Inclusive Teachers' Engagement, Job Satisfaction and Retention in Public Schools of Mandaue City, Cebu

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Abstract

This study utilized a descriptive correlational approach to examine relationships between teacher profiles, work engagement, job satisfaction, and retention at Public Schools of Mandaue City, Cebu, Philippines. Data was collected through validated surveys of 253 teachers recruited through complete enumeration, assessing demographics, engagement, satisfaction, and retention motivators. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze relationships between variables. Results showed the majority of respondents were female aged 32-41 years, over half were married with master's units, and most had 16+ years of teaching experience. Two-thirds received inclusive education training and were aware of policies. Descriptive analysis found work engagement and job satisfaction levels were very high. Retention levels were also very high thanks to good relationships, security, and community acceptance. Statistically significant relationships were observed between work engagementretention (r=0.436) and job satisfaction-retention (r=0.611). These findings provide empirical support for engagement and satisfaction predicting teacher retention, especially in demanding inclusive environments. A targeted Teacher Satisfaction and Retention Enhancement (TSRE) plan is proposed to directly address variables significantly impacting engagement, satisfaction, and retention based on comprehensive analysis. The TSRE plan recommends tailored initiatives targeting motivational and evaluative constructs, alongside concrete strategies, timelines and intended outcomes to enhance identified determinants of satisfaction and continued employment. By optimizing teacher profiles, job design, learning opportunities, and working conditions, this research aimed to provide Philippine public schools with empirical insights enabling educators to effectively fulfill emerging inclusive responsibilities with quality and resilience against challenges, contributing to stability as education reforms progress nationwide.

Keywords: Special Education, Inclusion Teachers, Job Satisfaction, Work Engagement, Retention, Complete Enumeration, Descriptive Correlational, Mandaue City, Philippines

1. INTRODUCTION

As the Philippines progresses towards realizing inclusive education for all, understanding teachers' experiences on the ground has become paramount. With new policies implementing inclusion nationwide, teachers now find themselves at the forefront of an educational transformation seeking to leave no child behind (UNESCO, 1994). However, little research examines how inclusion impacts teachers' work engagement, job satisfaction, and retention within the Philippine educational system.

Previous studies show inclusion poses challenges that negatively influence teacher engagement and satisfaction (Antoniou et al., 2024; Fu et al., 2022). For instance, Antoniou et al. (2024) found teachers experience burnout, engagement, and satisfaction differently based on demographics and context. Similarly, Fu et al. (2022) reported well-being, social support, and engagement predicted turnover among Chinese special educators. These findings suggest inclusion demands require additional support to avoid negatively impacting teachers (Fu et al., 2022).

The demands of inclusion also impact workplace conditions in the Philippines. A report by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS, 2023) emphasized the need to address teacher well-being and professional development to ensure successful policy implementation. Inclusion hurdles risk compromising long-term teacher engagement and satisfaction without proper training and support.

Engagement and satisfaction are important predictors of career persistence in inclusive schools (Antoniou et al., 2024). Diminished engagement and burnout are negatively associated with special educator retention globally (Woods, 2022). Furthermore, teacher attrition poses tangible challenges as the departure rate reaches 9.06% annually with many leaving within 5 years (UNESCO, 2024).

In the Philippines, DepEd actively promotes inclusion through policies like DepEd Order No. 21 (2020). However, concerns remain around logistical support and impacts on practices (Jugan, 2024; Blanco et al., 2021). Targeted professional development, smaller class sizes, and stronger support systems are needed to effectively implement inclusive education.

By examining relationships between teacher profiles, work engagement, satisfaction, and retention, this study aims to identify necessary supports. Findings may help enhance environments where teachers feel enabled to meet diverse student needs through inclusion. Ultimately, understanding factors impacting teacher experiences could guide efforts to strengthen the implementation of inclusive practices and reduce pressures caused by attrition in the education system.

2. METHODS

2.1. Theoretical Framework

This study adopts a theoretical framework combining Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Theory and relevant Philippine education laws. Figure 1 illustrates how these components relate to understanding factors influencing teacher job satisfaction and retention in inclusive settings.

