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RESEARCH ARTICLE

RETENTION AND ATTRITION FACTORS OF PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS IN EDUCATION SERVICE CONTRACTING PROGRAM

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Abstract

Teacher retention and attrition remain pressing challenges in private schools, particularly those participating in the Education Service Contracting (ESC) in the Philippines. The province of Cavite, a highly urbanized area in Region IV-A CALABARZON, where numerous private schools benefit from ESC subsidies was the setting of the study. The research aimed to identify the motivators and hygiene factors influencing teacher retention and attrition based on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory using a quantitative research design. Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire distributed to licensed teachers in ESC-participating private secondary schools that had been part of the program for at least five years which were selected through purposive sampling to ensure that participants had relevant experience with the ESC program. The instrument measured teacher perceptions on job satisfaction, professional development, workload, work-life balance, compensation, supervision, and school culture. Results revealed moderate satisfaction across most factors, with the highest ratings in the impact on student learning ($M = 3.51$) under motivators, and teacher-school head relationships ($M = 3.36$) under hygiene factors. The lowest satisfaction was recorded in compensation and benefits ($M = 2.94$), indicating it as a major contributor to teacher attrition. A strong positive correlation was found between motivators and hygiene factors ($r = .884$, $p = .000$), suggesting their combined influence on teachers' overall job satisfaction. The study concludes that while strong professional relationships and meaningful work experiences support teacher retention, inadequate compensation continues to drive attrition. These findings underscore the importance of enhancing compensation packages and implementing supportive policies to retain qualified teachers and sustain quality education in ESC-participating private schools in Cavite and similar contexts.

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Keywords

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Motivators
Hygiene Factors
Herzberg's Two Factor Theory
ESC program
Private schools
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INTRODUCTION

Teacher retention is a global concern, particularly in the private sector where educators face job insecurity, lower salaries, and limited professional growth (UNESCO, 2019). In the Philippines, these issues are especially evident in private schools participating in the Education Service Contracting (ESC) program, a GASTPE initiative that provides tuition subsidies for junior high school students in private schools. Although ESC-participating teachers receive a salary subsidy, the program has not significantly reduced teacher attrition (Cabigas, 2023). Schools continue to face high turnover rates, which disrupt instruction, weaken school communities, and impair educational outcomes (Dela Cruz, 2021).

Existing literature emphasizes that both extrinsic and intrinsic factors affect teacher retention. International studies show that dissatisfaction often stems from inadequate pay, lack of institutional support, and heavy workloads (Smithers & Robinson, 2019). In the Philippines, similar conditions such as limited resources, overcrowded classrooms, and inconsistent salary distribution contribute to low morale and reduced teaching effectiveness (Abad, 2023).

This study is anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which distinguishes between hygiene factors (e.g., salary, work conditions, job security) that prevent dissatisfaction, and motivator factors (e.g., recognition, achievement, advancement) that promote satisfaction and retention (Villanueva, 2022).

Despite government interventions like the Teachers' Salary Subsidy (TSS), gaps remain in understanding how these factors influence teacher retention in ESC schools, particularly in Cavite, where ESC participation is extensive.

To address this gap, the study is guided by the following objectives:

General Objective:

- To examine the motivator and hygiene factors influencing teacher retention and attrition in ESC-participating private junior high schools in Region IV-A (Calabarzon), particularly in the province of Cavite.

Specific Objectives:

- To identify the motivator factors contributing to teacher retention.
- To determine the hygiene factors contributing to teacher attrition.
- To assess the relationship between motivator and hygiene factors in influencing teachers' decisions to stay or leave.
- To provide policy recommendations that may help improve teacher retention in ESC-participating private schools.

Using a quantitative approach, the study surveyed currently employed licensed teachers in private junior high schools that have participated in the ESC program for at least five consecutive years during the 2024–2025 academic year. The findings aim to inform policies that promote teacher stability and strengthen the private education sector.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative-descriptive design, specifically using the descriptive-correlational method to examine the factors influencing teacher retention and attrition in private schools under the Education Service Contracting (ESC) program. Guided by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the research explored the relationship between hygiene and motivator factors and teachers' decisions to stay or leave.

Using Cochran's formula, 316 licensed teachers were selected through stratified random sampling from 33 ESC-participating private schools in Cavite, Region IV-A CALABARZON, which had implemented the program for at least five years. Stratification ensured proportional representation across school size, location, and ESC subsidy capacity. Data were gathered through a structured survey questionnaire administered via Google Forms.

