

The Journey of Retirable Public School Teacher During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract:- The purpose of this study was to tell and retell the experiences told about the journey of the retirable public school teachers. The study employed narrative approach design to explore the humble beginning, coping strategies and successful endeavor of the participants. The respondents of this study were the four retirable public school teachers aged 63-64 still currently teaching and are residents of General Santos City who undergo in-depth interview using the approved questionnaire. The study had three formulated themes which were the retirable humble beginnings, coping strategies and successful endeavor. The humble beginnings of the retirable had two cluster themes which were the work demand which revealed emergent themes work overload, strict admin, and students' discipline while personal demand revealed themes like family and self-expectation. Moreover, the other formulated theme the coping strategies had two cluster themes which were the administrative support with an emergent theme of support from teachers and admin and re-evaluation of teaching while the personal appraisal with emergent theme, time management. The last formulated theme the successful endeavor had one cluster theme the disposition of life revealed: economic view and personal view.

Keywords:- Educational Management, Public School Teachers, Retirable Teachers, Retirable Journey, Pandemic, Philippines.

I. INTRODUCTION

Millions of people have already died as a result of the pandemic caused by the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which spread quickly. To date, this unprecedented health crisis has had a negative impact on the economies of millions of people and families. The pandemic forced educational institutions, which had an effect on the educational systems of many nations to close or look for ways to continue to operate. Therefore, some of the most vulnerable to possible infection from COVID-19 are the teachers, specifically those retirable teachers at all levels of education (Arinto, 2016; Benton & Young, 2018).

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The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines has implemented technological and internet-based distance learning modalities to guarantee learning continuity. Students can continue their education in distance

learning environments in this way using TV, online and offline platforms. Also, radio-printed modules and additionally, students and teachers have access to these resources in a variety of settings, including blended learning and homeschooling. Any of these modalities are combined in blended learning to maximize their advantages and produce high-quality learning. Homeschooling allows parents to serve as both teachers and tutors for their children (Ritter, 2018; Samsuddin, 2021).

In General Santos City, various distance learning modalities were applied to ensure learning continuity. For instance, Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) are self-contained, self-instruction, and self-paced. Also, interactive learning resources for public schools are intended for learning a specific topic or lesson where the learner interacts actively with the instructional material rather than reading the material passively.

At present, teachers, including those who are older or retired, are still utilizing the Alternative Work Arrangement (AWA), where teachers are required to have an on-site duty and work from home with a required number of days a week despite the ongoing pandemic. Thus, with the problems presented, the researcher is motivated to conduct this study to explore the journey of the retirable public school teachers amid the pandemic. Moreover, I have yet to encounter a similar study exploring the same matter. Having this study would somehow give more profound views not only among the teachers but also to the higher authority in the Department of Education, and give them ideas also to craft some better regulations that will protect the health of teachers, specifically those who are retirable (Catalino & Boulton, 2021; Ng, 2017).

➤ *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this narrative study was to tell and retell the experiences of their journey towards achieving excellence in their chosen career until they are considered retirable public school teachers. Moreover, the study delineated the humble beginning and middle stories and the participants' challenges of becoming successful children from single families.

A qualitative method of inquiry was employed by the researcher using interview questions. It involved four (4) retirable public school teachers who are 63-64 years old and are currently teaching in the division of General Santos City.

This research highlighted the experiences and explained the successful journey of retirable public school

teachers during the pandemic. Furthermore, the researcher tried to make the study participants relive the experiences they had in their minds and listen to the stories they would tell, and study the possibilities of influencing the development of future training and workshop that would help other teachers.

This study eventually helped retireable public school teachers to improve and develop their self-concept by giving motivation, inspiration, and social support to reward them for their efficiency and performance in school.

Moreover, the study's findings may provide relevant data for curriculum planners, school heads, and other educators who envision a quality education for all learners in the department by assisting the teachers in their teaching journey, which inspired them, including the reactions of their peers and family. It included the issues they faced during their journey in teaching, as well as their thoughts and the effects that they will adapt to ensure productive teaching and learning. These experiences may be attributable to their educational training and preparations. Also, the gender they belonged to their age, personalities, and values, including the position of their assignments gave the most fascinating and worst experiences in their chosen profession as one travels on the road to excellence.

Finally, it also included their experiences with the help they got from their peers, their hopes and dreams as a teacher, and the experiences they might share with other teachers. More studies may need to be conducted to confirm the journey of retireable public school teachers to explore their situations and self-worth.

➤ *Research Objectives*

This study aimed to describe and provide an in-depth understanding of the retireable public school teachers' journey during the Pandemic in General Santos City.

• *This Study Aimed to Answer the Following Questions:*

- ✓ How do the participants describe their retirement journey during this pandemic?
- ✓ How do the participants view their beginning experiences as retireable public school teachers?
- ✓ How do the participants describe their middle experiences as a retireable public school teacher?
- ✓ How do the participants elaborate on their successful experiences as a retireable public school teacher?

➤ *Theoretical Lens*

This study was anchored on the Continuity Theory by Robert Atchley, 1971. Continuity theory provides a framework for understanding how adults employ their past concepts, constructs, and experiences to adapt and adjust to the changes brought about by normal aging. The theory assumes that middle-aged and older individuals attempt to preserve internal and external continuity when making adaptive life choices. Continuity theory has been used in understanding adjustment to retirement. In addition,

workability, which refers to the balance between employees' resources and job demands, can be understood from a continuity perspective. This perspective is essential in the light of the recent development in workforce participation of older employees and the trend toward an early exit from working life. Workability varies across time and enables participation in working life at older ages, provided that the job demands concern individuals' resources.

This theory was supported by the Theory of Career Choice by John Holland, in 1959. According to John Holland's Theory of Career Choice (RIASEC), individuals like careers that allow them to work among others who share their interests. They look for situations where they can apply their knowledge and expertise, display their attitudes and values, and engage in enjoyable challenges and roles. The interaction of personality and environment shapes behavior. A person's personality can be seen as extended through the professional decision and career adjustment. People use their job preferences and experiences to express their identities, interests, and values. Holland based his argument on the premise that stereotypes, or generalizations about people's attitudes toward their jobs, are typically accurate. Holland categorizes both people and work situations by researching and improving these stereotypes.

Secondly, this study is anchored on the Career Development Theory by Harkness & Super, 1996. According to Super's theory of career development, learning how one's interests and skills match job requirements requires going through life stages of growth and discovery. Almost every kid in high school is still in the career exploration phase. In this piece, the effects of this phase are discussed concerning the study program decisions that high school students must make. Proof of the theory and its efficacy, the effectiveness of treatments intended to support career development is examined.

Lastly, this study was also premised on the Theory of Work Adjustment by John Weiss, Rene Dawis, George England, and Lloyd Lofquist, 1964. A person is more likely to execute the job well and be viewed favorably by the employer if their talents (skills, knowledge, experience, attitude, behaviors, and others) closely match the demands of the role or the organization. Additionally, a person is more likely to view a job positively if the reinforcers (rewards) of the position or organization closely align with the values that the person strives to satisfy through their work.

➤ *Significance of the Study*

The results of this study will be significant to the following:

This study's findings may be used as a teacher's guide and a reminder of any matter related to retiring. It could also be a motivation for teachers in the future to look forward to a prepared and planned retirement. The result of this study provided the school administrators with factual information to create and implement programs that promote the preparedness of all personnel to be emotionally, mentally,

physically, and financially prepared for the moment of retirement. The findings of the study may benefit the researchers as they can utilize them as a readily available reference to investigate and explore the educational perspectives of retirable people.

