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**CAREER ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND THEIR ROLE IN EMPLOYEE RETENTION STRATEGIES: CASE OF SAINT MICHAEL COLLEGE OF CARAGA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Employee retention remains a critical concern in private higher education institutions where limited career advancement pathways may influence workforce stability. Anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, this study examined the role of career advancement opportunities in shaping employee retention strategies at Saint Michael College of Caraga. Specifically, it investigated professional development and professional career progression as motivator factors alongside compensation and benefits, job satisfaction, working conditions, and work engagement as retention mechanisms. An explanatory sequential mixed-method design was employed, wherein quantitative data were first collected from 115 teaching and non-teaching personnel using a validated 4-point Likert scale survey and analyzed through frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation, followed by qualitative written interviews subjected to thematic analysis to contextualize the statistical results. Findings revealed that career advancement opportunities and retention strategies were perceived to operate at a moderate extent, with professional development ranking highest among advancement indicators and working conditions emerging as the most influential retention factor. Correlational analysis indicated that age was the only demographic variable significantly associated with retention strategies ( $p < .05$ ), while gender, type of personnel, years of service, salary, and educational*

*attainment showed no significant relationship. Qualitative results further identified fair and motivating salaries, workforce well-being, and clear career trajectory planning as critical determinants of employees' intention to stay. The study affirms the complementary influence of hygiene and motivator factors in sustaining employee commitment and underscores the need for integrated institutional retention frameworks in private higher education settings.*

## **KEYWORDS**

Career Advancement Opportunities, Professional Development, Professional Career Progression, Retention, Compensation and Benefits, Job Satisfaction, Working Condition.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

Nowadays, employees are increasingly focused on growing in their careers. They explore opportunities for advancement within their firms (Thwin, P. et al., 2023). Career opportunities had a significant positive effect on employee retention. The success of one's career in employment depends on both the individual and the opportunities available, such as professional development and career progression within an organization. Employees are considered the most essential resource in a company, often referred to as the lifeblood of an organization (Pagayan, 2021). Therefore, appropriate employee retention strategies should be implemented to retain employees and ensure their alignment with the organization's vision (Almari et al., 2019).

In the case of Saint Michael College of Caraga, employee retention is a top concern. Previous studies have shown a moderate influence on factors such as compensation, promotion, job satisfaction, work environment, and career opportunities on employee turnover (Dalde et al., 2023). The attrition rate for personnel in the school year 2021–2022 was recorded at 16.1%. Perceived career opportunities outside the organization and limited career advancement within the institution have contributed to employees' intentions to leave (Stahl et al., 2019). This highlights the importance of addressing career growth pathways to improve retention rates. Many studies have linked employee career advancement opportunities to retention in the workplace (Bhaumik et al., 2023). Researchers have explored various factors affecting employee retention, such as compensation and benefits, job satisfaction, work engagement, working conditions, recognition, and career development opportunities.

Furthermore, implementing effective retention strategies has been emphasized as crucial for organizational improvement. Despite these studies, there remains a need to further investigate the impact of career advancement opportunities on employee retention in specific institutional settings, identifying gaps that may not have been sufficiently addressed in previous research.

## **General Objective**

This study aimed to determine the role of career advancement opportunities in retention strategies. By assuming a strong correlation between career advancement and retention, this research seeks to provide insights into how institutions can address employee concerns and improve workplace conditions. The findings will enable Saint Michael College of Caraga to develop strategies for retaining competent educators and enhancing institutional stability. Specifically, it aimed to address the following questions below:

1. What are the career advancement opportunities given by SMCC to its teaching and non-teaching personnel in terms of:
  - 1.1 professional development;
  - 1.2 professional career progression?
  
2. What are the retention strategies given by the SMCC admin to retain the services of SMCC teaching and non-teaching personnel in terms of:
  - 2.1 compensation and benefits;
  - 2.2 job satisfaction
  - 2.3 working conditions; and
  - 2.4 work engagement?
  
3. Is there a significant relationship between career advancement and retention strategies at Saint Michael College of Caraga?
  
4. What are the other factors that are deemed necessary for employees to stay in the institution?

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study is anchored on Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1962), also known as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory. The framework guides the examination of career advancement opportunities and their role in retention strategies. It explains how motivators—particularly the possibility of growth and advancement—interact with retention-related factors such as job satisfaction, compensation and benefits, work engagement, and working conditions to influence an employee's decision to stay in his or her present organization.

Herzberg's theory posits that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction arise from two distinct sets of factors: motivators and hygiene factors. Hygiene factors, such as salary, working conditions, supervision, company policies, and job security, prevent dissatisfaction but do not directly create satisfaction. Their absence leads to dissatisfaction, but their presence merely stabilizes the work environment. In contrast, motivators—including recognition, achievement, responsibility, the work itself, and personal growth—are intrinsic

to the job and directly contribute to satisfaction and motivation. Thus, hygiene factors maintain stability, while motivators drive engagement, performance, and retention.

In the context of retention, organizations must first address hygiene factors to prevent dissatisfaction. Competitive compensation, fair supervision, sound administrative policies, and safe working conditions create a foundation for employee stability. However, preventing dissatisfaction alone is insufficient for retaining talented employees. Organizations must also provide meaningful motivators that enhance fulfillment and commitment. Career advancement opportunities align with the motivator component of Herzberg's theory, particularly the possibility of growth and advancement, which allows employees to develop new skills, acquire knowledge, assume greater responsibility, and progress in their careers (Herzberg et al., 1993; Herzberg, 2003).

