

Factors Affecting Teachers Retention in a Non-Graded Private Educational Institution: Input to an Enhanced Retention Strategies

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ABSTRACT

This study provides an analysis of teacher retention at a non-graded private educational institution in Quezon City, utilizing data from exit survey forms to departing teachers over the last three school years, starting from AY 2020-2021 to 2022-2023. The study focuses on the perceptions of departing employees regarding various factors that could influence teacher retention, grounded in Frederick Herzberg's Hygiene and Motivation factors. These identified factors hold the potential to assist the school in retaining proficient teachers by crafting a comprehensive rewards program, enhancing overall satisfaction levels, and deterring them from seeking employment elsewhere. The research methodology involves a descriptive study employing baseline data and the results of an exit survey instrument completed by seventy-two teachers who left during the past three academic years. The findings indicate that more than half of the turnover was due to voluntary resignations (56%), while (44)% were a result of management-initiated separations. Teachers' decisions to leave were generally driven by the accumulation of a number of factors. Among those who resigned, the primary reasons cited were the pursuit of better opportunities, improved work conditions, and higher compensation. Departing teachers generally expressed satisfaction with both motivation and hygiene factors, underscoring the need to make improvements in areas related to professional growth and development, as well as compensation and benefits. The findings suggest that a teacher's decision to stay is contingent on individual motivation, and the institution may consider designing a tailored retention strategy that integrates these insights into the five components of a total rewards program.

Keywords: *Teacher Retention, Total Rewards, Motivation, Employee Satisfaction, Turnover.*



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INTRODUCTION

In the realm of education, a school's reputation as a provider of high-quality education is closely tied to several critical factors. These include the quality of its educators, the effectiveness of its teaching and learning methods, the depth of lifelong learning experiences it offers, the overall school environment, and the strength of its leadership. These elements collectively build trust and gain school parents' support (Lynch, 2016). Among these factors retaining quality teachers is one major concern of academic institutions especially in the private sector.

One of the most significant challenges for academic institutions, whether public or private, is retaining highly qualified and dedicated educators. Retaining employees is a primary concern of every organization because it was made clear to them that their workforce is the lifeblood of the organization. It was made understood by organizations that human resources are important in their success and attainment of their goals. The concern about retaining teachers becomes especially critical when coupled with the existing issue of teacher shortages (Martson, 2014).

Many research reveals that the teacher shortage problem arises from the challenge of maintaining educators within the profession. (Hayford, 2022). Such a challenge is evident through the high attrition rates. Teacher retention success, which is the act of keeping qualified teachers in the field is often measured by the turnover and attrition of teachers leaving the institution.

Retention is the process of encouraging the workers to stay with the company in order to avoid the company losing its qualified and finest talents (Winda, 2023). Employee turnover, on the other hand, is a ratio comparing the number of employees an organization must replace in a given time period to the average number of total workforce (Khan, 2013). Turnover is further

classified as voluntary and involuntary. Involuntary turnover is within the control of the organization; thus, it is a management-initiated separation, such as termination of a contract, lay-offs, or organizational restructuring. Voluntary turnover, on the other hand, was brought about by employee-initiated quits or resignations. (Holtom, et al 2008, Ahn, 2019)

Higher turnover, whether voluntary or involuntary, presents a significant impediment to productivity, quality, and profitability for organizations, regardless of their size. This renders turnover a costly challenge for organizations, thereby impacting their overall performance and causing organizational disruptions that affect the remaining teachers, subjecting them to increased instructional burdens and challenging working conditions (Kelchtermans, 2017; Hayford, 2022). To effectively address this issue, it is crucial for school leaders to comprehend the underlying reasons for turnover and gain insight into teachers' perceptions of the practices that can foster retention. This understanding equips them to better manage their human resources, implement appropriate strategies, and ultimately achieve a higher return on their investments in teaching (Hayford, 2022). Similarly, as postulated by Allen (2012), effective turnover management within an organization requires a preliminary diagnosis of the extent of the turnover problem and a thorough examination of the factors influencing employee separations before the implementation of retention strategies.