➤ *Delimitations and Limitations*

There are several limits to this study since the aim is explicitly focused on the narratives of the journey of retirable public school teachers teaching during the pandemic setting. The teachers selected to participate in this study are four retirable public school teachers aged 63-64 still teaching and are residents of General Santos City. A purposive sampling method was used to determine the sample size. The reputational technique identified the individuals who possessed the typical characteristics of the studied population (Campbell, Greenwood, Prior, Shearer, Walkem, Young & Walker, 2020). The sample is small to allow an in-depth interview. This study's rigor is also connected to the extent of the participants' openness regarding what they chose to share. The researcher took steps to collect multiple data sources and triangulate across sources. She aligned the findings with the research purpose and questions, conducted member checks, participated in peer debriefings at various points during the study, and remained vigilant in constructing the meaning of the participants' experiences. These issues at once can contribute to limitations and possibilities within this study, depending on the successful execution.

The results of this narrative study cannot be generalized because this study is limited to the responses of the five retirable teachers who were the participants.

This study was primarily designed to narrate the lived experiences of the retirable teachers on their humble beginnings and challenges, coping strategies, and successful and meaningful years of tears, hardships, learnings, and touching lives on the education battlefield. Thus, this study was narrowed by findings not intended for generalization to other research settings.

➤ *Definition of Terms*

The following terms were conceptually and operationally defined to understand better the terms used in this study.

- **Journey.** Conceptually, this means a course like traveling, such as a series of trying experiences; or a passage. Operationally, this referred to the ups and downs of retirable public school teachers, the experiences they have faced, and the challenges they have encountered.
- **Retirable public school teachers.** Conceptually, this refers to the teachers in public schools who can retire from the service. Operationally, this pertains to public school teachers aged 63 to 64 years old and currently teaching in General Santos City Division's public schools and who are the study participants.

- **COVID-19 Pandemic.** Conceptually, this pertains to the infectious disease pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus that affected the world. However, operationally, it pertains to the period where the four retirable public school teachers worked during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Vocational Choice.** Conceptually, this means the personality factors underlie career choices. Therefore, conceptually, it means the decision made by the study participants to stay in the service which was influenced by their personality.
- **Super's Career Development.** Conceptually, each individual takes on multiple roles or living spaces, often simultaneously and to varying degrees, and each of these roles is enacted in different life spans. Operationally, it means the study's participants' decision to stay in the service despite the unfavorable environment which was influenced by their maturity.
- **Career Construction.** Conceptually, this refers to one's career being constructed through the meaning placed on behaviors related to work life, in the context of his or her environment and experiences with others (Savickas, 2005). Operationally, this means the thoughts, feelings, and actions influence the participants of the study's decision-making in choosing and adjusting to an occupation.
- **Work-Adjustment.** Conceptually, this pertains to career decisions based on the fit between a person and the environment. Both individuals tend to adjust to their workplace or seek new employment based on their satisfaction with their work. Operationally, the study participants may decide to quit their service or shift careers because they are dissatisfied with their present work due to the work environment.
- **Social Cognitive Career.** Conceptually, this referred to the three interrelated aspects of career development: how fundamental academic and career interests develop, how educational and career preferences are made, and how scholastic and career success is obtained. Operationally, the study participants, in their journey towards their service, tend to set goals consistent with their views of their capabilities and the outcomes they expect to attain from pursuing a particular course of action.
- **Aging.** Conceptually, this refers to older adults that tend to be less connected socially; the decreased interactions are associated with how they view themselves and the type of relationships they will shift given their decreased involvement in formerly central roles. Operationally, it pertains to the engagement of the retirable teachers where they have less social connection and prefer to preserve their well-being and something that can impact their personal life.
- **Rational Choice.** Conceptually, individuals use rational calculations to make rational choices and achieve outcomes aligned with their objectives. Operationally, the teachers who wish to work continuously in the

service are based on the concept connected to their goals and something that can satisfy them.

- **Early Years.** Conceptually, this pertains to the period between infancy and young adulthood. It is the time when one attends compulsory school. However, operationally, it pertains to the humble beginnings of the retirable public school teachers in teaching.

➤ *Organization of the Study*

In presenting the study flow, the ideas and different concepts were organized. Each chapter has its corresponding views to be discussed. Details were adequately organized to achieve understanding among the readers. This study is organized into five (5) chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the problem and phenomenon to be studied. This chapter emphasizes the importance of the study. It explains what has been researched in the past and recent times and showed the gaps identified in existing research. It is followed by a discussion of the study's purpose, which aims to explore when teachers in public schools retire early. Specifically, it describes the various factors or considerations that influence their decision to early retirement and their assessment of life after retirement.

Next is the presentation of the research questions utilized for the in-depth interview of the informants. Another portion of this chapter presents the theoretical lens associated with the research study. Following is the significance of the study and the people who would benefit from this research. It is also essential to have a clear understanding of the terms. Thus, important words in the study are operationally defined. The last part of this chapter is the study's delimitation and limitation and the potential participants' presentation. The weaknesses and validity of the study are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2 contains the literature and other research studies as they are related to the main problem that supported the study's need. It is divided into four themes: The concept of Early Retirement, the Retirement System in Public Schools, Factors Influencing the Early Retirement of Teachers, and Life after Early Retirement.

Chapter 3 discusses the design and methodology used in the study, including research design, the role of the researcher, research participants, data collection, data analysis, inclusion criteria, and trustworthiness which explains the four criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability and lastly, the ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the interviews and the collected information from the informants.

Chapter 5 presents the discussion based on the results of the study. It is divided into three results- result in 1, result 2, and result in 3. Furthermore, after the discussion of the results, significant findings, the implication for practice, the implication for future research, and concluding remarks are presented.

II. METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design, locale, population and sample, instrument, data collection, statistical tools, and ethical considerations.

➤ *Research Design*

This study was a narrative approach. Qualitative research is an inquiry approach which is helpful in exploring, investigating, and understanding participants' experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Also, to learn about this, the researcher asked participants broad, general questions, collected the detailed views of participants in the form of words or images and analyzed the information for descriptions and themes. From this data, the researcher understood and described the meaning of the information, drawing on personal reflections and past research.

Moreover, narrative research aims to explore and conceptualize human experience as it is represented in textual form. Aiming for an in-depth exploration of the meanings people assign to their experiences, narrative researchers work with small samples of participants to obtain rich and free-ranging discourse. The emphasis is on storied experience. Generally, this takes the form of interviewing people around the topic of interest, but it might also involve the analysis of written documents (Salkind, 2010).

This study was a qualitative research study that used narrative research as a strategy of inquiry to tell and retell. Qualitative research enables the researcher to reach detailed data in its natural setting, and since it is interpretative, it allows the researcher to interpret the data. It also focuses on participants' experiences and ideas. As a strategy of inquiry, narrative research is aimed at understating the outcome of interpretation rather than explanations by providing an opportunity to gather data from real people. Narratives were related to life stories. A narrative is a story that tells a sequence of events that is significant for the narrator or audience.

Narrative research gave us stories about lived experiences that are not forgotten and the way of experiencing them. In our case, the narrative approach highlighted how we integrated social media into our courses as an educational tool outside the classroom. The storytelling method was used to collect data in this study, including the stories of two higher education faculty members who have been using social media as an educational tool in their teacher education since 2008 and information technology courses since 2007.

➤ *Role of the Researcher*

The function of the researcher in producing this knowledge is critical, and stake emphasizes the researcher's interpretive role as essential in the process. The stake has provided different parts that a researcher may play in making continuous conscious and unconscious decisions to develop fundamental case research. A researcher could be a

teacher, advocate, evaluator, biographer, theorist, interpreter, constructivist, relativist, and others.