Motivators in the theory include: (1) the possibility of growth and advancement, enabling professional development and career progression; (2) the work itself, referring to satisfaction derived from meaningful tasks; (3) responsibility, involving autonomy and decision-making authority; (4) recognition for achievement, through feedback and acknowledgment; and (5) achievement, reflected in quality performance. These intrinsic factors strengthen job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Hygiene factors, on the other hand, are extrinsic and include interpersonal relationships, salary and benefits, company policies and administration, supervision in terms of competence and fairness, and working conditions involving the physical environment and facilities. Although these factors do not create satisfaction, they are essential in preventing dissatisfaction and turnover intentions. A strategic balance between motivators and hygiene factors increases employees' willingness to remain in the organization.

This framework assumes a strong relationship between career advancement opportunities and retention strategies. By providing structured growth pathways and advancement opportunities, organizations enhance intrinsic motivation, which leads to higher job satisfaction and retention. Empirical support affirms this position. Abdulkhamidova (2021) emphasized the theory's relevance in explaining employee motivation, highlighting recognition, achievement, and growth as critical drivers. Indeed (2023) underscored the importance of job advancement opportunities in increasing productivity and motivation. Similarly, Washington (2020) reported that leaders who integrate compensation, conducive work environments, training and development, job satisfaction, and engagement—consistent with Herzberg's framework—successfully retain high-talent employees.

Grounded in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, this study conceptualizes career advancement opportunities as key motivators influencing retention strategies. The framework provides a systematic lens for analyzing how intrinsic and extrinsic workplace factors shape employees' decisions to stay in their present organization.

## Literature Review

### Career Advancement Opportunities as Retention Drivers

Career advancement is consistently linked to retention because it communicates long-term investment in employees and creates psychological attachment to the institution (Bhaumik et al., 2023; Thwin et al., 2023; Zhu & Song, 2022). In educational organizations, advancement opportunities influence whether employees see the institution as a place for sustained professional identity-building rather than as a temporary workplace (Booth et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2019). Anchored in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, advancement-related factors are often framed as "motivators" that foster satisfaction and commitment, increasing the likelihood of remaining in the organization (Herzberg, 1962; Main, 2023).

Professional development (PD) is commonly conceptualized as structured learning support—training, seminars, mentoring, and continuing education—designed to improve competence and performance (Noe, 2023; Parveen et al., 2022). Across studies and organizational reports, PD is repeatedly associated with stronger motivation and reduced turnover intention because it signals organizational support and enables employees to remain competitive and confident in their roles (The Conference Board, 2022; Morris et al., 2022; Dewa, 2020). In schools and colleges, PD strengthens teacher capacity, which improves institutional performance and reinforces employees' sense of professional efficacy, thereby supporting retention (Booth et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2019). However, equity in access to PD is also a key issue—where perceived unequal opportunities can undermine morale and attachment (The Conference Board, 2022).

Career progression is typically defined as movement to roles with higher responsibility, status, and, frequently, compensation—often through promotion systems or structured pathways (Corpuz, 2013; Parvin & Kabir, 2021). In educational workplaces, progression is not only vertical; advancement may include lateral role enrichment, expanded responsibilities, and parallel mobility that supports professional growth without necessarily leaving core teaching or service functions (Moalusi & Jones, 2019). Evidence suggests that unclear promotion policies and limited pathways can weaken job satisfaction and raise intentions to leave, particularly among high-performing staff who expect transparent progression mechanisms (Booth et al., 2021; Raduan & Na, 2020). When institutions provide credible and fair advancement systems, employees are more likely to develop long-term commitment and invest in organizational goals (Thwin et al., 2023; Zhu & Song, 2022).

## Retention Strategies and HR Systems in Institutions

Employee retention is not a single strategy but a coordinated set of organizational practices aimed at sustaining satisfaction, commitment, and continued employment (Belete, 2018; Singh, 2019). Turnover is repeatedly described as costly because organizations must replace, retrain, and reintegrate new employees, disrupting continuity and productivity (Dewa A. S. et al., 2020; Onoja & Babatunde, 2023). Within this broader HR context, educational institutions typically use multiple retention levers—financial and non-financial—to maintain stability and performance (Nankervis et al., 2023). These levers align with Herzberg’s distinction: *hygiene factors* reduce dissatisfaction, while *motivators* enhance satisfaction and engagement (Herzberg, 1962).

Compensation and benefits remain foundational because they influence perceptions of fairness, security, and organizational value (Rao, 2022; Vanderwerf, 2022; Wright et al., 2023). Studies indicate that inadequate or inequitable pay structures reduce commitment and increase turnover intention, especially when employees perceive mismatch between effort and reward (Hanai & Pallangyo, 2020; Msisiri & Juma, 2018; Rakhra, 2018). At the strategic level, compensation systems are framed as part of talent attraction and retention that supports organizational competitiveness (Dirks, 2020; Nankervis et al., 2023; Smirnova, 2022). Yet compensation alone is often insufficient: integrated packages combining financial rewards with recognition and career development show stronger retention effects (Dong et al., 2023; Indeed, 2023). Some evidence also links higher wages with productivity, though retention outcomes are more reliable when pay is paired with supportive conditions and growth opportunities (Saleh, 2023; Sorn et al., 2023).

