred sixteen (116) Grade 8 teachers who participated in this study. A descriptive correlational method of research was used in utilizing adopted research instruments. The said instruments were validated by the panel of experts and subjected to pilot testing before it was made ready for administration. Weighted mean, Pearson product moment correlation, and regression analysis were statistical tools used in analyzing the data. The hypotheses in this study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

The major findings of the study were the following: the extent of the professional development programs of the teachers is extensive. Meanwhile, the extent of the teacher retention of the teachers is also extensive. It was found that there is a significant relationship between professional development programs and the teacher retention. The hypotheses of no significant relationship between professional development programs and teacher retention and



none of the 116 domains of professional development programs significantly influence teacher retention were rejected.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered:

The extent of professional development programs is extensive, which implies that it is oftentimes evident. All dimensions of professional development programs which include thematic knowledge, learning environment, cooperation, educational technology, research base, educational planning, evaluation, and development of human resources, are at an extensive level, which means it is oftentimes evident. Meanwhile, the extent of teacher retention is also extensive, which means that it is oftentimes evident. All dimensions of teacher retention are oftentimes evident. Both variables call for all school members to work hand in hand to strengthen the existing status of the professional development programs and teacher retention.

Based on the findings, professional development programs, and teacher retention are correlated. Also, professional development programs significantly influence teacher retention. All domains of professional development programs, namely, thematic knowledge, learning environment, cooperation, educational technology, research base, educational planning, evaluation, and development of human resources significantly influence teacher retention by registering a p-value of .002 which is less than .05 in the level of significance. This leads to the rejection 117 of the null hypotheses. Further, the result indicates that for every unit increase in the eight domains of professional development programs, teacher retention also increases.

Recommendations

The following suggestions were offered based on the conclusions of the study: For Higher Officials in the Department of Education, it is recommended to institutionalize and consistently support comprehensive, research-based, and teacher-driven professional development programs. These programs must be contextualized to meet the specific needs of teachers across various regions. Given the significant influence of all professional development domains on teacher retention, the Department should prioritize the allocation of funds and resources to sustain continuous professional learning. Additionally, enhancing existing policies related to performance management, mentorship, and teacher welfare—including compensation and recognition systems—will contribute to creating a more supportive environment that encourages long-term teacher commitment.

For School Principals, there is a critical need to ensure that professional development programs are integrated into school improvement plans and implemented meaningfully. As instructional leaders, principals should create a culture of collaboration, reflective practice, and mentorship within their schools. Encouraging teachers to engage in action research, participate in peer learning communities, and lead school-based training can help sustain motivation and professional growth. Moreover, principals must recognize the importance of a 118 positive work environment, as highlighted by the study, and address issues related to workload, facilities, and collegial support, which greatly affect teacher satisfaction and retention.

For Teachers, the study highlights the importance of actively participating in professional development opportunities and viewing them as essential to career growth and instructional excellence. Teachers are encouraged to be proactive in seeking out training, engaging in reflective practices, and sharing best practices with their peers. By embracing the culture of continuous improvement and professional collaboration, teachers not only enhance their competencies but also build resilience and commitment to the profession. Furthermore, teachers can advocate for school- or district-wide improvements by contributing insights from their professional development experiences.

For Future Researchers, it is recommended to explore longitudinal studies on the long-term impact of specific professional development domains on teacher retention. Investigating how these interventions evolve and influence teacher motivation over time can provide deeper insights. Additionally, expanding the scope to include other grade levels, public-private school comparisons, and different geographical contexts will help in generalizing the findings and making policy recommendations more robust. Qualitative approaches may also be considered to capture teachers' personal narratives and the nuanced effects of professional development on their decision to stay in the profession.

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