I am a critical thinker person not only in my work as a teacher but also on a daily basis. From this lens, I became interested in learning the journey of the retireable teachers who taught during the pandemic, explicitly knowing the challenges and coping mechanisms they both encountered and employed. As the primary data collection instrument, I had to identify and harmonize my values, assumptions, and biases at the study's outset. For example, being in public school for many years has led to various biases that I bring regarding the need to consider retiring early. As a teacher who is close to reliable people, this undertaking is relevant to me and the rest of the teachers in both public and private schools. Further, there is a need to plan seriously, and doing a study should be given enough time to plan for the retireable teachers since their health is at risk.

Moreover, this endeavor explored the journey of the retireable public school teachers during the pandemic. It is an exciting exploration because knowing this matter ignited my interest and having the opportunity to take all learning they shared can be of great help in preparation when arriving at that same stage of life. Therefore, this study has a personal bearing on me. As a public school teacher, I gathered the data by conducting in-depth interviews using interview guide questions among informants. Upon getting the results of the in-depth interview, I sought the assistance of an independent reader analyst. The two of us analyzed the data gathered from the audio recordings of the in-depth interviews. After coming up with the same findings, I utilized the expertise of a professional data analyst for data analysis and interpretation. Then, based on the collected data, my insights were formed.

➤ *Research Participants*

The participants of this study were the four (4) retireable public school teachers who are 63-64 years old and are currently teaching in the division of General Santos City.

The researcher relied on the participants' ability to explain their experiences and answer questions during the interview. There are varying degrees of expertise and experience by informants and participants, which may be subjective. Since this study is for retireable teachers, the requisite permission from participants to obtain access is sought. The study and its intent are also directly told to the participants.

This study, through in-depth interviews, is focused on open-ended questions. Given this sample's limited number of subjects, five were interviewed in depth (IDI). Therefore, it is optional to generalize the findings of the investigations to other regions of the world. In its investigation, this research is a phenomenological study.

➤ *Data Collection*

Qualitative research interviews are attempted to understand the world from the participants' point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences, and to uncover

their lived world before scientific explanations. Further, qualitative research interviews unfold as an interviewer asked the interviewee questions to gather personal information about a particular topic or experience (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

In qualitative research, the person collecting the data plays a central role. Regardless of the study area or preferred method for defining data (qualitative vs. quantitative), accurate data collection is crucial to upholding the integrity of the research. Errors are less likely to occur when the right data collection tools are chosen (whether they are already available, modified versions of them, or brand-new ones).

Before the study, the researcher asked permission to conduct the study through a formal letter to the schools division superintendent of General Santos City Division. Upon approval, the researcher coordinated with the school heads and the teachers involved in the study. After ensuring the rigor and appropriateness of the interview guide, the following data-gathering procedures were observed:

First is the preparation of the logistical requirements, which includes the venue and audio/voice recorder used during the interview with the participants. The venue and time were determined during the researcher's meeting via zoom and face-to-face.

Second, before the conduct of the interview, the participants were given a copy of the consent form to sign via zoom and physical meeting. It contained the study's objectives, the methodology, confidentiality, and benefits, including the contact number of the researcher if there were clarifications or verifications of the purpose, after which, with no more extended questions or clarifications, the Consent Form was retrieved. A Participant Agreement Form followed it. It indicated the agreement between the participants and the researcher regarding the conduct of the interview and transcription process. It included the use of a pseudonym and other pertinent information to help the researcher come to know and recall each participant. Most of all, the form includes their permission to conduct the interview.

Lastly, it was followed by a one-on-one interview with the participants via zoom and face-to-face. It consisted of two parts. The first part was a mere solicitation of information that would serve as the basis for the background of the participants. The second part was the interview proper, which consisted of questions on when the public-school teachers retire early, followed by developmental questions to gain more meaningful questions.

With the participants interviewed face-to-face, COVID-19 protocols were observed, for instance, following established protocols regarding mask-wearing, physical distancing, hand sanitizing, and other preventive measures.

Since the study utilized one-on-one interviews, the researcher believed that building rapport and trust with the participant is more important than the questions in the

discussion guide. The list of questions and objectives is meaningless if the participant feels self-conscious or apprehensive throughout the session. That is why the researcher initiated a preliminary meeting with the informants and explained the details of the study, which made them understand that everything would be done with the utmost confidentiality.

Then, the researcher conducted a one-on-one interview with the participants at an agreed time and place at their convenience. A digital recorder was used to record the interview. Their answers in the interview were transcribed after the interview process.

During the interview proper, questions were asked to the participants, followed by elucidating or probing questions. The main question is: when public-school teachers retire early, then look specifically at the factors or considerations that influence their decision to early retirement and their assessment of life after retirement. Asking this type of grand tour question allowed the participants tell their stories without constraint. Sub-questions written in the semi-structured interview guide were also asked.

During the interview, prompt questions were used for clarification and focus. Quick questions will be when, who, where, why, how, and what. Prompt questions were not intended to lead the participant but to encourage and elicit examples and meaning about the experience they are describing (Munhall, 1994; Manen, 2000). Interviews were conducted in the faculty room of Senior High School or their respective classrooms free of interruption, like during their free time or after their class hours, and conducive to reflective storytelling. Each participant was interviewed separately at different times. The length of interviews did not last an hour.

At the end of the interview, a leading question was asked: "Were there any experience that was not asked that you would like to share?" In most instances, this question did not elicit any new information. All interviews were recorded using audio recorder and transcribed verbatimly by the researcher and were validated using member checking. Participants were assured of confidentiality, as explicated in the section of the informed consent form for human consideration. Field notes were utilized during the interview to record body language or other contributing factors that are not reflected in the recording. In addition, it was done to minimize distractions to the participant.

Finally, the researcher transcribed the audio recordings as soon as possible after the interviews. Member checking was used as a method of validation whereby participants read and affirmed the contents of the interview transcript by affixing their signatures. Such a validation process signaled the trustworthiness of the data.

The interview saturation point is identified when the tenor of the answers has the same flow of thought deriving from the same phenomenon of experiences based on the similarity of experiences revealed during the interview.

Interviews were completed with the participants and transcribed to form the raw data for this research study. The interviews revealed the participant's teaching journey during this pandemic and how they described it. The raw data in this study included the interviews with the participants and insights provided by the participants. Participants for this study were asked to participate in a semi-structured interview which was appropriate to use "when the researcher knows enough about the study topic to frame the needed discussion in advance" (Roose, Vantieghem, Vanderlinde & Van Avermaet, 2019).

Moreover, the interviews aim to describe the participants' teaching journey. Therefore, questions were asked to get as much detail as possible from the participants. Interviews were conducted during the academic year 2020-2021. Interviews were correctly scheduled to ensure the participant's availability and lasted no more than ninety minutes. Interviews took place through meeting at an interview site. To ensure consistency and standardization, participants answered the same questions. The interview consisted of open-ended questions that explore teacher immediacy behaviors and engagement strategies in the course and their effectiveness.

Interview questions were pilot-tested on a colleague to gauge the time required and fluency of responses. All interviews were recorded first and then transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Finally, the researcher sent the interview transcript to each participant for review, validation, and feedback from each participant.

➤ *Data Analysis*

When the researcher gathered all the data, it was followed by analysis. It was the moment when the researcher tried to break down all the data gathered to understand them better so that each element would be placed in its respective order to explain and mean it properly. As he pointed out, in a research report, analyzing the data means summarizing the mass of data gathered and presenting the findings in a way that expresses the most important characteristics. Therefore, data were analyzed using a method involving data reduction, data shows, conclusion drawing, and verification, adding that "any qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings" was qualitative content analysis (Balang, 2021).