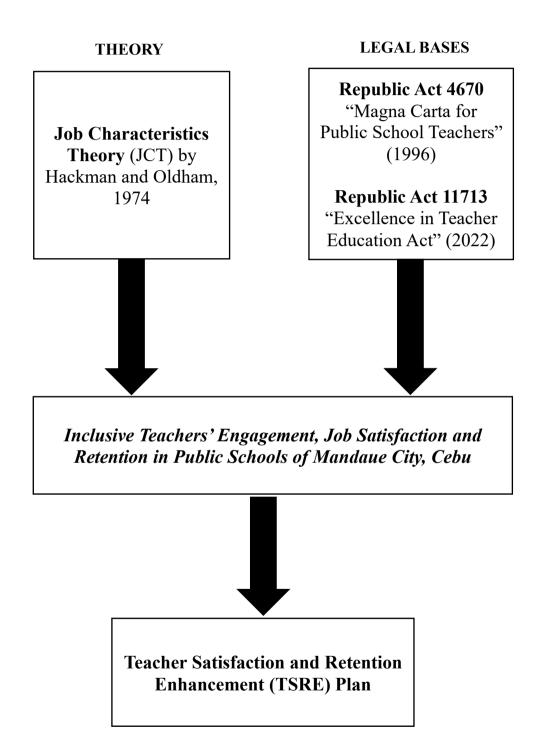


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of the Study

The Job Characteristics Theory provides a useful lens for examining how job design impacts motivation and outcomes (Hackman & Oldham, 1974). It proposes key characteristics - skill variety, task identity, autonomy, task significance, and feedback - shape critical psychological states and work results. Applying this framework allows analyzing how teaching inclusive students relates to these characteristics and overall motivation potential.

Meanwhile, two laws establish policies supporting teacher well-being. The Magna Carta for Public School Teachers (RA4670, 1996) outlines protections like continuing education, healthcare, and hazard pay. It emphasizes promoting well-being through mandated resources that compare favorably to other careers. Inclusive education poses unique demands; thus resources bolster the self-efficacy needed in these settings (Ortan et al., 2021).

More recently, the Excellence in Teacher Education Act (RA 11713, 2022) aims to develop qualified teachers through standards-aligned competency development. Effective implementation positively impacts inclusion by strengthening preparation and satisfaction (Abragan et al., 2022).

These laws establish rights and expectations guiding analysis of their influence on satisfaction and retention vital for sustainable reforms. Understanding impacts from the teacher's perspective can strengthen working conditions and develop a system catering to diversity as envisioned.

2.2. IPO Model

This study was guided by the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model as depicted in Figure 2. Utilizing a descriptive correlational approach, relationships between input, process, and output regarding work engagement, teacher job satisfaction, and retention at Public Schools of Mandaue City, Cebu were examined.

Input. This study investigated teacher and job characteristics as inputs that could impact satisfaction and retention. Through surveys, demographic data on gender, age, qualifications, experience, and training were collected. Furthermore, measures of work engagement examined feelings of focus, effort, belonging, and perceived meaningfulness. In addition, job satisfaction was assessed regarding autonomy, leadership, compensation, opportunities, and competence. Similarly, perceptions of recognition, resources, salary increases, facilities, and discipline as retention motivators were also surveyed.

Process. Necessary ethical approvals were obtained before beginning data collection. Subsequently, surveys containing questions on demographics, engagement, satisfaction, and retention were administered to all teachers due to the school's small population size. Response data were then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to understand relationships between variables and identify key influencers. Next, findings were synthesized with the research context to formulate a Teacher Satisfaction and Retention Enhancement (TSRE) Plan focused on strengthening identified themes. Likewise, the results and plan were disseminated to stakeholders.