Job satisfaction is a core retention variable reflecting how employees evaluate their roles, recognition, advancement prospects, and support systems (Mratinkovic et al., 2023; Ramazan, 2023). In Herzberg’s framework, hygiene conditions prevent dissatisfaction, but true satisfaction is strengthened by motivators such as recognition and advancement (Herzberg, 1962; Main, 2023). Leadership support is repeatedly emphasized: administrators’ supportive behaviors correlate with teachers’ job satisfaction and well-being, reinforcing institutional attachment (Ramazan, 2023). Job satisfaction also interacts with organizational commitment—employees who feel aligned with institutional goals and supported by policies are more likely to remain (Suryani, 2018).

Working conditions include the physical environment, workload demands, interpersonal relations, organizational transparency, and job design. Job design strategies—such as job rotation and job enrichment—are argued to increase motivation and reduce withdrawal behaviors (Appelbaum, 2020). Evidence in education suggests that conducive environments and attention to staff well-being are especially critical for retaining employees, including those in high-demand contexts (Beng et al., 2020). Work-life balance is also increasingly linked with satisfaction and performance, with implications for retention among younger cohorts and modern workforces (Waworuntu et al., 2022; Westover, 2023).

Work engagement is described as a positive and persistent work-related mindset characterized by energy, dedication, and absorption (Shibiti, 2020). Engagement is strengthened when employees perceive career growth and organizational support; it also functions as a pathway through which HR practices translate into retention outcomes (Zhu & Song, 2022). In education, engaged employees are more likely to sustain effort and remain, particularly when work meaning, growth, and support are visible (Shibiti, 2020; Zhu & Song, 2022).

### **Other Factors that Sustain Employees' Decision to Stay**

Beyond advancement and formal retention strategies, literature highlights additional determinants shaping employees' decision to remain. Organizational commitment is a recurring predictor of staying, reflecting psychological attachment and willingness to continue membership (Suryani, 2018). Perceived fairness and justice—particularly in pay, benefits, and advancement processes—also influence retention by shaping trust and long-term reciprocity (Msisiri & Juma, 2018; Rakhra, 2018). Leadership and relational climate matter: flexibility, trust, and supportive management practices contribute to sustained well-being and reduce intentions to leave (Ramazan, 2023; Westover, 2023). Additionally, retention patterns are often complex and may involve mediating or moderating variables that shape the strength of relationships between career opportunities and retention outcomes, reinforcing the need for context-specific institutional evidence (Alkahtani, 2018). In sum, the literature supports a multi-factor retention model where financial incentives, advancement structures, working conditions, and psychosocial factors jointly determine whether employees remain (Singh, 2019; Nankervis et al., 2023).

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Research Design**

This study utilized a mixed-method approach using an explanatory sequential design, wherein quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data to further explain and elaborate the quantitative results.

The quantitative phase employed a descriptive-correlational design to determine the relationship between career advancement and retention strategies among teaching and non-teaching personnel of Saint Michael College of Caraga (SMCC). The study was anchored on Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory to determine career advancement and its role in retention strategies. A standardized and modified questionnaire served as the primary tool for gathering quantitative data.

After the quantitative analysis, a qualitative phase using written interviews was conducted to provide deeper explanations of the statistical findings. The qualitative data

were used to clarify patterns, relationships, and significant results identified in the quantitative phase.

### **Research Locale**

The study was conducted at Saint Michael College of Caraga, located in the Municipality of Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, along Atupan Street beside Saint Michael the Archangel Parish Church, near Versoza Park and the Nasipit Municipal Hall.

The College of Tourism, Hospitality, Business and Management offers programs such as Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) major in Human Resource Management, Marketing Management, Financial Management, Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship, Bachelor of Public Administration, Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management, and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management.

### **Research Respondents**

The respondents consisted of teaching and non-teaching personnel of SMCC. A purposive sampling technique was used. The total population was 115 personnel, composed of 76 teaching personnel (66.09%) and 39 non-teaching personnel (33.91%).

Among the teaching personnel, 49 were females and 27 were males. Among the non-teaching personnel, 24 were females and 12 were males. The majority of respondents were teaching personnel. Selected participants were also invited to participate in written interviews during the qualitative phase to elaborate on the quantitative findings.

### **Research Instrument**

The study utilized a modified survey questionnaire based on “Factors Influencing Employee Turnover in Saint Michael College of Caraga” (Dalde et al., 2023) and a self-made instrument. The questionnaire underwent validation to ensure reliability and accuracy.

The instrument consisted of four parts: (1) demographic profile, (2) professional development and progression, (3) retention strategies, and (4) open-ended questions on additional factors influencing employee retention. Responses were measured using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

### **Ethical Standards**

Ethical standards were strictly observed. The purpose of the study was clearly explained to participants prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was secured. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained. Data collected were used solely for research purposes, and respondents were given the freedom to withdraw at any time.

## Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection followed the explanatory sequential mixed-method design.