Employees' decision to leave the organization voluntarily is brought about by several factors and is particularly triggered by what motivates them to stay. The Herzberg Motivation-hygiene Theory postulated that every worker has two sets of needs: motivational or within the person and hygiene needs or the external factors affecting motivation. Failure to meet these needs would increase feelings of dissatisfaction, thus increasing

the likelihood of employee departure (Gibson et al. 2006, Winda, 2021)

This study aimed to analyze factors affecting retention in a non-graded private academic institution by looking into the reasons of severance for the last three academic years and teachers' perception on how the practices offered by the institution. The said analysis would be used as an input to enhanced retention strategies aligned with the institution's total rewards program. Significant findings will be beneficial to the field of education as it impact not only retention but also attraction and sustaining highly qualified teachers. Interpretation of data and discussion of concepts were basically founded on Herzberg's Motivation-hygiene Theory.

METHODS

The study employed a descriptive evaluative research method, which allowed for the description and evaluation of the profiles of teachers who had left a non-graded private educational institution over the past three school years. It also gathered their collective opinions based on their responses to an exit interview form that teachers completed upon leaving the institution. The study included seventy-two respondents from the academic years 2020-2022. A quantitative research design was utilized, generating data through an exit interview survey questionnaire developed by the institution. This questionnaire consisted of twenty-eight items

that covered statements related to how the institution responded to various hygiene and motivator factors. Motivators with eleven (11) items included items related to the work itself (3 items), recognition and achievement (4 items), and professional growth and development (4 items). The remaining seventeen items pertained to hygiene factors, covering aspects such as relationships with superiors and peers (5 items), work conditions (4 items), policies and administration (4 items), and compensation and benefits (4 items). The respondents' responses were recorded using a four-point Likert scale, where 4 indicated "Strongly Satisfied," and 1 indicated "Strongly Dissatisfied." The study then derived factors affecting retention from the participants' responses, representing them in terms of mean values and ranking. These factors were used to understand the respondents' perceptions regarding the extent to which their experiences influenced their intention to stay.

The study utilized the data generated from the exit interview form were also utilized and tabulated it to generate the perception of all severed employees on factors affecting teacher retention. The Exit Interview is a customized survey instrument of the school administered upon severance of an employee from the institution as part of its clearance requirements facilitated by the Human Resource Department. The said instrument aimed to generate perceptions of an existing employee about the

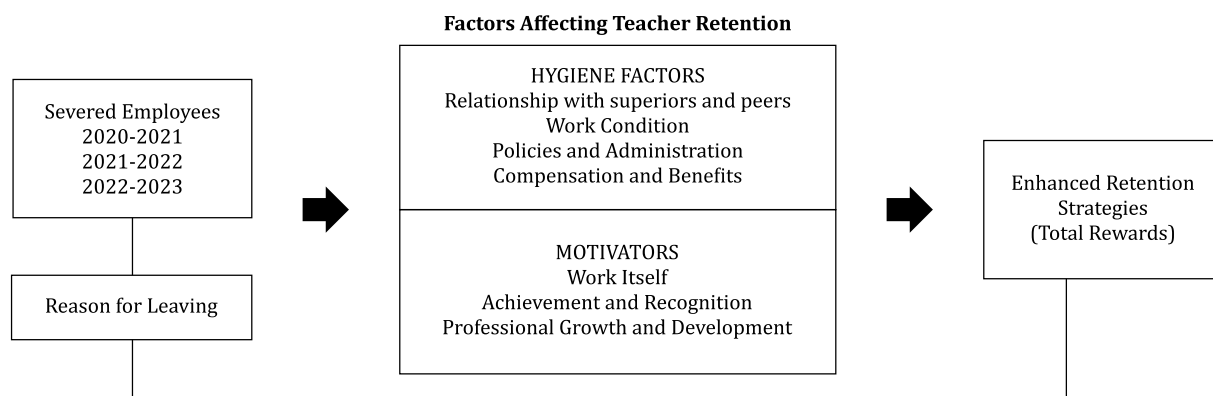


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

institution's practices, apart from the usual actual conduct of exit interviews with the management. The weighted mean and ranking were used to determine the extent of factors affecting teacher retention. Likewise, the reasons for severance were also identified and assessed by means of percentage and rank.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The profile of severed employees is composed of 35% male and 65% female teachers. The higher percentage of female is attributed to the teaching profession in the Philippines being female-dominated (Bongco, 2019) Of the seventy-two respondents, there were forty-nine (49) or equivalent 68% were already tenured or permanent, while there were twenty-three (32%) who are still non-tenured.