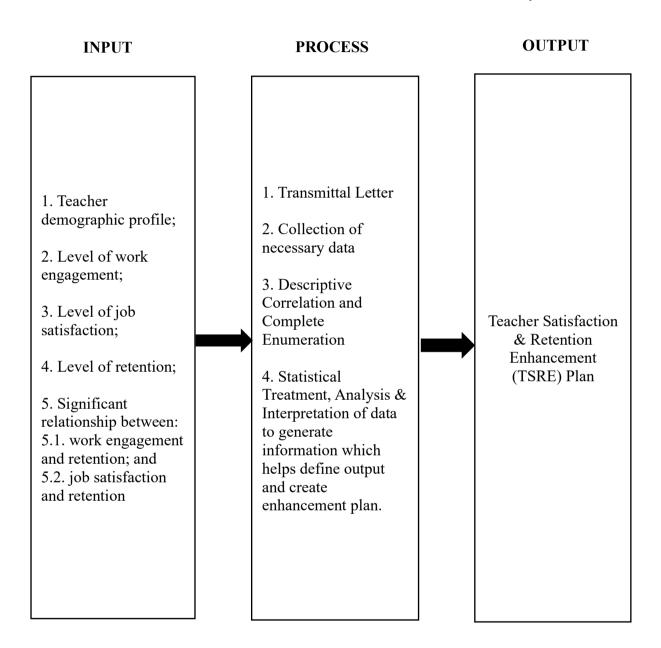


Figure 2. Flow of the Study

Output. The TSRE Plan aimed to directly address variables significantly impacting teacher engagement, satisfaction, and retention based on comprehensive analysis. Similarly, it recommended tailored initiatives targeting the improvement of motivational and evaluative constructs. Likewise, concrete strategies and timelines for implementation by school administrators and government agencies to enhance identified determinants of satisfaction and continued employment were presented. Furthermore, the intended outcomes of enacting the TSRE Plan in terms of expected changes in engagement, satisfaction, and retention over the

years were described. Likewise, an evaluation framework and indicators to track goal progress were provided before disseminating the proposal for feedback and finalization.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Profile of the Respondents

The respondents were mostly female aged 32-41 years, more than half were married and attained master's units. The majority had 16+ years of teaching experience indicating a more mature and veteran teaching career. Two-thirds received training for inclusion and were aware of inclusion policies.

Notably, the respondents were highly engaged, satisfied, and committed to remaining in their positions, they represent an experienced, educated, and well-equipped workforce. This stable, mature sample familiar with inclusive practices is well-suited to providing the continuity, individualized instruction, and policy-aligned support required to strengthen long-term inclusive education efforts and address the evolving needs of diverse learners through their attributes, specialized skills, and positive dispositions.

3.2. Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction, and Retention

Descriptive analysis found that the level of work engagement of respondents was very high, showing care about the future of the company/school, extreme focus on their work, and a firm belief in the mission and purpose of the company/school. Likewise, job satisfaction level presents a very high overall due to the perception of having steady employment, the feeling of accomplishment from their job, and reliance on the competence of their supervisor at work. Nevertheless, retention levels were very high thanks to a good relationship with colleagues, job security, and community acceptance.

Further, a highly engaged and satisfied teaching force that intends to remain in their positions would provide much-needed stability and consistency for students with diverse learning needs. Subsequently, experienced teachers who feel invested in their roles would be well-positioned to individualize instruction, make appropriate accommodations, and develop supportive relationships with all learners in the long run. Consequently, this could help strengthen inclusion implementation and foster improved achievement outcomes. Furthermore, a motivated, dedicated teaching workforce committed to their students and schools is crucial for ensuring educational equity and quality for both mainstream and vulnerable students. The very high ratings show that educators feel sufficiently supported and capable of meeting the evolving demands of inclusion, bolstering its sustainability.

3.3. Significant Relationship between Work Engagement-Retention and Job Satisfaction-Retention

The results provide some interesting insights into factors influencing teacher retention in inclusive education. A statistically significant relationships were found between work engagement, job satisfaction, and teachers' intentions to remain in the profession.

Specifically, a significant weak positive correlation was observed between work engagement and retention, with an r-value of 0.436. This suggests that higher levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption in their roles relate to stronger plans to stay in teaching. Further, a moderate positive correlation of 0.611 was observed between job satisfaction and retention. This

indicates teachers' overall affective state regarding their work and work environment markedly predicts their career decisions. Those more content in their positions are likely to persist in inclusive education. These results provide empirical support for previous research indicating engagement and satisfaction as important predictors of teacher retention, especially in environments that are very demanding like inclusion.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

4.1. Discussion

4.1.1. The Problem

This research examined the levels of work engagement, job satisfaction, and retention of teachers handling inclusive classes at Mandaue City Public Schools for the school year 2023-2024 as the basis for a Teacher Satisfaction and Retention Enhancement Plan. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