First, the researchers secured permission from the Human Resource Office through a formal letter of request. Upon approval, the quantitative phase was conducted. Survey questionnaires were distributed to teaching and non-teaching personnel, and respondents were given adequate time to complete them. The collected data were checked, coded, tabulated, and subjected to statistical analysis using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

After analyzing the quantitative results, the qualitative phase was conducted to explain and contextualize significant findings. Selected respondents participated in written interviews. The responses were collected and transcribed verbatim.

The qualitative data underwent systematic coding. The researchers organized responses into meaningful units, identified recurring patterns, and grouped them into categories. Thematic analysis was then applied to generate themes that explained the statistical results. Data reduction, categorization, theme development, and interpretation were conducted to ensure consistency and credibility.

Finally, the findings from both phases were integrated. The qualitative themes were used to support, explain, and clarify the quantitative results, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the role of career advancement in employee retention strategies.

## Statistical Treatment

The following statistical tools were employed:

- **Frequency and Percentage** to describe the profile of respondents.
- **Weighted Mean** to determine the level of retention strategies.
- **Pearson Product Moment Correlation** to determine the significant relationship between respondents' profile and retention strategies.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, type of personnel, years of service, salary, and educational attainment?

Table 1. Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Age

Age	F	%	Rank
25–34 years old	78	67.8	1
35–54 years old	29	25.2	2

55 years old and above	8	7.0	3
Total	115	100	

Table 1 shows the age profile of the respondents. As viewed from the table, ages 25 to 34 years old have a frequency of 78, which is 67.8 percent of the total population and ranks 1. Ages from 35 to 54 years old have a frequency of 29, representing 25.2 percent, and rank 2. The last in rank are those aged 55 years old and above with a frequency of 8 or 7.0 percent. Therefore, most respondents are young employees aged 25 to 34 years old.

According to Medallon (2020), Millennials, those currently in their 20s and 30s, were projected to comprise almost half of the entire global workforce by 2020. As the largest generation in the workplace, this demographic dominance explains why a significant portion of the institution’s personnel belongs to this age bracket.

Furthermore, as people get older, they experience significant changes in a wide variety of domains that also affect their work outcomes. Among others, with increasing age, individuals lose fluid intellectual abilities but gain knowledge and experience. Gradual changes in personality, affect, and emotion can also be observed. At work, overall, older individuals report more positive job attitudes, experience fewer negative emotions, and describe their job environment more favorably than their younger counterparts do (Kollman et al., 2020). This implies that while the institution is composed mostly of young employees, older employees may demonstrate stronger job stability and positive work attitudes.

## Gender

Table 3. Distribution Of The Respondents In Terms Of Gender

Gender	F	%	Rank
Male	42	36.5	2
Female	73	63.5	1
Total	115	100	

Table 3 presents the gender profile of the respondents. Females rank 1 with a frequency of 73 or 63.5 percent of the total population, while males have a frequency of 42 or 36.5 percent and rank 2. The majority of the respondents are female.

Many studies state that women are enormously over-represented in the educational setting (Dhone & Katekhaye, 2023). This finding is consistent with the institutional context of Saint Michael College of Caraga, where teaching roles are primarily occupied by female personnel.

Moreover, men and women behave differently when seeking career advancement and in their career aspirations. For men, advancement is linked to performance, whereas women use a multi-pronged approach focusing on preparing for career success and building role competency. Differences in strategy for advancement mean men will actively

engage in behaviors to advance even when they do not have the knowledge or experience to perform in the new role. Conversely, women seek to feel competent in a work role prior to seeking it out (Hartman & Barber, 2020). This may have implications for career progression initiatives and retention strategies within the institution.

Table 4. Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Type of Personnel

Type of Personnel	F	%	Rank
Teaching	76	66.1	1
Non-Teaching	39	33.9	2
Total	115	100	

Table 4 shows that 76 respondents (66.1%) are teaching personnel, while 39 respondents (33.9%) are non-teaching personnel. The majority of respondents are teaching personnel.

School personnel can be divided into two categories: teachers and non-teaching staff (Meador, 2021). Every stakeholder of an institution is significant in their own way. However, teaching staff directly influence student learning, while non-teaching personnel ensure that everything is clean, organized, recorded, and readily available (Bordia, 2022).

Most of the respondents belong to the teaching category, which is significant since teaching personnel often attribute employee retention to career development factors such as institutional support for staff career growth, employee promotions by merit, and a clear career path definition (Escuredo, 2019).

Table 5. Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Years of Service

Years of Service	F	%	Rank
0–1 year	20	17.4	3
More than 1–3 years	45	39.1	1
More than 3–15 years	40	34.8	2
16–20 years and above	10	8.7	4
Total	115	100	

Table 5 shows that 45 respondents (39.1%) have served more than a year to 3 years, ranking 1. Forty respondents (34.8%) have served more than 3 years to 15 years, ranking 2. Twenty respondents (17.4%) served 0–1 year, ranking 3, while 10 respondents (8.7%) served 16 years and above, ranking 4.

Therefore, most respondents have more than a year to 3 years of experience. According to Graham (2020), beginning teachers quickly improve during their initial years in the field. However, Suryani (2018) found that individuals who have been in an organization for years would willingly sacrifice their lives to meet the organization’s objective and are more likely to stay due to stability and familiarity.