The instrument was adapted from Sumipo (2020) for motivator factors and Ortega (2021) for hygiene factors, and was divided into three sections: demographic profile, hygiene factors (e.g., compensation, job security, workload, working conditions, administrative support, and policies), and motivator factors (e.g., recognition, professional growth, achievement, and meaningful work). A 4-point Likert scale ("Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree") was used.

Content and face validity were ensured through expert review, and a pilot test was conducted with a separate group of teachers. Cronbach's alpha scores exceeded 0.70 for both subscales, indicating strong internal consistency. Descriptive statistics (means) were computed to determine satisfaction levels, and Pearson correlation was used to examine the relationship between hygiene and motivator factors.

Ethical approval was granted by the Institutional Ethics Review Board of the Open University Center for Research and Extension. Permissions were obtained from PEAC and participating schools. Informed consent was secured from all respondents, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary participation.

RESULTS

Motivators and Their Influence on Teacher Retention and Attrition

This table presents the teachers' perceived satisfaction with various motivator factors, such as job satisfaction, professional development opportunities, and school culture. The results indicate that while most factors received moderate satisfaction, the impact on student learning stands out with very high satisfaction, suggesting that teachers find fulfillment in their influence on students' academic growth.

Motivators	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Job Satisfaction	3.44	With Moderate Satisfaction
Opportunities for Professional Development	3.40	With Moderate Satisfaction
Workload and Work-Life Balance	3.08	With Moderate Satisfaction
Supportive Work Environment	3.36	With Moderate Satisfaction
Impact on Student Learning	3.51	With Very High Satisfaction
School Culture	3.43	With Moderate Satisfaction

Recognition and Appreciation	3.20	With Moderate Satisfaction
Spiritual and Morale Factors	3.45	With Moderate Satisfaction
General Mean	3.36	With Moderate Satisfaction

Among motivators, **impact on student learning** received the highest satisfaction score ($M = 3.51$), indicating that teachers remain in their positions when they see the positive impact of their work. Recognition and appreciation received the lowest satisfaction among motivators ($M = 3.20$), suggesting an area for improvement.

Hygiene Factors and Their Influence on Teacher Retention and Attrition

This table below summarizes teachers' levels of satisfaction with hygiene factors, including job security, compensation, and working conditions. The findings show moderate satisfaction across most factors, with compensation and benefits scoring the lowest, highlighting its role as a key concern influencing teacher attrition.

Hygiene Factor	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Job Security	3.23	With Moderate Satisfaction
Compensation and Benefits	2.94	With Moderate Satisfaction
Feedback	3.25	With Moderate Satisfaction
Working Conditions	3.30	With Moderate Satisfaction
Conflict Resolution	3.22	With Moderate Satisfaction
Communication Clarity	3.26	With Moderate Satisfaction
Supervision and Policies	3.28	With Moderate Satisfaction
Teacher-School Head Relationship	3.36	With Moderate Satisfaction
Grand Mean	3.23	With Moderate Satisfaction

Among the hygiene factors, **teacher-school head relationships** had the highest satisfaction score ($M = 3.36$), while **compensation and benefits** had the lowest ($M = 2.94$), emphasizing financial concerns as a major reason for attrition.

Significance of Relationship Between Motivators and Hygiene Factors

This table presents the Pearson correlation results between motivators and hygiene factors. The strong positive correlation ($r = 0.884$, $p < 0.01$) suggests a significant relationship, indicating that improvements in hygiene factors are likely to enhance motivator factors, ultimately influencing teacher retention.

Hygiene Factors	Motivators
Pearson Correlation	.884
p-value	.000
Decision	Reject Ho
Remarks	Significant

Results show a strong positive correlation ($r = .884, p = .000$) between motivators and hygiene factors, indicating that improvements in hygiene factors can significantly influence motivators and enhance teacher retention.

Matrix of Dominant Factors Affecting Teacher Retention and Attrition

This matrix highlights the most common themes derived from teachers' responses regarding their reasons for staying in their positions. Passion for teaching, impact on student growth, and support from school leadership emerge as dominant factors contributing to teacher retention, emphasizing the importance of professional fulfillment and a positive work environment.

Retention Factors

Theme	Sample Responses
Passion for Teaching	"I have a passion for teaching and helping students grow."
Impact on Students' Growth	"Witnessing my students' academic success and personal development gives me a sense of fulfillment."
Support from School Leadership	"The school administration is very supportive, especially in professional growth."