- 4.1.1.1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
- 4.1.1.1.1 age and gender,
- 4.1.1.1.2 marital status,
- 4.1.1.3 highest educational attainment,
- 4.1.1.1.4 length of service,
- 4.1.1.5 training in inclusive education, and
- 4.1.1.1.6 awareness of inclusive policies?
- 4.1.1.2. What is the level of work engagement of the respondents?
- 4.1.1.3. What is the level of job satisfaction of the respondents?
- 4.1.1.4. What is the level of retention of the respondents?
- 4.1.1.5. Is there a significant relationship between the:
- 4.1.1.5.1 work engagement and retention of the respondents,
- 4.1.1.5.2 job satisfaction and retention of the respondents?

4.1.2. Age and Gender

The data collected from the 253 teacher respondents offered valuable insights into their age and gender demographics. This profile provided important context for understanding the career stages and potential retention factors impacting the inclusion teachers.

Table 1
Age and Gender of the Respondents

8							
Age (in years)	Fe	male	Male		,	Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	
52-61	31	12.25	3	1.19	34	13.44	
42-51	65	25.69	6	2.37	71	28.06	
32-41	76	30.04	13	5.14	89	35.18	
22-31	55	21.74	4	1.58	59	23.32	
Total	227	89.72	22	8.70	253	100.00	

As displayed in Table 1, the largest percentage of respondents were female teachers aged 32-41 years old (30.04%), followed by those aged 42-51 years old (25.69%). This aligns with traditional teaching demographics of being a predominantly female profession (Wyatt, 2021). Furthermore, teachers aged 32-41 and 42-51 represented those in their early to mid-career stages, when work demands may be higher (Miller, 2024). Retaining effective educators, especially during these mid-career periods, is important for sustaining long-term inclusive education programs (Botha & Hugo, 2021). Understanding factors influencing job satisfaction, such as implementing family-friendly policies and flexi-time, onsite childcare, and stress management training, can help optimize retention among female teachers as their careers and responsibilities progress (Tsetim, 2021; Mishra et al., 2024).

Previous research also found attrition was often highest early in female teachers' careers as they balanced work conditions with family responsibilities (Miller, 2024; Mishra et al., 2024; Wyatt, 2021). The current study's findings suggest retention support prioritizing work-life balance, such as mentorship opportunities and additional training, could help increase satisfaction through different career phases (Botha & Hugo, 2021). Although a small percentage were male, efforts to recruit more male teachers may be advisable given role model benefits for all students, including those with disabilities.

4.1.3. Marital Status

The demographic survey also provided insights into the marital status of the 253 teacher respondents. Understanding the personal life contexts of the inclusion teachers offered important considerations for retention efforts.

Table 2
Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital Status	f	%
Single	71	28.06
Married	172	67.98
Separated	5	1.98
Widow	5	1.98
Total	253	100.00

As displayed in Table 2, the highest percentage were married teachers (67.98%), followed by single teachers (28.06%). There were a few factors that could have explained these results. In the Philippines, the cultural norms view marriage positively. Consequently, the prevalence of married teachers suggested that work-life balance policies were important retention considerations. As a result, recognizing teachers' family roles could have positively impacted their commitment as educators. Previous research found that lack of family support negatively impacted married female teachers' motivation in similar contexts (Al-Alawi et al., 2021). Likewise, implementing flexible work arrangements and dependent care resources had enhanced retention (Ortan et al., 2021).

4.1.4. Highest Educational Attainment

The survey also examined the highest educational attainment of the 253 teacher respondents. Understanding the academic qualifications and professional development of the inclusion teachers provided important insights for retention efforts.

Table 3
Highest Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Educational Attainment	f	%
Doctorate Graduate	2	0.79
With Doctorate Units	10	3.95
Master's Graduate	29	11.46
With Master's Units	167	66.01
Bachelor's Degree	45	17.79
Total	253	100.00

As displayed in Table 3, the highest educational attainment showed that the largest percentage had earned master's units (66.01%), followed by those attaining a bachelor's degree (17.79%). Smaller portions included master's graduates (11.46%) or doctorate studies (0.79-3.95%). A potential rationale for these findings involved requirements and incentives within the field. A bachelor's degree is the minimum entry-level qualification for teaching, though continuing education is encouraged (Suryani, 2021). Pursuing a complete Master's degree or a Doctorate costs too much for the individual teacher, which is why there are only a handful of Master's and Doctorate graduates (Grace et al., 2023).