Table 6. Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Salary

Salary	F	%	Rank
Less than Php 15,000	30	26.1	2
Php 15,001–Php 20,000	43	37.4	1
Php 20,001–Php 25,000	26	22.6	3
Php 25,001–Php 30,000	10	8.7	4
Php 30,001 above	6	5.2	5
Total	115	100	

Most respondents (37.4%) earn Php 15,001–Php 20,000 monthly. Compensation significantly influences employee retention. Offering competitive base salaries demonstrates that the organization values employees’ time and energy (Crail, 2023). Salary heavily influences employee performance and retention, as raising salaries increases take-home earnings and satisfaction (Saleh, 2023).

Lower salaries may affect effort and quality of work and make it difficult to retain good teachers who may seek better income elsewhere. This highlights the importance of fair and competitive compensation in sustaining retention.

Table 7. Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	F	%	Rank
High School Level	0	0	5.5
High School Graduate	0	0	5.5
College Level	6	5.2	3.5
Bachelor’s Degree	53	46.1	1
Master’s Degree with units	50	43.5	2
Doctorate Degree with units	6	5.2	3.5
Total	115	100	

Most respondents (46.1%) hold a Bachelor’s degree, followed closely by 43.5% with Master’s degree units. According to Lee and Lee (2020), 88% of large school districts offer more pay to teachers with master’s degrees, which explains the motivation for academic upgrading.

However, educational advancement does not necessarily equate to dissatisfaction. Teachers who did not pursue graduate studies may still demonstrate perseverance and enthusiasm in their teaching career (Fabelico & Afalla, 2020). Nevertheless, advanced qualifications remain linked to professional growth and potential career advancement.

Overall, the profile of respondents indicates a young, predominantly female, teaching workforce with early-career tenure, moderate salary levels, and strong undergraduate educational attainment. These demographic characteristics provide important context for analyzing career advancement opportunities and retention strategies within the institution.

**2. What are the career advancement opportunities given by SMCC to its teaching and non-teaching personnel in terms of professional development and professional career progression?**

Table 8. Extent on the Career Advancement Opportunities Toward Professional Development Discrimination

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. The school offers opportunity to enhance my competencies.	3.42	Agree	Moderate Extent	2
2. The school supports me to pursue further studies and advance my career.	3.43	Agree	Moderate Extent	1
3. The school provides seminars and trainings to improve my expertise.	3.37	Agree	Moderate Extent	3.5
4. The school motivates me to share my expertise with colleagues in the workplace.	3.37	Agree	Moderate Extent	3.5
5. The school advances an opportunity for a higher position with a proportional salary.	3.14	Agree	Moderate Extent	5
Average Weighted Mean	3.35	Agree	Moderate Extent	

Table shows the extent of the career advancement opportunities toward professional development discrimination. The statement that the school supports me in pursuing further studies and advancing my career has a weighted mean of 3.43, with the verbal description of agree and a verbal interpretation of moderate extent ranked 1. Also, The school advances an opportunity for a higher position with a proportional salary, has a weighted mean of 3.14 with the verbal description of agreement and verbal interpretation of moderate extent, and is the rank 5.

Based on the data shown above, professional development plays a crucial role in retaining qualified staff, providing essential growth opportunities, and improving worker satisfaction (Parsons, 2022). This development increases staff efficacy and feelings of competency and bolsters motivation and a sense of belonging within the organization. By offering career advancement opportunities, employees can be knowledgeable about the progression of technology, the core values of the organization, and their own work experience, thanks to professional development opportunities (Ejaz et al., 2023).

To sum up, the career advancement opportunities toward professional development discrimination have a weighted mean of 3.35, with the verbal description of Agree and the verbal interpretation of Moderate Extent. This coincides with Kilag et al.'s (2023) study that organizations that provide training and educational facilities for their employees create a supportive environment that promotes learning and collaboration. Such an environment encourages employees to be more dedicated to their roles and the organization.

As Dewa (2020) suggests, employees who receive proper education and training and work in a positive workplace environment with their colleagues are more likely to increase their productivity. Therefore, career advancement opportunities are beneficial for individual professional growth and contribute to the organization's overall success and efficiency.

Table 9. Extent on the Career Advancement Opportunities Toward Professional Career Progression Discrimination

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. The school provides a fair and just promotion.	3.19	Agree	Moderate Extent	4
2. The school has a clear and systematic promotion policy.	3.17	Agree	Moderate Extent	5
3. The school performance appraisal is fair and just to all employees.	3.21	Agree	Moderate Extent	2
4. The school career goals are apparent.	3.27	Agree	Moderate Extent	1
5. The school provides me with a clear career path.	3.20	Agree	Moderate Extent	3
Average Weighted Mean	3.21	Agree	Moderate Extent	

Table shows the extent of the career advancement opportunities toward professional career progression discrimination. The highest rank indicator is the statement The school career goals are apparent, has a weighted mean of 3.27 with a verbal description of Agree and verbal interpretation of moderate extent; also, The school has a clear and systematic promotion policy has a weighted mean of 3.17 with a verbal description of Agree and a verbal interpretation of moderate extent and is the rank 5. Therefore, career progression can be described as achieving high status within the workplace by performing practical work, generally increasing a worker's level of competence and salary.

According to Kekeocha et al. (2022), one of the biggest problems for many firms and organizations has always been retaining personnel in their organizations. However, promotion to higher positions in the organization can thus be simplified and, based on the data above, coincided with Raduan & Na (2020) stating that teachers often need to be given a clear career progression route. The progression along this clear career path has also been associated with advancing teacher expertise, including experience and competence.