Data reduction is the abstraction of transcription data, eliminating non-important data and transforming it into accessible information easily understood by many. This data pairing and shelving is sometimes called thematic analysis, a sorting and categorizing form. They used the expertise of a skilled data analyst for data analysis with data reduction, which helped them manage the data, especially with the sorting and organization of large quantities of qualitative data, word and phrase retrieval, and location. After being

sorted and categorized, the data were consolidated, and manageable stories were categorized into inspirational or empowering stories and stories of desperation or discouragement (Chabot & Chen, 2020).

On the other hand, data display is data organization through graphic organizers such as matrices, charts, and graphs, enabling the viewer to draw his conclusion. It is one step beyond data reduction, showing the data orderly and clearly showing the interrelationships of bits of information readily available to the viewer. At this stage, other higher-order categories could come beyond those discovered during the first step of data reduction (Cruickshank, 2017).

Drawing and testing of conclusions were the last phases of qualitative research. It involved considering what the analyzed data meant and assessing their implications for the issues. Integrally linked to conclusion drawing, verification required revisiting the data as often as possible to cross-check or validate these emerging conclusions. No definitive decisions were taken at this stage, but rather the knowledge was enabled to "speak for itself" through the emergence of conceptual categories and descriptive themes. These themes were typically implanted in a system of "make sense" linked ideas (Estrellan, Ferrariz, Lazona, Madres & Estrellan, 2021).

Concerning the relevant literature on the topic, the conceptual structure was interpreted to describe, with a hypothesis, the phenomenon being examined by the researcher with the assistance of two independent readers. Also, an analyst who is a field of study specialist created a triangulation team in which each analyzed the data and compared individual outcomes to gain a deeper and broader understanding of how each investigator viewed the issue (Klapproth, Federkeil, Heinschke & Jungmann, 2020).

Through using more than one person to gather the data, triangulation is used to ensure the validity of the data, thus increasing its reliability. If the results of the multiple investigators come to the same conclusion, the researcher ensures that the study's outcome is accurate. Before the researcher formed a logical case in the most obvious way possible, several alternative interpretations were considered so that others could judge the validity of the analysis. We considered what information to include and what to dispose of in analyzing the report. How the interpretation was written is simple and precise, correctly defining which data is a realistic explanation or the researcher's plain personal opinion. An exciting and understandable article' offers enough description to enable the reader to understand the basis for an interpretation and sufficient interpretation to enable the reader to understand the description (Lindner, 2021; Murphy, Louis & Smylie, 2017).

The researcher's narrative research would look for the "essential structure" of the study of data by questioning the participants who had encountered this phenomenon in detail about the pedagogical journey of a retirable public school teacher. Then the researcher extracted what she considered to be essential statements. Then she incorporated these themes into a narrative overview of the retirable public school pedagogical journey phenomenon.

➤ *Results*

This chapter presents the result of the study, which consists of the description of participants and analysis of themes through data categorization.

➤ *Participants*

The participants of this study were four (4) reliable teachers from General Santos City with their corresponding chosen pseudonyms based on their tribe identities.

- P1 is a female public school teacher, 63 years old with 20 years in service, residing in General Santos City.
- P2 is a female public school teacher, 64 years old with 21 years in service, residing in General Santos City.
- P3 is a male public school teacher, 64 years old with 23 years in service, residing in General Santos City.
- P4 is a female public school teacher, 63 years old with 20 years in service, residing in General Santos City.

➤ *Categorization of Data*

This part presents the analysis of themes through the categorization of data, including the humble beginnings and challenges, coping strategies, and the successful endeavor of reliable teachers.

Table 1 presents the humble beginnings and the challenges faced by the retirable teachers during their early years in the teaching profession and is further analyzed through thematic analysis. Table 2 presents the coping strategies faced by the retirable teachers through the following themes: support from teachers and admin, re-evaluation of teaching, and time management. Finally, Table 3 presents the successful endeavor faced by retirable teachers through the following themes: economic view and personal view.

The central theme consists of two cluster themes, work demands and personal demands. The participant's responses to the questions were the basis for establishing the themes.

➤ *Q1: Beginning Experiences*

• *Work Overload*

The result of the study showed that the humble beginnings and challenges encountered by the retirable teachers were loaded with work. Teaching is a beautiful yet challenging job. However, teachers are prone to burnout due to long teaching hours and a hefty workload.

Table 1 Central Theme: Humble Beginnings and the Challenges

Cluster Theme	Emergent Theme
<p>A. Work Demands</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. we compile large amounts of data 2. more paper works 3. cruel and rigorous principal 4. Fairly severe 5. discipline helps pupils 6. student's lack of discipline 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work overload 2. Rigorous Code of Conduct 3. Students' Discipline
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. family 8. problems at home 9. time for kids 10. disregard family 11. work at home 12. give the very best 13. our best is good enough 14. challenging our expectations and others' expectations 15. I have many things to prove 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Family 5. Self-Expectations

For instance, participants 1 and 2 reported dealing with several unnecessary papers. Participant 1, a teacher, has direct concerns about the students, so when the higher-ups in the division office ask for any reports, they compile large amounts of data from the BMIs to "Gulayan sa Paaralan" reports. From the grades to student growth indicators and collaboration, which teachers find challenging to do because it takes time away from preparing quality content for their students. While participant 2 emphasized that over the last two decades, as teaching has been her career, she encountered thousands of paper works, bureaucracy, and rebellious students.

• *Work Overload*

From these verbatim accounts of the participants, we can say that teaching has been more difficult as a career over the last two decades, with more paperwork, bureaucracy, and unruly students (Higton et al., 2017). Teachers have a lot on their minds, their attention is divided among many tasks, and they must think about many things (Yusof, 2021). It includes teaching unmotivated students, maintaining classroom discipline, dealing with general time pressures and workload demands being exposed to much change. They are also being evaluated by others, having complex relationships with colleagues, administration, and management, and being exposed to generally poor working conditions prospects. Teachers are subjected to various stressors (Li, Miao, Zeng, Tarimo, Wu & Wu, 2020).

Thus, workload has a great impact on the level of burnout faced by teachers. Workload has an impact on teachers' performance as well. It is recommended that every school administrator adheres to proper workload assignments.

• *Rigorous Code of Conduct*

The study also showed that the schools where the retireable public teachers were employed were observing a strict code of conduct. For instance, in participant 1, the principal sets the school's tone: a kind principal who is too liberal may lead to a school that lacks academic abilities,

whereas a cruel and rigorous principal may lead to a constricted school. While participant 2 reasoned that because elementary schools are the foundation of all children's education, the principal of a primary school must possess attributes that match the school's required goals. Additionally, a principal who is moderately severe about academic policies and integrity, for example, is vital if a school wishes to achieve academically.

With the verbatim accounts of the participants, being an effective school principal does not just mean empowering principals, giving them decision-making powers, clear objectives, and accountability. Principals are not merely classroom teachers taking another step up in a successful career ladder. It also demands a merit-based process to select competent professionals with the management and leadership skills needed. Moreover, they have to be trained in human resources management, the use of financial resources, and pedagogical leadership.

Additionally, a good principal constantly sets an example for others to follow. A principal should be upbeat, energetic, involved in the school's day-to-day operations, and listen to what his constituents say (Khalifa, Khalil, Marsh & Halloran, 2019). Teachers, staff workers, parents, students, and community members can benefit from an excellent leader. In stressful situations, he maintains his composure, thinks before acting, and prioritizes the school's requirements (Murphy, Louis & Smylie, 2017). Even though it is not part of his routine, a good principal fills holes as needed (Cruickshank, 2017).