Consequently, this educational profile carried implications. Teachers' satisfaction could vary according to their professional learning goals which institutional support should target (Ortan et al., 2021). Given most staff pursued master's level work, development programs should emphasize practical skills rather than theoretical doctorates. Additionally, providing tuition reimbursement or study leaves may motivate continued education valued by staff and students alike.

Understanding educators' qualifications aided in designing compensation and training initiatives appropriately addressing satisfaction across experience levels. Recognizing learning preferences could optimize educator skills and commitment to addressing diverse needs.

4.1.5. Length of Service

The survey also examined the length of service of the 253 teacher respondents. Understanding the distribution of experience levels among the inclusion teachers offered important insights for developing targeted retention strategies.

Table 4
Length of Service of the Respondents

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Length of Service	f	%				
(in years)						
16 and above	65	25.69				
11-15	45	17.79				
6-10	60	23.72				
1-5	60	23.72				
Less than one year	23	9.09				
Total	253	100.00				

The majority of teacher respondents had over a decade of experience, with nearly 26% having taught for 16 years or more. This indicates a largely veteran workforce at the school. Previous research found that more years spent in the profession relates to higher expectations regarding career development and working conditions (Gimbert & Kapa, 2022; Ortan et al., 2022). Veteran teachers, making up over 60% of respondents, represent a significant investment in institutional knowledge and require targeted support to retain their passion and expertise. Experience level influences job satisfaction, with more established teachers having greater needs for career growth, supportive environments, and workload adjustments (Baroudi et al., 2022). While experienced mid-career staff possess strong skills, they also expect their workplace to support them appropriately. A strategic approach is needed to balance the needs of novice and veteran teachers through professional development, workload management, and inclusive planning attentive to different career stages. This supports staff morale and stability as reforms are implemented, helping maintain teaching quality long-term amid transitions. Recognizing the substantial population of seasoned educators provides insights into tailoring retention strategies at the school.

4.1.6. Training in Inclusive Education

The survey also examined the training in inclusive education received by the 253 teacher respondents. Understanding the distribution of inclusive education expertise among the inclusion teachers offered important insights for developing targeted professional development initiatives.

Table 5
Respondents' Training in Inclusive Education

Respondents Training in Inclusive Education					
Training in Inclusive	f	%			
Education					
With Training	179	70.75			
No Training	74	29.25			
Total	253	100.00			

The majority, comprising 70.75% of respondents, had received training in inclusive education, while 29.25% had not received any training. To explain this, the high percentage of respondents

who were trained in inclusion implied that during the time of the survey, the school had invested in building teacher capacity through relevant professional development opportunities. This could have helped in the initial implementation of inclusion programs within the school. However, following this, the data also pointed out that about one-third of teachers still lacked

However, following this, the data also pointed out that about one-third of teachers still lacked such training. Consequently, it meant difficulties for untrained teachers to practice inclusive strategies in class without guidance. Importantly, support needed to be extended to help untrained teachers acquire inclusive skills through workshops or on-the-job coaching.

Meanwhile, research confirmed that training positively impacted teachers' perceptions and competency in inclusion (Humaira & Rachmadtullah, 2021). However, training alone was insufficient without follow-up support (Morgado et al. 2024). Therefore, the school may have needed continual capacity-building initiatives to help all teachers implement inclusive practices effectively.

4.1.7. Awareness of Inclusive Education

The survey also examined the awareness of inclusive education reported by the 253 teacher respondents. Understanding inclusive education awareness among inclusion teachers offered important insights for developing targeted professional development initiatives.

Table 6
Respondents' Awareness of Inclusive Education

As presented in Table 6, it showed awareness of inclusive education as reported by the 253 teacher respondents. The majority (83.79%) had awareness, while 16.21% had no awareness. There were likely several factors that could have contributed to this result. Primarily, as discussed in Table 5, most teachers had received training that increased their awareness. Additionally, school practices emphasizing inclusion over the years also could have raised awareness levels. However, those without training from Table 5 comprised the untrained group lacking awareness.