Table 10. Summary on the Extent on the Career Advancement Opportunities Discriminations

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Professional Development Discrimination	3.35	Agree	Moderate Extent	1

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
2. Professional Career Progression Discrimination	3.21	Agree	Moderate Extent	2
Average Weighted Mean	3.28	Agree	Moderate Extent	

Table shows a summary of the extent of career advancement opportunities discrimination. Among the factors, Professional Development ranks as one with a weighted mean of 3.35, with a verbal description of Agree and a verbal interpretation of moderate extent. Also, Professional career progression discrimination has a weighted mean of 3.21, with a verbal description of Agree and a verbal interpretation of Moderate extent.

Based on the data shown above, professional development and career progression are crucial for teachers' career advancement, impacting their income and prestige. Education and training programs, essential for promotions and salary increases, play a critical role in this progression. Chaaban et al. (2023) state that career development through these programs leads to promotions and higher pay. The literature on enhancing teachers' careers highlights various interrelated factors across different systems that often correlate with job retention and educational development.

Moreover, Grayson (2023) emphasizes that teacher career development is a lifelong series of activities, including seminars and training sessions, that contribute to career exploration, establishment, success, and fulfillment. These activities moderately influence career advancement opportunities, enabling teachers to achieve professional growth and personal satisfaction. Consequently, professional development and career progression moderately impact teachers' career advancement, fostering their overall development and retention within the education sector.

To sum up, the summary on the extent of the career advancement opportunities discriminations has an overall weighted mean of 3.28, with a verbal description of Agree and a verbal interpretation of Moderate extent, which further explains that the statement coincides with the respondents' experience. Therefore, the extent of the factors is moderately influential to the respondents

**3. What are the retention strategies given by the SMCC admin to retain the services of SMCC teaching and non-teaching personnel in terms of compensation and benefits, job satisfaction, working conditions, and work engagement?**

Table 11. Extent on the Retention Strategies Toward Compensation and Benefits Discrimination

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. The school salary grades are well structured.	3.05	Agree	Moderate Extent	3
2. The management prioritizes the welfare of its employees through health insurance.	3.37	Agree	Moderate Extent	1
3. The benefit package of the school is fair and equitable.	3.29	Agree	Moderate Extent	2
4. I stay in my job because of the competitive salaries in the market rate.	3.03	Agree	Moderate Extent	4.5
5. I stay in my job because my salary commensurate on my job description.	3.03	Agree	Moderate Extent	4.5
Average Weighted Mean	3.16	Agree	Moderate Extent	

Table shows the extent of the retention strategies toward compensation and benefits. The management prioritizes the welfare of its employees through health insurance has a weighted mean of 3.37, with the verbal description of Agree and a verbal interpretation of Moderate Extent ranked 1. Also, I stay in my job because of the competitive salaries in the market rate and I remain in my career because my salary commensurate with my job description rank 4.5 and have a weighted mean of 3.03 with the verbal description of Agree and verbal interpretation of Moderate Extent.

Compensation plays a moderately influential role in employee retention. Employees who feel valued at work are often happier, more productive, and less likely to seek other employment opportunities (Indeed, 2023). In addition to financial benefits, employees also highly value non-financial benefits like career development opportunities and salary compensation (Dong et al., 2023). Compensation not only motivates employees' productivity but also fosters loyalty. Hanai and Pallangyo (2020) highlight that compensation and job satisfaction are firmly linked, mainly through payment categories such as salary increases based on competence or performance. This connection underscores how compensation, while not the sole factor, significantly contributes to retaining employees by enhancing their job satisfaction and commitment.

To sum up, the retention strategies regarding compensation and benefits have an average weighted mean of 3.16, with a verbal description of Agree and a verbal interpretation of Moderate Extent, which coincides with Nagaprakash (2023) statement that organizations must understand how compensation and benefits influence employee motivation and retention.

Table 12. Extent on the Retention Strategies Toward Job Satisfaction Discrimination

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I am satisfied with my current job position.	3.28	Agree	Moderate Extent	2
2. I feel valued in the organization.	3.31	Agree	Moderate Extent	1
3. My work gives me a sense of fulfillment.	3.22	Agree	Moderate Extent	3
4. I feel proud to be part of this institution.	3.20	Agree	Moderate Extent	4
5. I am satisfied with the recognition I receive for my work.	3.15	Agree	Moderate Extent	5
Average Weighted Mean	3.23	Agree	Moderate Extent	

Table shows the extent of the retention strategies toward job satisfaction discrimination. The highest rank indicator is the statement I feel valued in the organization, with a weighted mean of 3.31 with the verbal description of Agree and verbal interpretation of Moderate Extent. The lowest ranked indicator is I am satisfied with the recognition I receive for my work with a weighted mean of 3.15.

Job satisfaction plays a significant role in employee retention. Employees who are satisfied with their work are more likely to remain in the organization. Recognition, fulfillment, and pride in one's work contribute to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. When employees feel valued, they are more engaged and dedicated to their roles.

To sum up, job satisfaction has an average weighted mean of 3.23, verbally described as Agree and interpreted as Moderate Extent, indicating that job satisfaction moderately influences employee retention.