Fifty-six percent (53%) or equivalent to forty (40) learning facilitators left the institution due to voluntary resignation while forty-four (44%) or thirty-two (32) of them left the school involuntarily due to the end of a contract or non-renewal, retirement, and authorized causes. Severance of employment is not merely borne out of the teachers' initiative or what is normally

called movers; it could also be the institution's decision, such as the end of the contract or non-renewal, particularly to those who have not received the security of tenure.

Table 2 shows that the reasons for leaving teachers are a mixture of voluntary and involuntary separation over the last three academic years. Twenty-five percent (25%) or a total of 18 teachers for the last three years resigned for a better career opportunity. On the other hand, there were a total of sixteen teachers or 22% whose contracts were no longer renewed. Renewal of teaching contract was due to either failure to meet the standards of the institution or due to decline in enrolment which was greatly affected during the height of the pandemic in the years 2020 and 2021.

It can be gleaned that there was a high percentage of those who availed of optional retirement in the year 2020-2021 with the equivalent of 28% primarily because of the impact of the pandemic and the shift of teachers to online modality. Those who availed of the optional retirement were those who were at least fifty years old and with ten years of teaching within the institution.

Table 1. Type of Teachers' Severance

| Type Of Teacher Severance | 2020 | | 2021 | | 2022 | | Total | |
|---------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-------|-----|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| Voluntary | 11 | 34 | 9 | 60 | 20 | 80 | 40 | 56 |
| Involuntary | 21 | 66 | 6 | 40 | 5 | 20 | 32 | 44 |
| TOTAL | 32 | 100 | 15 | 100 | 25 | 100 | 72 | 100 |

Table 2. Cause of Severance AY 2020-2022

| Reason for Leaving | 2020-2021 | | 2021-2022 | | 2022-2023 | | Total | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| Work Conditions | 3 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 32 | 12 | 17 |
| Better Career / Opportunity | 7 | 22 | 4 | 27 | 7 | 28 | 18 | 25 |
| Higher Pay and Benefits | 1 | 3 | 4 | 27 | 5 | 20 | 10 | 14 |
| End of Contract | 9 | 28 | 3 | 20 | 4 | 16 | 16 | 22 |
| Retirement | 9 | 28 | 2 | 13 | 1 | 4 | 12 | 17 |
| Authorized Causes | 3 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 6 |
| Total | 32 | 100 | 15 | 100 | 25 | 100 | 72 | 100 |

With the sudden change of modality, the adjustment of seasoned teachers is high, especially in the use of technology and the utilization of online platforms.

For the last three academic years, teachers' primary reason for resigning is for a better career opportunity (22%) followed by better work conditions (17%) and higher pay and benefits (14%). The results were like the findings of Donley (2019) and San Mateo (2019), explaining that a prominent source of voluntary turnover, particularly among teachers, is the desire to improve career opportunities and relatively low compensation in small private schools. The same findings were found in the turnover analysis made by Aulia (2022), explaining that compensation is related to teacher transition behavior. It was explained that salary is one of the major considerations of teachers in their

decisions to switch schools. This was also supported by Khan (2013), who stated that the economy plays a role in the decision of workers leaving an organization for higher-paying jobs. This is the current scenario for a small private academic institution as it competes not only with bigger schools but also with public schools, where the salary range is way higher.

FACTORS AFFECTING TEACHER RETENTION

Table 3 presents the perceptions of teachers who have left the institution regarding how the non-graded private institution addresses hygiene factors that could influence teacher retention. Results show that all hygiene factors play a contributory role in teacher retention. The respondents perceived that the institution excels in providing strong and positive interpersonal relations, particularly in giving constructive feedback (with a score of 3.54), and maintaining