Thus, the principal's duty encompasses many responsibilities, including leadership, teacher evaluation, and student discipline. Being an effective principal takes a lot of effort and time. However, an excellent principal maintains balance in all her tasks and strives to do what she believes is best for all her clients (Netolicky, 2020). Prioritizing, scheduling, and organization are all skills that a principal must master.

- *Students Discipline*

The study found out that in the early years of the retireable teachers, they are more concerned about students' discipline. This matter is essential because discipline helps pupils focus on their studies in the classroom. For instance, participants 3 and 4 reported the importance of learners' discipline. Participant 3 explained that imposing discipline trains children to focus in different ways throughout time. Additionally, a diligent student can stay focused on his objectives and prioritize his work. While participant 4 said that this kind of attention carries over into kids' lives outside of school, allowing them to maintain high standards in all aspects of their lives.

The verbatim accounts pointed out the importance of discipline. For it is an essential behavior in life. It is a character trait that is crucial for expressing many other attributes in life. For example, it refers to orderliness, which is essential for success. Additionally, it demonstrates respect for physical and moral laws in society. We all know that students are the future assets of the nation.

Furthermore, discipline lays a good foundation for being selective, independent, punctual, focused, encouraged & organized in life. Self-discipline is very important and lies in inhibiting our headlong desires and passions. Compared to those who disregard discipline, a disciplined child takes an interest in studies. He/she can choose subjects & his/ her career more easily & independently.

According to González, Etow & De La Vega (2019), school discipline is critical for students to achieve significant academic improvements, but many schools fall short in this area. Discipline is crucial in keeping children on target and safe in schools (Welsh & Little, 2018). In addition, effective school discipline methods assist kids in making sound decisions and staying on track with their education (McIntosh, Ellwood, McCall & Girvan, 2018).

Finally, school discipline should be prioritized because it leads to improved academic success found in the study by Gregory & Fergus (2017). Students who understand that they are responsible for their conduct inside and outside the classroom do better on academic tests. In addition, classroom discipline encourages students to stay focused while working with the teacher, reducing distractions and boosting information flow (Ritter, 2018).

- *Family Support*

The second cluster of the study, the personal needs, found that the family's demand was the humble beginnings and challenges encountered by the retireable teachers. Teaching is the noblest profession. However, according to participant 1, teachers are humans too, and have families to attend to. Although she reported that she is getting a life outside the department and has dedicated her life to that, she regretted that what matters most is her family. In support to the first statement, participant 2 finds it hard to be a teacher when a teacher is experiencing profound personal loss or severe problems at home.

In addition, it is difficult for her to be the teacher she wanted to be when she knew she lacked time for her kids. Meanwhile, participant 3 admitted she has problems at home and disregards her family. Instead of spending quality time with her family, she instead brings her paper works at home and does it at and on weekends. Additionally, participant 5 recalled that during all those years serving the department, one of her regrets was bringing her work home. She even let her kids check the quizzes of her students. Even her kids got clamored. She got angry and later realized that she should not have done it in the first place.

Based on the verbatim accounts of the participants, we can observe the conflicts between professions and personnel, which is the family demand. It is believed that home life and work life are necessary fields affecting one another. Work-family conflict occurs when the job causes specific difficulties in the individual's private life depending on its characteristics. For example, work-family conflict may originate from long working hours, less time at home, and an inflexible working schedule.

According to Fotiadis et al. (2019), the work-family balance is hard to sustain in modern industrial societies due to increasing demands at work and in family settings. Individuals are asked to manage multiple roles simultaneously, allocating their resources between work and family. Work-family conflict is a psychological phenomenon of imbalance between work and home life. The most common stressors conducive to a work-family conflict are job burnout, dissatisfaction, work stress, long working hours, and role conflict.

From this problem, a teacher should consider time management skills. Effective time management for teachers is essential. Good time management does not mean working harder but smarter. Concentrate on achieving results rather than just how busy you are at work. Time management can be achieved by balancing school and life outside work properly.

- *Self-Expectations*

The study also found out that the retireable public school teachers, in their humble beginnings, encountered problems that they always considered self-expectation. Meeting one's expectations for oneself is as simple as believing in her ability to rise to those expectations. An expectation is a firm belief that something will happen or be the case in the future. It is a belief that someone should or will achieve something.

Teachers are taught as instructors to have high expectations for their pupils in the hopes that these expectations will motivate them to do better than they would otherwise. Participant 1 imposed her expectations and those placed on her, which motivated her to succeed. Self-expectations and external expectations can be realistic or unrealistic, beneficial or harmful, according to participant 2. She added that these expectations could be the foundation for dreams, ideas, and possibilities when made plain and reasonable. Thus, expectations can nourish, inspire, and

assist teachers in showing up in their lives. Participant 1 explained that teachers could learn to change their expectations if they hold themselves or others to an unrealistic level.

According to Adebayo & Allen (2020), expectations become an issue when they divert teachers' attention from the present to focus only on the future. Alternatively, when they fill their heads with ideas about how things "should" be and feel, as well as how the people around them "should" act and feel. People's expectations of themselves are reflected in their "should," which they believe they are not meeting (Azariah, 2021). They reinforce the perception that they are not doing something when one will tell themselves they "should" be doing something. For example, if their internal dialogue says, "I should spend more time on these lesson plans," the implied conclusion is, "...but I am not." Teachers reinforce the negative, leading to guilt, dissatisfaction, or anxiety (Roose, Vantieghem, Vanderlinde & Van Avermaet, 2019).

While Gottfried & Ansari (2019) asserted that it is essential to keep an eye on instructors' expectations and preconceptions, they are also subjected to several other expectations. Many of them suffer greatly in their attempts to meet others' expectations. Expectations placed on them are frequently unclear and unspoken; instead, they form conclusions about what people expect of them. Expectations that need to be conveyed cannot be met. Others' expectations can be reasonable or unreasonable. Instructors are more likely to burn out when held to inappropriate standards. Giving instructors too much responsibility while they seek to meet or exceed expectations can lead to burnout (Oanh & Dat, 2018).

➤ Q2: Middle Experiences

• Support from Admin and Teachers

Table 2 presents the coping strategies for challenges faced by the retireable teachers during their teaching profession and is further analyzed through thematic analysis.

Table 2 Central Theme: (MIDDLE) Coping Strategies

Cluster Theme	Emergent Theme
A. Administrative Support 1. total mentoring 2. asking for help 3. thankful for the principal 4. support 5. sending us to workshops	Support from Teachers and Admin
B. Personal Appraisal 6. self-evaluate always 7. no teacher evaluation 8. do self-evaluation and re-evaluation 9. progress in teaching practices	Re-evaluation of Teaching Time Management

The central theme consists of two cluster themes, administrative support and personal appraisal. The participant's responses to the questions were the basis for establishing the themes.

Under this emergent theme, the participant retold her adjustments in her first years of teaching, and it took her five years before mastering her teaching skills. She did the trial and error, learning, relearning and unlearning, innovations, and strategizing to make her lessons understandable. However, what made her cope with the total mentoring and the help and assistance from her co-teachers? Additionally, participant 5 expressed how thankful she was that her principal saw the real problem and addressed it immediately. She was thankful that her first principal was supportive of professional development. That principal sent them to workshops and seminars for enhancement and capability building.