Consequently, the high percentage of teachers aware of inclusion suggested exposure to inclusive philosophies. Nonetheless, teachers with low awareness may have struggled to implement inclusive strategies effectively as special educators. Therefore, continuous efforts to increase awareness across all staff could have positively impacted educational services.

Previous research indicated that awareness correlated with teachers' attitudes and skill in inclusion (Savolainen et al., 2022). Furthermore, school-wide training combining both conceptual and practical content maintained long-term awareness (Kivirand et al., 2022). Regular awareness-raising would have strengthened understanding and collaboration towards inclusive practices.

4.1.8. Level of Work Engagement

The survey also examined the level of work engagement among the 253 teacher respondents, providing valuable insights into their commitment to inclusive practices.

Level of work engagement of the respondents

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	I am really focused when I am working.	4.68	Very High
2	I concentrate on my job when I am at work.	4.73	Very High
3	I give my job responsibility a lot of attention.	4.72	Very High
4	At work, I am focused on my job.	4.70	Very High
5	Working at my current organization has a great deal	4.62	Very High
	of personal meaning to me.		
6	I feel a strong sense of belonging to my job.	4.62	Very High
7	I believe in the mission and purpose of my company.	4.72	Very High
8	I care about the future of my company.	4.74	Very High
9	I really push myself to work beyond what is expected	4.54	Very High
	of me.		
10	I am willing to put in extra effort without being asked.	4.57	Very High
11	I often go above what is expected of me to help my tear	n4.47	Very High
	be successful.		
12	I work harder than expected to help my company be	4.49	Very High
	successful.		-
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	4.63	Very High

Legend: 4.21-5.00-Very High; 3.41-4.20-High; 2.61-3.40-Moderate; 1.81-2.60-Low;1.00-1.80-Very Low

The survey results presented in Table 7 indicated that teacher work engagement at the school was exceptionally high, with all indicators scoring within the very high range and an aggregate weighted mean of 4.63. This suggested that at the time of the study, teachers were strongly focused on and committed to their roles, felt a deep sense of belonging, and cared strongly about the school's mission and success. Previous research found that supportive work environments and collaborative cultures can promote higher engagement among teachers (Han & Wang, 2021; Gómez-Hurtado et al., 2021).

Sustaining such very high engagement levels long-term will require continuous efforts. For example, tailoring professional development and leadership opportunities based on teachers' career stages can help prevent burnout (Altinay & Bicentürk, 2023). Periodic assessment of engagement alongside other factors like job satisfaction and retention intentions would help the school identify targeted programs and policies to support teacher well-being and motivation throughout their careers. This ongoing evaluation process could guide improvement measures (Buyukgoze et al., 2022). Overall, the findings revealed an exceptionally engaged current teacher workforce. Strategic and customized retention strategies focusing on career-long needs will be important to maintain this very positive engagement indicator over time as reforms are implemented.

4.1.9. Level of Job Satisfaction

The survey also examined the level of job satisfaction among the 253 teacher respondents, providing valuable insights into their overall fulfillment in their roles as inclusive educators.

Table 8
Level of job satisfaction of the respondents

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	Being able to keep busy all the time	4.32	Very High
2	The chance to work alone on the job	4.20	High
2 3 4 5	The chance to do different things from time to time	4.27	Very High
4	The chance to be "somebody" in the community	4.22	Very High
	The way my boss handles his/her workers	4.41	Very High
6	The competence of my supervisor in making decisions	4.43	Very High
7	Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience	4.38	Very High
8	The way my job provides for steady employment	4.59	Very High
9	The chance to do things for other people	4.49	Very High
10	The chance to tell people what to do	4.25	Very High
11	The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities	4.41	Very High
12	The way company policies are put into practice	4.42	Very High
13	My pay and the amount of work I do	4.25	Very High
14	The chances for advancement on this job	4.31	Very High
15	The freedom to use my own judgment	4.28	Very High
16	The chance to try my own methods of doing the job	4.39	Very High
17	The working conditions	4.33	Very High
18	The way my co-workers get along with each other	4.38	Very High
19	The praise I get for doing a good job	4.30	Very High
20	The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job	4.45	Very High
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	4.35	Very High

Legend: 4.21-5.00-Very High; 3.41-4.20-High; 2.61-3.40-Moderate; 1.81-2.60-Low;1.00-1.80-Very Low

As presented in Table 8, the survey found that the overall job satisfaction among teacher respondents was exceptionally high, with an aggregate weighted mean of 4.35.