Attrition Factors

This matrix presents key themes derived from teacher responses on the reasons for attrition. Compensation and benefits, supervision and policies, and working conditions are identified as major concerns, reinforcing the need for improved financial support, leadership effectiveness, and manageable workloads to reduce teacher turnover.

Theme	Sample Responses
Compensation and Benefits	"Inadequate pay and limited benefits make it difficult to meet my financial needs."
Supervision and Policies	"Lack of administrative support and poor school leadership."
Working Conditions	"Excessive workload and lack of work-life balance."

DISCUSSION

This study revealed that teachers in ESC-participating private schools in Cavite experienced moderate satisfaction with both motivator and hygiene factors. Among the motivators, the perceived impact on student learning received the highest rating, emphasizing how intrinsic factors such as making a meaningful difference in students' lives are key drivers of job satisfaction and retention. This supports Herzberg's (1959) assertion that intrinsic motivators, like a sense of purpose and achievement, play a pivotal role in fostering long-term commitment. However, recognition and appreciation ranked lowest among motivators, suggesting that while teachers feel fulfilled by their work, many feel underacknowledged a concern echoed by Smithers and Robinson (2019), who noted that the absence of formal recognition contributes to attrition, especially in under-resourced schools.

For hygiene factors, the most satisfying aspect reported was the relationship between teachers and their school heads. This highlights the importance of supportive leadership in creating a stable teaching environment and affirms findings of Sumipo (2020) on the role of school leadership in maintaining morale and reducing turnover. Conversely, compensation and benefits received the lowest scores among hygiene elements, underscoring a persistent financial dissatisfaction that aligns with findings by Ortega's (2021), who reported similar challenges among private school educators across the Philippines. These results suggest that the salary subsidy provided under the Teachers' Salary Subsidy (TSS) component of the ESC program may be insufficient to address economic insecurities among private school teachers, particularly given rising living costs and workload demands.

The observed strong positive correlation between motivators and hygiene factors ($r = .884$, $p < .01$) validates the application of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory in this context. It suggests that enhancing extrinsic conditions such as compensation, working conditions, and administrative support can strengthen intrinsic motivators like professional growth and personal accomplishment. This supports UNESCO's (2019) global education framework, which emphasizes that holistic teacher support systems combining financial, structural, and emotional backing are essential for sustainable teacher retention, especially in low- to middle-income countries.

Open-ended responses reinforced the quantitative findings. Teachers cited passion for teaching, student progress, and supportive leadership as primary reasons for staying, reflecting Herzberg's motivators. In contrast, low compensation, ineffective supervision, and challenging workloads were frequently mentioned as reasons for leaving, highlighting unresolved hygiene concerns. These issues not only compromise teacher well-being but also jeopardize student learning outcomes and institutional stability (Dela Cruz, 2021).

These findings underscore the need for policy reforms targeting both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of teacher work. Local education authorities and policymakers should consider enhancing financial support mechanisms like the ESC and TSS, while simultaneously investing in school-based leadership training, mentorship, and teacher recognition systems. Such multi-level strategies can improve job satisfaction, reduce attrition, and strengthen the private education sector's capacity to deliver quality instruction.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that both intrinsic (motivators) and extrinsic (hygiene) factors play a significant role in influencing teacher retention and attrition in ESC-participating private schools in Cavite. Teachers are most motivated by the meaningful impact they have on student learning and by supportive leadership, while dissatisfaction stems primarily from inadequate compensation, lack of recognition, and challenging working conditions. These findings affirm Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and emphasize that addressing both psychological and material needs is essential to reducing turnover.

In response to these findings, it is recommended that school administrators and policymakers first address financial concerns by ensuring timely and competitive compensation through improved ESC subsidy disbursement and supplemental incentives. Schools should also institutionalize recognition and reward programs to affirm teacher contributions and boost morale. Leadership development is equally crucial school heads must be equipped with participative and responsive management skills to maintain strong teacher-administrator

relationships. Furthermore, continuous professional development should be prioritized to enhance teachers' skills and long-term engagement. Regular assessments of working conditions, including workload and facilities, are needed to identify and resolve stressors affecting job satisfaction. Finally, at the policy level, sustained advocacy is needed to reform the ESC program's structure to better support teacher retention through long-term, system-wide improvements.

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