According to Warsame & Valles (2018), teaching is a lifelong learning process, and the most effective administrators understand how to encourage and support teacher development. Strong teacher-administrator connections, according to research, foster a positive school atmosphere, assist instructors in "buying in" to school policies and requirements, and eventually result in improved

classroom instruction (Redding & Nguyen, 2020). These connections also aid in reducing teacher burnout. Instructors benefit from sharing planning periods with colleagues who teach the same subject or grade level. Consider establishing a mentorship program or allowing novice instructors to shadow seasoned teachers in the classroom. One is improving the quality of education at one's school by doing so (Rakap et al., 2018).

• Re-evaluation of Teaching

One must self-evaluate to teach to find out one's strengths and weaknesses. Participant 2 does self-evaluation because she wanted to know if she did better for the current year or just made a little progress on worst, none. She also mentioned that she had yet to receive a teacher's evaluation in her first years of teaching, such as the IPCR and the like, so she needs to evaluate her teaching styles. Moreover, participant 3 reported that in her first years in service, she did self-evaluation and re-evaluation. It is in the hope that she made progress compared to the previous years.

Teacher evaluation can create a schism between administrators and teachers. Providing relevant, fair evaluations is critical regarding how administrators can help teachers (Benton & Young, 2018). It must always be kept in mind that the ultimate purpose of assessments is to assist

teachers in increasing their overall performance. Therefore, you must offer specific, constructive feedback that points teachers on the correct path (Wentworth et al., 2020).

In most cases, a teaching evaluation will be created with students as the key participants in the learning and teaching process. There is, nevertheless, a significant benefit to soliciting outside feedback. Feedback from colleagues and other employees, as well as feedback from students, allows for learner triangulation of diverse viewpoints, which improves the reliability and validity of the assessment process's conclusions (Wentworth et al., 2020).

The assessment results must be accessible to both the evaluators and the evaluated and the person(s) in charge of managing the educational provision's quality (Müller et al., 2017).

- *Time Management*

According to the participants, as a teacher, she should be aware that she must have excellent time management skills to complete the daily to-do list. As a result, time management is a crucial ability to possess. Furthermore,

teachers can use this in the classroom to maximize students' learning possibilities and personal lives because they can attend to both.

According to Adams & Blair (2019), time management is essential since it aids in prioritizing tasks. This means making a list of daily responsibilities and prioritizing them (Wolters, Won & Hussain, 2017). As time management allows the instructor to accomplish more in less time, she can figure out how much time she can devote to each task once she has mapped out her duties and time. It can also assist teachers in planning additional enjoyable activities in the classroom (Bradley, Merrifield, Miller, Lomonico, Wilson & Gleason, 2019).

- *Q3: Successful Experiences*

- *Economical View*

Table 3 presents the successful endeavor of the retireable teachers after meaningful years of tears, hardships, learnings, and touching lives on the education battlefield and is further analyzed through thematic analysis.

Table 3 Main Theme: (ENDING) Successful Endeavor

Cluster Theme	Emergent Theme
A. Disposition in Life 1. Financial Preparedness 2. Aspiring to have a simple way of life	Economical View
3. Believe in oneself 4. Future-oriented 5. Perseverance 6. Self-reliance	Personal View

The main theme consists of one cluster theme, the disposition in life. The participant's responses to the questions were the bases for establishing the theme.

In this part, the participants shared their dispositions after retirement. The first thing that came out was their preparations and anticipations regarding their economic status. Participant 3 reported that based on her tone, she is prepared because she has savings. She had saved when she was younger. While participant 4 invested in lands for her retirement; this could mean she is planning to live in a blissful place such as a farm. Meanwhile, participant 5 shared her belief that she can surpass whatever she needs to go through since she is used to simple living and already has the comfort of a home she owns.

According to Mansukhani & Santos (2021), pay, incentives, and work conditions were some of the most critical determinants of teachers' professional standing and self-esteem. The results of the survey reveal that changes in salary and working conditions have a commensurate impact on teacher status over time. However, most participating countries have deteriorated labor conditions in recent years (Kobakhidze, 2018). Teachers' incomes are different from those of professionals with similar skills, according to a small number of unions. Nonetheless, in this research, the

participants have prepared their finances for retirement and the way of living there foresee (Purwanto, et al., 2020).

- *Personal View*

The key reason retireable teachers were able to manage themselves and produce high achievements is that they had a positive outlook. The participant believed in financial preparedness, while participant 2 believed in simple living. They prefer to approach retiring with optimism, as do most participants. It talked about positive thinking, positive affirmations, and thought-based positivity, which fall under the umbrella of positive psychology (Steiner, Thomsen & Pillemer, 2017). These likable participants should not seek out tension and should not be forced to focus solely on minimizing their stress on retiring (Lindner, 2021).

Retirement can result in tension, worry, and dejection, even though it may be a welcome release after years of labor (Yunanto, 2020). Years of fantasizing about traveling the world, trying to spend more time with friends and family, engaging in pastimes like artwork, gardening, preparing food, playing golf, or fishing, or just unwinding and taking a break for a change are all common among teachers (Carstensen & DeLiema, 2018).

At first, getting away from the daily grind and a long commute, as well as workplace politics or a demanding principal, can seem like a huge relief. However, many new retirees discover that the novelty of being on "permanent vacation" wears off after a few months (Steiner, et al., 2017). A retired teacher may miss the feeling of identity, meaning, and purpose that came with her career, the structure it provided her days, and the social side of working with coworkers (Chabot & Chen, 2020).

A teacher may feel bored, aimless, and alone instead of free, relaxed, and fulfilled. She may be saddened by the loss of her previous life, concerned about how she will occupy her days, or concerned about the impact of staying at home all day on her relationship with her spouse or partner (Steiner, Thomsen & Pillemer, 2017). Some new retirees even suffer from mental health problems, including despair and anxiety (Jess, Hastings & Totsika, 2017).

Change is unavoidable, but dealing with it is rarely simple (Catalino & Boulton, 2021). Life can change at an ever-increasing rate as individuals get older. Children leave home, one loses friends and family members, physical and health issues grow, and retirement draws near. It is natural to feel diverse, often conflicting emotions in response to these changes (Jess, et al., 2017).

The daily routine, deadlines, demanding school principals, and the seven-to-five routine may be ended, but that does not imply a teacher's life will be stress- and anxiety-free after retirement. Professional stress can harm a teacher's health, mainly if she is dissatisfied with her career. Harmful stresses can also follow her into retirement (Tomasulo, 2020).

➤ Chapter Summary

In this chapter, three main themes were formulated based on the responses of the participants to the interview questions that retold the endeavor of the retirable teachers on their humble beginnings and challenges, coping strategies and successful and meaningful years of tears, hardships, learnings, touching lives in the battlefield of education.

The first main theme was the humble beginnings and the challenges. Under this theme were the two cluster themes: The work demands with emergent themes of work overload, rigorous code of conduct, and students' discipline. At the same time, the other cluster theme was the personal demands with an emergent theme of family and self-expectations.

The second main theme was the coping strategies with two cluster themes: Administrative support with emergent themes of support from teachers and admin and re-evaluation of teaching. The other cluster theme was personal appraisal, with one emergent theme, time management.

The last main theme was the successful endeavor with one cluster theme, the disposition of life. Under this theme were two emergent themes: economic view and personal view.

III. DISCUSSION

This part presents the discussion of significant findings, comparisons of findings to other existing literature, limitations, and overall significance of the study. Moreover, this study sought the journey of the retirable public school teachers during the pandemic.