Table 3. Hygiene Factors Experienced by Teachers

| Hygiene Factors | Mean | SD | Rank | Interpretation |
|---|-------------|-------------|------|--------------------|
| Relationship with Superiors and Peers | | | | |
| 1 The institution encouraged cooperation among members of the institution. | 3.31 | 2.72 | 8 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 2 The institution gave fair and equal treatment. | 3.17 | 2.57 | 11 | Satisfied |
| 3 The management and its leaders provide effective supervision. | 3.39 | 2.80 | 4 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 4 The management maintains professional relationship with subordinates. | 3.50 | 2.94 | 2 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 5 The management provides constructive feedback | 3.54 | 2.97 | 1 | Strongly Satisfied |
| Work Conditions | | | | |
| 1 There is a good and positive work environment to work in. | 3.32 | 2.74 | 5 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 2 It has adequate equipment, supplies and other resources to do the work. | 3.18 | 2.60 | 10 | Satisfied |
| 3 Workload was manageable | 3.06 | 2.50 | 13 | Satisfied |
| 4 Sufficient resources and manpower are available. | 2.88 | 2.35 | 16 | Satisfied |
| Policies and Administration | | | | |
| 1 Internal communications worked well. | 2.92 | 2.38 | 15 | Satisfied |
| 2 There is a consistent in the implementation of policies and protocols | 2.99 | 2.47 | 14 | Satisfied |
| 3 There was an accurate orientation and reorientation on policies and protocols about the institution | 3.24 | 2.68 | 7 | Satisfied |
| 4 Employees are involved in planning and decision making. | 3.46 | 2.91 | 3 | Strongly Satisfied |
| Compensation and Benefits | | | | |
| 1 Work-life balance was promoted and practiced in the institution | 3.07 | 2.54 | 12 | Satisfied |
| 2 Salary was adequate in relation to responsibilities and scope of work. | 2.85 | 2.32 | 17 | Satisfied |
| 3 Company initiated and CBA benefits were competitive. | 3.32 | 2.73 | 5 | Satisfied |
| 4 The institution provides appropriate pay adjustments based on ranks and performance. | 3.19 | 2.74 | 9 | Satisfied |
| Composite Mean | 3.19 | 2.64 | | Satisfied |

positive professional relationships (with a score of 3.50). These findings are consistent with a similar study conducted by Nurul in 2022, which explains that a lack of the management's commitment to support and the absence of tools and resources to be effective in the classroom might lead teachers to resign from their positions (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). In similar local research, it was also revealed that faculty members stay with the university because they enjoy the camaraderie with their colleagues and maintain it by providing activities that increase a positive atmosphere. (San Mateo, et al 2019). Thus, teachers have a strong need for a feeling of belongingness which could be achieved by an established harmonious relationship with superiors and colleagues.

On the other hand, salary ranked lowest with a score of (2.85) and the need to provide sufficient manpower (2.88 which the school needs to attend to minimize leavers. Salary has been one major factor for teachers to leave the institution. This was supported by the findings of Aulia (2022) and Mahkuzen (2015) where compensation and benefits are the pivotal factors in retaining

teachers in their positions. Those teachers who perceive their salary is insufficient are more inclined to seek other employment opportunities as well as to move to the public sector. Here in the Philippines, this is one major dilemma of private education as there is a big gap between the pay and benefits the public sector has to offer as compared to what private institutions can give. This eventually resulted in a mass migration of teacher talent from private to public. This is a pressing need for academic institutions to find ways to enhance compensation for teachers.

Table 4 presents the perceptions of teachers who have left the organization regarding various motivational factors that influence teachers' decisions to stay in an organization. Among the eleven items, the management's recognition of teachers' efforts and contributions ranked highest, scoring 3.61. Following this, the encouragement of employees to pursue professional growth and advancement by the school scored 3.60, and the provision of self-fulfilling experiences received a score of 3.49. These were identified as the top three motivational practices provided by

Table 4. Motivator Factors Experienced by Teachers

| Motivators | Mean | SD | Rank | Interpretation |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| Work Itself | | | | |
| 1 Job was challenging. | 3.17 | 2.60 | 8 | Satisfied |
| 2 Provide self-fulfilling experiences | 3.49 | 2.92 | 3 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 3 Skills were effectively used | 3.28 | 2.72 | 5 | Strongly Satisfied |
| Achievement and Recognition | | | | |
| 1 There were sufficient opportunities for promotion. | 3.00 | 2.41 | 11 | Satisfied |
| 2 Work accomplishments were acknowledged | 3.21 | 2.61 | 6 | Satisfied |
| 3 Offers various rewards and programs | 3.38 | 2.78 | 4 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 4 Recognize efforts and contribution to the organization. | 3.61 | 3.05 | 1 | Strongly Satisfied |
| Professional Growth and Development | | | | |
| 1 Employees have access to adequate training and development programs | 3.10 | 2.57 | 9 | Satisfied |
| 2 Employees receive timely performance feedback, coaching and mentoring sessions. | 3.03 | 2.48 | 10 | Satisfied |
| 3 Employees were given opportunities and exposures to expand their skills and competencies | 3.21 | 2.60 | 6 | Satisfied |
| 4 The school encouraged employees to pursue professional growth and advancement | 3.60 | 3.03 | 2 | Strongly Satisfied |
| Composite Mean | 3.28 | 2.71 | | Strongly Satisfied |

the school, yielding the highest satisfaction, and contributing to teacher retention. On the other hand, the factors that ranked lowest in terms of satisfaction were related to management providing timely performance feedback, coaching, and mentoring sessions, with a score of 3.03, and management offering sufficient opportunities for advancement and promotion, with a score of 3.00.