All individual facets of satisfaction, aside from chance to work alone, were also rated very high, from 4.20 to 4.59. Aspects relating to steady employment, autonomy to use own methods, working conditions, and sense of accomplishment scored highest. This consistent pattern of very high satisfaction across all areas indicates that teachers derived great fulfillment from numerous elements of their role at the time. Previous research links higher teacher job satisfaction with positive student outcomes, lower turnover, and improved organizational performance (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Therefore, with satisfaction levels being so elevated during this period, the school was well-positioned for achieving success.

However, sustaining the drivers of long-term satisfaction necessitated an ongoing assessment of and support for teachers' evolving needs over their career lifespan. Continually maintaining high levels of fulfillment through tailored programming and working conditions optimization could further benefit both individual educators and the institution on an enduring basis. The findings provided a valuable baseline understanding of teachers' exceptionally positive mindsets.

4.1.10. Level of Retention

The survey also examined the level of retention among the 253 teacher respondents, based on 12 key factors. The result suggested the teachers intended to remain as inclusive educators over the long term. This finding underscored the school's commitment to providing quality educational services through stable and experienced inclusion teachers.

Table 9
Level of retention of the respondents

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	I have been promoted and recognized	4.03	High
2	I am respected by authorities	4.30	Very High
3	I am appreciated for work done	4.27	Very High
4	I have good relationship with management & leaders	4.42	Very High
5	I have good relationship with colleagues	4.52	Very High
6	My salary was increased	4.05	High
7	Career & opportunities for Professional Development	4.33	Very High
8	Job security	4.49	Very High
9	The School has basic facilities	4.42	Very High
10	I receive fringe benefits	4.21	Very High
11	The community accept me	4.49	Very High
12	Students are disciplined	4.03	High
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	4.30	Very High

Legend: 4.21-5.00-Very High; 3.41-4.20-High; 2.61-3.40-Moderate; 1.81-2.60-Low;1.00-1.80-Very Low

As presented in Table 9, the survey found that the overall teacher retention level was very high, with an aggregate weighted mean of 4.30. Individual retention indicators were predominantly rated as very high, particularly for relationships with management, colleagues, job security, school facilities, and community acceptance. This suggested that teachers were highly likely to remain in their roles during this period. Previous literature associated retention with satisfying factors like relationships, recognition, and career prospects (Baroudi et al., 2022). Therefore, the school appeared successful in motivating its teaching workforce long-term through various measures.

However, continually reviewing retention factors could have helped the school proactively address any potential dissatisfiers to maintain very high teacher stability over time. Strong relationships signaling support, adequate facilities/benefits meeting basic needs, and leadership validating expertise may have bolstered commitment (Journell, 2023; Sumanasena & Mohamed, 2022; Hite & Milbourne, 2022). Ensuring meaningful work coupled with fair compensation improves loyalty more than monetary incentives alone (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Periodic retention assessments also aid adjusting supports to reduce burnout, maintaining a fulfilling learning environment vital for diverse learners' wellbeing (Al-Thani et al., 2021). The implications of very high retention suggest initiatives sustaining positive trends through tailored development building resilient, student-centered practices long-term.

4.1.11. Test of Relationship between Work Engagement and Retention

Retaining highly engaged teachers is highly important for educational quality and stability. This study examined the relationship between teacher work engagement and retention.