IV. MAJOR FINDINGS

After an in-depth analysis of the data gathered, the following findings were drawn:

❖ Result 1

➤ *Humble Beginnings and the Challenges*

The main theme consists of two cluster themes, work demands and personal demands. The cluster theme work demands found three emergent themes, these were work overload, rigorous code of conduct, and students' discipline. While the cluster theme of personal demands, emergent themes were family and self-expectation were found.

The humble beginnings of the retirable public school teachers reminded them of having work overload. Most of the study participants found out that as they had started their teaching career, they were bombarded by tons of paper works plus had an academic overload unit that resulted in burnout.

According to Cacharon-Zagalaz et al. (2020), teachers are prone to burnout due to long teaching hours and a heavy workload. Teachers' need for relaxation is compromised by the excessive paperwork they must complete while teaching students, which may cause stress. Additionally, being under too much stress would lead to burnout from being unable to manage work demands.

Indeed, teaching is a noble but challenging profession. Teachers are prone to exhaustion because they work many hours and have a heavy workload. Moreover, it has been more difficult as a career over the last two decades, with more paperwork, bureaucracy, and unruly students (Higton, et al., 2017).

➤ *On Work Demands*

Knowing that the work overload of teachers affects their well-being and impacts students' well-being and learning, the government, through the school principal, must find ways to make teachers' workload more manageable.

The school observed a strict code of conduct; these were the experiences of the retirable public school teachers working during the pandemic. In addition, most participants noted how strict the school principal is in managing the school.

The school principal is one of the important figures. So, the teachers are expected to adhere to the command of their boss. Further, the principal's duties include leadership, teacher evaluation, and student discipline. Being an effective

principal takes a lot of effort and time (Jacob, Smith, Butler, Barnett, Grabovac, McDermott & Tully, 2020).

However, there will be times when rigorous management will be interpreted differently. That is why as the school principal, one should maintain his/her composure, think before acting, and prioritize what will benefit the school, especially the learners, teachers, parents, and the community.

According to Prado-Gasco et al. (2020), even though there did not seem to be much competition for scarce resources and the physical setting of the schools seemed to be in good shape, interpersonal and intergroup relations were the primary causes of interpersonal conflict. Further, management issues, personnel practices, work structure, employee development, cultural differences, and ethical concerns were significant causes of interpersonal conflicts.

Thus, a good leader constantly sets an example for others to follow, maintains a sense of balance in all tasks, and strives to do what she believes is best for all her clients (Netolicky, 2020). Prioritizing, scheduling, and organization are all skills that a principal must master. In addition, a principal should be upbeat and energetic, be involved in the school's day-to-day operations, and listen to what his constituents have to say.

Another study finding is that retireable teachers are concerned about students' discipline. Most of the participants during their early years in the service considered discipline among students.

In the classroom, discipline helps pupils stay focused on their studies. In this emergent theme, participants reported the importance of learners' discipline. A participant explained that imposing discipline trains children to focus in different ways throughout time. Additionally, a diligent student can stay focused on his objectives and prioritize his work. While other participants said that this kind of attention carries over into kids' lives outside of school, allowing them to maintain high standards in all aspects of their lives.

According to González, Etow & De La Vega (2019), school discipline is critical for students to achieve significant academic improvements, but many schools fall short in this area. Discipline is crucial in keeping children on target and safe in schools (Welsh & Little, 2018). In addition, effective school discipline methods assist kids in making sound decisions and staying on track with their education (McIntosh, et al., 2018).

One of the reasons why school discipline should be prioritized is because it leads to improving academic success found in the study by Gregory & Fergus (2017). Students who understand that they are responsible for their conduct inside and outside the classroom do better on academic tests. In addition, classroom discipline encourages students to stay focused while working with the teacher, reducing distractions and boosting information flow (Ritter, 2018).

➤ *On Personal Demands*

Other challenges encountered by the retireable teachers were the personal demands which narrowed down into the family and self-expectation demands. Most participants found a conflict between their work and family at the same time between self-expectation.

Teaching is the noblest profession. However, most participants mentioned that teachers are humans too, and have families to attend to. The conflict between work and family occurs when the needs and responsibilities of both are incompatible. In other words, it is harder to play the family role when you play the work role, and the reverse is true when you play both the family and the work role.

According to several studies, teachers' perspectives on professional concerns change as they age in their personal life and face new situations outside of the classroom (Chen, et al., 2021).

So, both individual and organizational initiatives can be used to manage work-family conflict. The personal initiatives that people can take to manage work-family conflict include finding and developing the proper social support at work and home, reducing or rearranging the time allocated to work or family demands—furthermore, downgrading the psychological significance of work or family roles, and developing coping mechanisms to lessen or better manage stress sources at work and home.

Finally, teachers are taught as instructors to have high expectations for their pupils in the hopes that these expectations will motivate them to do better than they would otherwise. In the study, most of the participants imposed their expectations and those placed on them.

According to the participant, self-expectations and external expectations can be realistic or unrealistic, beneficial or harmful. However, she added that these expectations could be the foundation for dreams, ideas, and possibilities when made plain and reasonable. Thus, expectations can nourish, inspire, and assist teachers in showing up in their lives.

❖ *Result 2*

➤ *Coping Strategies of the Retirable Teachers*

The main theme consists of two cluster themes, administrative support, and personal appraisal. The cluster theme administrative support consists of two emergent themes: the support from admin and teachers and two emergent themes, which are the support admin and teachers and the re-evaluation of teaching. On the other hand, the personal appraisal theme consists of time management.

➤ *On Administrative Support*

One of the coping strategies of the teachers during their early years was seeking support from the admin and teachers. Being of service to others is not only correct and beneficial to them, but it also makes us feel better about ourselves. Giving also strengthens our bonds with others,

fostering healthier communities and contributing to a more contented society.

Most of the retirable teachers during their early years found it difficult; most of them sought help from their co-teachers and asked for assistance from the school principal. Studies have shown that teachers go through different phases during their first year of teaching. They begin the year idealistically, thinking they can "change the world" by being just the right person who can inspire students to love learning. However, reality soon sets in. It is often accompanied by discouragement, personal illness, struggles to keep up with planning and grading, and the realization that some students do not come to school excited about being there.

According to Warsame & Valles (2018), teaching is a lifelong learning process, and the most effective administrators understand how to encourage and support teacher development. Strong teacher-administrator connections, according to research, foster a positive school atmosphere, assist instructors in "buying in" to school policies and requirements, and eventually result in improved classroom instruction (Redding & Nguyen, 2020). These connections also aid in reducing teacher burnout. It is sometimes very beneficial for instructors to share planning periods with colleagues who teach the same subject or grade level. Consider establishing a mentorship program or allowing novice instructors to shadow seasoned teachers in the classroom. One is improving the quality of education at their school (Rakap et al., 2018).

➤ *On Personal Appraisal*

Another coping strategy employed by the retirable teachers was a re-evaluation of teaching. Teacher evaluation is necessary for a successful school system, and research supports that "good teachers create substantial economic value." Therefore, ensuring teacher quality with a robust, fair, research-based, and well-implemented teacher evaluation system can strengthen the teacher workforce and improve their teaching abilities.

Further, to find out one's strengths and weaknesses, one must do a self-evaluation to teach. A participant did a self-evaluation because she wanted to be aware if she did better for the current year or just made a little progress on worst, none. Teacher evaluation can create a schism between administrators and teachers. Providing relevant fair evaluations is critical regarding how administrators can help teachers (Benton & Young, 2018).

Finally, one should consider time management. In the study, most participants employed time management to complete their tasks. Time management is the process of organizing and planning how to divide time between different activities. When one gets it right, one works more brilliantly, not more challenging, to get more done in less time, even when tight and pressures are high. As a result, the highest achievers manage their time exceptionally well.