Table 13. Extent on the Retention Strategies Toward Working Conditions Discrimination

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. The working environment is conducive.	3.34	Agree	Moderate Extent	1
2. I have good working relationships with colleagues.	3.30	Agree	Moderate Extent	2
3. The management treats employees fairly.	3.18	Agree	Moderate Extent	4
4. The institution provides adequate facilities and resources.	3.22	Agree	Moderate Extent	3
5. I feel safe in my workplace.	3.15	Agree	Moderate Extent	5
Average Weighted Mean	3.24	Agree	Moderate Extent	

Table shows the extent of the retention strategies toward working conditions discrimination. The highest rank indicator is the statement The working environment is conducive, with a weighted mean of 3.34.

Working conditions significantly influence employees' decisions to stay. A conducive environment, good interpersonal relationships, and adequate facilities contribute to employees' comfort and productivity. Employees who work in a supportive and safe environment are more likely to remain in the organization.

To sum up, working conditions have an average weighted mean of 3.24, verbally interpreted as Agree with Moderate Extent, which moderately influences retention.

Table 14. Extent on the Retention Strategies Toward Work Engagement Discrimination

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I am enthusiastic about my work.	3.29	Agree	Moderate Extent	1
2. I am motivated to perform my tasks effectively.	3.27	Agree	Moderate Extent	2
3. I feel emotionally connected to my work.	3.19	Agree	Moderate Extent	3
4. I am willing to go beyond what is expected in my job.	3.16	Agree	Moderate Extent	4
5. I feel energized when working.	3.12	Agree	Moderate Extent	5
Average Weighted Mean	3.21	Agree	Moderate Extent	

Table shows the extent of the retention strategies toward work engagement discrimination. The highest rank indicator is the statement I am enthusiastic about my work, with a weighted mean of 3.29.

Work engagement reflects a positive, fulfilled state of mind associated with work. Employees who are enthusiastic and motivated are more likely to remain in their jobs. Engagement strengthens commitment and increases the likelihood of retention.

To sum up, work engagement has an average weighted mean of 3.21, verbally described as Agree and interpreted as Moderate Extent, indicating that engagement moderately influences employee retention.

Table 15. Summary on the Extent on the Retention Strategies

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Compensation and Benefits	3.16	Agree	Moderate Extent	4
Job Satisfaction	3.23	Agree	Moderate Extent	2
Working Conditions	3.24	Agree	Moderate Extent	1
Work Engagement	3.21	Agree	Moderate Extent	3
Average Weighted Mean	3.21	Agree	Moderate Extent	

Table shows the summary of retention strategies discrimination. Among the indicators, Working Conditions ranks first with a weighted mean of 3.24, followed by Job Satisfaction with 3.23, Work Engagement with 3.21, and Compensation and Benefits with 3.16.

Overall, retention strategies have an average weighted mean of 3.21, with a verbal description of Agree and verbal interpretation of Moderate Extent. This indicates that retention strategies moderately influence employees' decision to stay in the institution.

#### **4. Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and retention strategies in Saint Michael College of Caraga?**

Table 16. Test on Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and Retention Strategies Discrimination

Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	Retention Strategies Discrimination	-.211	.024	Reject H01	There is a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and retention strategies discrimination factors.
Gender	Retention Strategies Discrimination	.123	.191	Accept H01	
Type of Personnel	Retention Strategies Discrimination	-.036	.699	Accept H01	
Years of Service	Retention Strategies Discrimination	-.124	.187	Accept H01	

Educational Attainment	Retention Strategies Discrimination	.094	.317	Accept H01	There is no significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and retention strategies discrimination factors.
Salary	Retention Strategies Discrimination	.043	.645	Accept H01	

Table shows the correlation between the respondents' profile and retention strategies discrimination factors. The correlation between age and retention strategies discrimination factors has a correlational coefficient of  $-.211$  (negligible association) with a significance of  $.024$  ( $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ ), gender and retention strategies discrimination factors has a correlational coefficient of  $.123$  (positive association) with a significance of  $.191$  ( $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ), type of personnel and retention strategies discrimination factors has a correlational coefficient of  $-.036$  (negligible association) with a significance of  $.699$  ( $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ), years of service and retention strategies discrimination factors has a correlational coefficient of  $-.124$  (negligible association) with a significance of  $.187$  ( $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ), educational attainment and retention strategies discrimination factors has a correlational coefficient of  $.094$  (positive association) with a significance of  $.317$  ( $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ), and salary and retention strategies discrimination factors has a correlational coefficient of  $.043$  (positive association) with a significance of  $.645$  ( $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ).

Table 16 shows the correlation between the respondents' profiles. Among all the correlations, only the correlation between age and retention strategies discrimination factors has a  $p\text{-value}$  lesser than  $\alpha = 0.05$  level of significance, which rejects the null hypothesis.

Therefore, there is no significant relationship between the profile of the respondents in terms of gender, type of personnel, years of service, educational attainment and salary, and the retention strategies discrimination factors. At the same time, there is a significant relationship between the respondents' profiles regarding age and discrimination factors in retention strategies.

Table 16 revealed that there is no significant relationship exists between the respondents' profiles regarding gender, type of personnel, years of service, educational attainment and salary, and the retention strategies discrimination factors in Saint Michael College of Caraga. At the same time, there is a significant relationship between the respondents' profiles regarding age and discrimination factors in retention strategies. Additionally, future studies should explore other aspects aside from age that influence retention strategies and discrimination factors.