Table 10
Test of Relationship between the work engagement and retention of the respondents

the respondents						
Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p-value	Decision	Remarks	
Work Engagement and Retention	0.436*	Weak Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant	

^{*}significant at p<0.05 (two-tailed)

As presented in Table 10, inferential statistics found a statistically significant weak positive relationship between teacher work engagement and retention. As engagement increased, teachers' intent to remain at their jobs also tended to increase. Retaining highly engaged teachers is important for educational quality and stability during reforms. Prior research emphasizes that supportive inclusion practices can increase satisfaction and commitment through enhanced engagement, positively impacting necessary staff continuity (Abraham & Vijayarani, 2024). Such strategies foster initiative, passion and autonomous motivation, sustaining engagement and retention in professional development long-term (Lan, 2022). Maintaining the established correlation acts as a safeguard against costly loss of experienced teachers during reforms. Strategies like meaningful professional learning, leadership roles, workload management and recognition can continuously cultivate teacher initiative, passion and positive experiences to sustain both high engagement and retention over an extended period (Santmajor et al., 2022). A stable, experienced workforce is critical to ensuring high-quality inclusive practices and smooth reform implementation while protecting investments in teacher training. Nurturing work engagement through adequate support and resources helps create this experienced teaching force committed to students.

4.1.12. Test of Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Retention

Understanding the dynamics between job satisfaction and staff retention is instrumental for educational institutions seeking to cultivate a positive work environment and stable teaching workforce. This study examined the potential linkage between these important factors.

Table 11
Test of Relationship between the job satisfaction and retention of the respondents

Variables r-value Strength of Correlation	p-value Decision Remarks
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Job Satisfaction		Moderate		Reject	
and Retention	0.611*	Positive	0.000	Но	Significant

^{*}significant at p<0.05 (two tailed)

As presented in Table 11, the inferential statistics found a statistically significant moderate positive relationship between teacher job satisfaction and retention. As satisfaction increased, intent to remain tended to increase moderately. Understanding this dynamic is important for cultivating positive, stable work environments. Higher satisfaction stemming from supportive inclusion practices increases commitment and continuity necessary for sustainability (Vieira et al., 2021). When inclusion efforts provide satisfying work conditions through supports, training and resources, teachers feel more committed long-term versus leaving (Brussino, 2021). Maintaining this significant correlation acts as a protective factor during challenging reform periods. Strategies strengthening experiences promoting satisfaction, like workload-wellbeing balance and targeted professional learning, reinforce satisfaction levels long-term. This finding is confirmed by research highlighting how job satisfaction, engagement, morale and well-being create an experienced, invested workforce resilient against setbacks (Thangaraja et al., 2024). Fostering satisfaction helps develop a cohesive team committed to carrying out inclusive practices with quality and maximizing returns on reform investments. Overall, cultivating a satisfying environment through support, resources and continuous learning enhances retention critical to stability during times of change.

4.2. Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence supporting the relationships between inclusive teachers' work engagement, job satisfaction, and retention in Public Schools of Mandaue City, Cebu. Statistically significant correlations were found between 1) work engagement and retention, and 2) job satisfaction and retention. These findings align with previous research highlighting the importance of engagement and satisfaction in predicting teacher persistence, especially in demanding inclusive environments.

Generally, the results indicate that retention is most optimized when inclusion practices, leadership, continuous learning opportunities, and working conditions enhance experiences promoting engagement and satisfaction. Sustaining these motivating factors necessitates an ongoing assessment and personalized support responsive to teachers' evolving needs across career stages. Strategically addressing issues impacting engagement, satisfaction, and ultimately retention is crucial for maintaining a stable, well-experienced teaching workforce committed to implementing inclusive practices and reforms with quality and resilience against challenges.

With inclusion policies now being enforced nationwide, understanding practical impacts on teachers' job attitudes provides valuable empirical data for enhancing environments where educators feel enabled to fulfill new expectations. The findings offer a baseline for developing targeted Teacher Satisfaction and Retention Enhancement initiatives prioritizing the well-being and career of inclusion teachers. Insights can also guide efforts maximizing investments in training through improvement in working conditions and optimizing human resources support committed to teaching quality inclusive education to students.

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6. AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

All authors made valuable contributions at different stages of this research. The lead researchers oversaw data gathering and drafting of the manuscript. The advisor provided supervision and examination of the content. Additional specialists and experts from pertinent fields assisted in validating accuracy, reinforcing the methodology, and enhancing findings through iterative rounds of feedback. Their collaborative verification process strengthened various aspects of the study, including methodological robustness, result validity, and reporting quality. The collaborative nature of this work allowed the incorporation of diverse perspectives to refine and improve the study overall.

7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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