Based on the verbatim accounts of the participants, time management can solve many schedules and problems. Therefore, practicing time management allows one to enhance performance and achieve goals with less effort and more effective strategies.

According to Adams & Blair (2019), time management is essential since it aids in prioritizing tasks. Please make a list of daily responsibilities and prioritize them. Then, prioritize crucial ones (Wolters, Won & Hussain, 2017). So as time management allows the instructor to accomplish more in less time. She can figure out how much time she can devote to each task once she has mapped out her duties and time. It can also assist teachers in planning additional enjoyable activities in the classroom (Bradley, et al., 2019).

❖ *Result 3*

➤ *Successful Endeavor of the Retirable Teachers*

The main theme consists of one cluster theme, the disposition in life, with two emergent themes, economic and personal views. The study found out that the participants came up with the disposition in life about economic and personal views. The first thing that came out was their preparations and anticipations regarding their economic status. During their early years in service, they have saved to be financially prepared in times of their retirement.

According to Mansukhani & Santos (2021), pay, incentives, and work conditions were some of the most important determinants of teachers' professional standing and self-esteem. The results of the survey reveal that changes in salary and working conditions have a commensurate impact on teacher status over time. However, most participating countries have deteriorated labor conditions in recent years (Kobakhidze, 2018). Teachers' incomes are different from those of professionals with similar skills, according to a small number of unions. Nonetheless, in this research, the participants have prepared their finances for their retirement and the way of living there foresee (Purwanto, et al., 2020).

➤ *On Disposition in Life*

Based on the verbatim accounts of the participants, financial stability brings a host of great benefits; it requires hard work, motivation, intentionality, and sometimes backtracking to get there. Having in the service as a teacher, one should be wise on how to spend the money, for at the end of the day, when retirement came, just like the study participants, they were prepared and ready to step into another journey.

Lastly, the study found that the retirable teachers have a disposition on their personal views. The right outlook on life improves our outlook, gives us a more positive, upbeat outlook, and greases the wheels of our relationships with others. When we approach life with a positive, open-minded perspective, everyone wins.

The critical reason retireable teachers were able to manage themselves and produce high achievements was that they had a positive outlook. In addition, most participants believed in financial preparedness and approached retiring with optimism.

Positive viewpoints and attitudes make it easier to handle life's daily responsibilities. It makes staying optimistic and clear of worries and pessimistic thoughts simpler. It will help one make positive changes and make their life happier, more successful, and brighter.

According to some studies, personality traits like optimism and pessimism can impact various aspects of one's well-being and well-being, particularly in teachers close to retiring. Positive thinking usually comes with optimism and is crucial to effective stress management. Moreover, effective stress management is associated with many health benefits.

➤ *Implications for Practice*

Based on the journey and insights from the five informants of this study, the researcher sought to seek the realities of being the retireable public school teachers who worked during the pandemic. Furthermore, the researcher believed that this undertaking would be a significant source of information not only for the retireable teachers but also for all the teachers in the public school.

The humble beginnings and challenges encountered by the retireable teachers were the work demands with emergent themes of work overload, strict code of conduct, students' discipline, and personal demands with emergent themes of family and self-expectations.

The findings implied that there is still a need for more teachers to lessen the workload of the teachers. In addition, school principals were performing their duties and responsibilities to improve the school. Furthermore, during the early years of the retireable teachers, they observed discipline among students; this also implies that students needed to be well-rounded in terms of self-discipline. Further, the findings also implied that teachers struggled to balance work and family, and every teacher has expectations regarding teaching and learning.

According to Yuniastari & da Silva (2022), public school teachers' workload is limited to teaching and other non-teaching tasks. However, teachers are forced to have many additional roles and responsibilities due to workload.

Teacher's expectations create a cycle. Teachers' actions are influenced by their beliefs about their student's potential for growth, which in turn affects those students' growth and reinforces those teachers' beliefs about those students (Zhou, 2018).

The coping strategies employed by the retireable teachers were administrative support with emergent themes of support from teachers and admin, re-evaluation of teaching, and personal appraisal with one emergent theme, time management.

These findings implied that new teachers often find teaching difficult; however, it is also expected that there are still kind teachers who will always be willing to offer a hand to make those new teachers in the field of teaching-learning. In teaching, a teacher should not stick to old knowledge or strategies; one should continually assess their performance to see their progress and compare it with previous performances. Further, the study also implied that as a teacher, one should have time management to avoid stress and to make all tasks or goals accomplished.

According to Jacob et al. (2020), beginning educators also require assistance in approaching new tasks and resolving specific issues that arise during instruction. Even the most fundamental teaching tasks, such as creating lesson plans, preparing remarks for back-to-school night, choosing what goes in the grade book to establish grades at the end of nine weeks, and organizing parent-teacher conferences, are typically undertaken for the first time by new teachers. Beginners do not have to reinvent the wheel for such commonplace activities with the assistance of an experienced teacher; they can be guided in effectively planning and completing these tasks. Veterans can also discuss the occasionally unstated expectations that accompany these duties in a particular school, district, or state.

According to Adams & Blair (2019), effective time management is associated with excellent academic or work performance and lower anxiety levels in students or teachers. However, many students/ teachers need help balancing their studies and daily lives.

The successful endeavor of the teachers was more on their dispositional life after retirement, which is about economic and personal views. These findings implied that teachers are so concerned about life after retirement; that they always ensure they are optimistic.

Recent studies have suggested that account-style plans should replace teacher pensions because they are unfair to most teachers. However, most teachers today prepare for a secure retirement (Adams & Blair, 2019; Balang, 2021).

Finally, in this study, no generalization could be drawn from the revealed experiences of the five participants based on the outcomes of this study. As a result, further research relevant to this study should be done at other research sites and with other purposively selected participants to validate and compare the noteworthy findings. Furthermore, some future researchers may perform related studies to see if there are any significant differences in how participants achieve success in their professional careers.

➤ *Implications for Future Research*

The result of the study could only generate experiences from retirable public-school teachers in General Santos City. Hence, another research of the same kind may be conducted in other municipalities or divisions to validate this study's results.

Moreover, further research may be done to re-interview some participants to validate their feelings, views, and perceptions regarding retirement.

Finally, other research may also be conducted from the perspective of other retirable teachers' diverse information to have a broader sense and understanding of the views, challenges, and coping mechanisms of retirable teachers.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The result of this study served to be an insight into the journey of the retirable public school teachers during the pandemic. The study found that teachers' humble beginnings and encountered challenges were more on work overload, rigorous code of conduct, students' discipline, the conflict between work and family, and self-expectation. Having these challenges, teachers employed strategies such as asking for help from other teachers and the admin, reflecting on the teaching, and time management. Further, retirable teachers were more concerned about life disposition on economic and personal views.

The pandemic has recalibrated how teachers divide their time between teaching, engaging with students, and administrative tasks. Moreover, it has not only affected the mental state of students since teachers have also accumulated a high level of stress since the beginning of the crisis.

The devastating effects of the pandemic are not only limited to reliable teachers. Everyone can be infected by the virus even younger teachers. With this, the Department of Education (DepEd) should find ways to improve the assistance and protection among teachers not only in public schools but also in private ones.

The DepEd should address the teachers' workload during the pandemic and in the standard education setting. With this, teachers' well-being will be protected, and they will have more time for their personal life, especially among their families.

Despite their difficulties, public school teachers are expected to provide the highest possible standard of instruction. Because they made a significant contribution to educating front-line workers, therefore, it is crucial to safeguard public teachers' welfare, consider their diverse professions, and pay attention to their psychosocial well-being, especially during this pandemic.

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