These findings are consistent with Sumipo's (2020) study on factors affecting teacher retention in a private institution, which also highlighted the importance of professional growth, recognition, and awards to teachers. These factors are instrumental in retaining teachers in an organization. Thus, the most influential factors for teachers deciding to remain in private schools are related to the job itself, especially a passion for teaching and a sense of fulfillment. Furthermore, Jiang (2023) supported these claims, asserting that intrinsic motivation is cultivated when employees experience personal accomplishment and recognition is provided at work. This, in turn, leads to improved teaching effectiveness and a greater likelihood of teachers choosing to stay. This was supported by Mahkuzen(2015) in his research findings revealed that performance management, career development and teacher compensation were inadequately implemented

in schools. Due to these shortcomings, the teachers were contemplating leaving teaching profession due to inadequate rewards.

Promotion opportunities as well as coaching and mentoring should be enhanced. However, small private academic institutions often operate with a flat organizational structure, oftentimes limiting vertical promotions for teachers. To address this issue, a career development program could be implemented, encompassing not only vertical advancement but also job enlargement, exposure to other academic and administrative roles, and corresponding reductions in teaching loads or additional compensation. Jiang (2023) emphasized the significance of recognizing contributions and exposing employees to more significant roles as an effective and cost-efficient way to maintain their commitment to the organization.

Table 5 reflects the mean scores of the various factors both in hygiene and motivators that impact retention as it yielded a total 3.29 overall mean. Motivation and Hygiene factors should be closely looked into my management to reduce the likelihood of teachers leaving the institution. This was supported by Dela Cruz. (2015) in her conclusion that educators will opt to stay at schools where there is sustained and consistent support, autonomy to do their day-to-day jobs

Table 5. Summary of Hygiene and Motivator Factors Affecting Retention

| Hygiene Factors | Mean | SD | Rank | Interpretation |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| Relationship with superiors and peers | 3.38 | 2.80 | 1 | Strongly Satisfied |
| Work Conditions | 3.11 | 2.55 | 6 | Satisfied |
| Policies and Administration | 3.15 | 2.61 | 5 | Satisfied |
| Compensation and Benefits | 3.11 | 2.58 | 6 | Satisfied |
| Total | 3.19 | 2.64 | | Satisfied |
| MOTIVATORS | | | | |
| Work Itself | 3.31 | 2.75 | 2 | Strongly Satisfied |
| Recognition and Achievement | 3.30 | 2.71 | 3 | Strongly Satisfied |
| Professional Growth and Development | 3.23 | 2.67 | 4 | Satisfied |
| Total | 3.38 | 2.80 | | Strongly Satisfied |
| Overall | 3.29 | 2.72 | | Strongly Satisfied |

with confidence, and where they can grow in their profession over time.

Teachers are strongly satisfied with the practices on motivator factors with 3.38 as compared to hygiene factors with 3.19. The institution provides intrinsic motivation to teachers to stay in the field of the teaching profession. This may hold true because, by nature, the academic institution as well as the teaching profession provides a high level of self-fulfillment. This is aligned with Herzberg's theory that motivational factors are inherent to work that responds to the psychological needs of teachers which could result into superior performance and positive satisfaction and motivation. These factors include growth needs such as recognition of work, sense of accomplishment, progress, and the job itself. (Jiang, 2023)

Among the motivational factors identified, providing professional growth and development should be given a priority. San Mateo (2019) explained in similar local research that a faculty may intend to leave if there are better career development opportunities offered by other institutions. This was further supported by Santiago (2022) where he reemphasized that the lack of career development in teaching is a retention concern, especially of younger teachers.

Thus, the institution should also provide a structured and mid-range faculty development program that also includes continuous training, coaching and mentoring activities for teachers. Growth opportunities should also not only be limited to vertical promotion but also include possible rotation, and additional or special assignments since faculty are expecting career development and movement.

Likewise, hygiene factor can affect teachers' decision to stay in an organization. Hygiene factors that include compensation (3.11), work conditions (3.11), policies, and administration

(3.15) need to be given priority when creating retention strategies. These findings were consistent with the findings among teachers in China as they respond to three essential hygiene factors namely compensation, incentives, and personnel policies. (Jiang 2021) Thus, raising compensation levels and implementing reasonable personnel policies reduced the likelihood of teachers leaving the institution.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers' inclination to remain in a school or within the teaching profession can be influenced by various factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic. The practices related to hygiene and motivator factors offered by the institution can play a significant role in either encouraging teacher retention or contributing to attrition. While motivator factors can cater to teachers' higher-level psychological growth needs, enhancing motivation and reducing turnover intentions, it is equally crucial to complement them with hygiene factors that address fundamental survival needs, including compensation, working conditions, and interpersonal relations.

Severed employees in a non-graded private education were generally satisfied with their stay, with the positive working environment and the presence of harmonious relationships with their colleagues. However, internal and external conditions push them to leave the institution. Reasons affecting voluntary employee turnover in are both intrinsic and extrinsic in nature. Career advancement and growth are internal factors, while higher salary and school leadership are the external factors.

Enhanced retention strategies to be implemented should be holistic in nature and will cater to both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of the job. This includes ensuring good working conditions, sustaining positive interpersonal relationships, exemplifying efficient and effective administration, providing opportunities for career growth and

advancement, and giving equitable pay and benefits. These strategies are said to help motivate employees and increase the likelihood of staying longer in the organization.

Based on the findings and conclusions, retention strategies aimed at fully engaging employees of private education must be integrated into the Total Rewards Program. Total rewards Program following the world of work framework covers five components that are complimentary with the Two-factor theory namely: compensation, benefits, well-being, development, and recognition. These include programs and practices aligned with the organization's strategy to build a productive, committed, and sustained human capital.

a. Compensation

Enhanced compensation and benefits are often the primary reasons why employees decide to leave their current jobs and seek opportunities elsewhere, as indicated by the findings of this study. Creating a fair and competitive salary structure is one effective way to retain a skilled workforce. Compensation should be fair, considering the level of responsibilities, qualifications, and experience required for each role, and it should align with prevailing market standards. This approach is crucial because employees need to meet the basic needs of teachers. Furthermore, offering competitive salary rates can give the institution a competitive advantage and increase leverage in attracting highly qualified professionals.

b. Benefits

While the responses revealed that teachers were fairly satisfied with the benefits associated with teaching professions, improvement can still be suggested with benefits aligned with the various needs of teachers. Revisiting benefits offered by the institution and customized with the needs of the teachers. Benefits offered could be linked to other hygiene and motivation factors

including health and welfare programs, financial preparedness, study leaves and sabbaticals, and time-off aiming to ensure the holistic well-being of teachers.

c. Well-being

Ensuring positive well-being encompasses practices that promote success and satisfaction both within and outside the school. To enhance teachers' well-being, it is also recommended to implement practices and policies that foster a positive work environment, nurturing harmonious and trusting relationships. Positive well-being begins with excellent working conditions provided by the management and entails the fair treatment, open communication, and regular feedback, often facilitated through plenaries or departmental meetings.

d. Development

Development programs constitute a critical area that demands attention on teachers' retention. Teachers, as educators, require ongoing growth and development, underscoring the necessity for support in creating avenues for professional development. A well-structured career development plan should explicitly delineate the skills and knowledge necessary for teachers to advance within the institution. Learning and development opportunities must be customized to cater to teachers' specific needs and include structured coaching and mentoring programs. With sufficient development program can lead to a possible reduction of involuntary turnover due to poor performance To foster comprehensive faculty development, providing a program that encompasses local and international scholarships for job-related training and academic pursuits, can help enhance the career progression of teachers. Aligning teachers' development goals with rewards, incentives, and promotional opportunities is a pivotal strategy. This could include the implementation of a job

enrichment scheme, allowing employees to diversify their experiences and making the work more interesting.

e. Recognition

Recognition initiatives in school can help

promote levels of satisfaction and increase teachers' self-esteem. Various informal and formal recognition should be crafted to acknowledge, affirm, recognize, and celebrate the contributions of teachers.

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