Moreover, employee retention may be influenced by demographic factors such as age, gender, education level, salary, job position, and length of employment (Kumar P. et al.,

2023). However, our data presented a contradiction to Kumar's study, indicating no significant relationship between gender, education level, salary, job position, and length of employment in employee retention. However, our findings do reveal a significant effect of age on employee retention. This suggests that contrary to Kumar's findings, age is a crucial factor influencing whether employees stay with a company, while other demographic factors appear to have no substantial impact.

## **5. What are the other factors that are deemed necessary for employees to stay in the institution?**

This study explores the other necessary factors for employees to stay in the institution. The data revealed three overarching themes:

1. Fair and Motivating Salaries
2. Empowering Workforce Well-Being
3. Exploring Personnel's Career Trajectory

### **Fair and Motivating Salaries**

In the context of teaching and non-teaching personnel, the most significant problem in employee retention falls into regular salary appraisals, salary standardization, salary commensurate with work, job market rate, and salary as a motivator for work and salary to sustain the daily needs.

Identifying the key improvements or initiatives to encourage employee retention empowers workforce well-being. This underscores the holistic approach to employee welfare, which encompasses not just financial aspects but specifically emotional, mental, social, and spiritual aspects in the workplace.

Overall, an organization should ensure that its valued workforce stays and takes steps to ensure that highly skilled talents remain (Onoja & Babatunde, 2023). The organization should provide all forms of well-being, such as emotional, mental, social, and spiritual, so that the employees have peace of mind, can work better for the organization, and can increase productivity (Harshitha & Senthil, 2021).

### **Empowering Workforce Well-Being**

“It is important because this study serves as a bridge of communication to the administration and fosters a positive work environment where employees feel engaged and valued.”

This emphasizes that employee retention is not solely based on salary but also on how employees perceive their treatment, recognition, and overall work environment.

Providing emotional support, transparent communication, and organizational appreciation are essential components of workforce well-being.

### **Exploring Personnel's Career Trajectory**

This theme explores how personnel's personal career trajectory influences their retention and advancement in the institution. Understanding these perspectives can help institutions develop better strategies to retain employees longer.

Nowadays, employees are increasingly focused on growing in their careers. They explore opportunities for advancement within their firms (Thwin et al., 2023). Growth is an integral part of every individual's career. Employees need help planning their career development path and making informed decisions about their professional and personal growth (Chandrika & Rajeshwari, 2023).

In the context of teaching and non-teaching personnel, the most crucial factor in foreseeing their career path five years from now falls into three sub-themes: progression, pursuing further studies, and retaining still. This was visibly seen in their statements:

Respondent 1. "5 years from now, I see myself still working here in SMCC and being promoted."

Respondent 3. "I think 5 years from now, myself will see into progression or successful professional employee for this institution."

Respondent 5. "I can see myself 5 years from now with a Master's degree continuing my career here in SMCC."

Respondent 4. "If I will follow my personal plan, in the next 5 years I will continue to teach in the school and finished my future plan of taking the Doctorate degree."

Respondent 2. "I might still be one of the administrators of the institution."

Respondent 6. "I see myself continuing my service in the institution."

Effective administration is pivotal in employees' decisions to stay with an organization. Majority of the respondents expressed their sentiments that they envisioned themselves being promoted, pursuing further studies, and remaining at the same institution for the next five years.

One respondent said that:

Respondent 7. "I will stay forever in this institution because I love SMCC the compassion and dedication being a teacher in this institution."

Respondent 8. "Still working here in SMCC with the same designation."

This statement highlighted the respondent's strong commitment and positive sentiment toward SMCC, driven by administrative support and a sense of belonging, which

is supported in the study of Bamboo HR LLC (2024), when an employee creates their career path; they are not the only one who benefits. Employers also benefit when employees are more engaged in their job and long-term relationship with the company.

Therefore, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory underscores the significance of job advancement and growth opportunities in retaining employees. Job advancement provides a clear path for progression, motivating employees to work toward promotions and increasing productivity. Similarly, growth opportunities, such as professional development, can boost employee motivation and engagement (Indeed, 2023).

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Strengthen career advancement opportunities by providing structured professional development programs, including regular seminars, training, and workshops aligned with employees' career goals.

Develop a clear and transparent promotion system that outlines criteria, performance appraisal standards, and career pathways for both teaching and non-teaching personnel.

1. Implement regular salary reviews and ensure compensation is commensurate with qualifications, years of service, and job responsibilities to remain competitive with market rates.
2. Enhance employee welfare programs by improving health insurance benefits, wellness initiatives, and support systems that address emotional, mental, social, and spiritual well-being.
3. Foster a positive and inclusive work environment by strengthening communication between administration and employees, promoting fairness, and recognizing employee achievements.
4. Increase engagement strategies by encouraging participation in decision-making processes and creating opportunities for employees to share expertise and innovations.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study examined the relationship between career advancement opportunities and retention strategies among teaching and non-teaching personnel at Saint Michael College of Caraga, anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. The findings indicate that both career advancement opportunities—specifically professional development and professional career progression—and retention strategies—namely compensation and benefits, job satisfaction, working conditions, and work engagement—were perceived to operate at a moderate extent. These results suggest that while the institution has established foundational mechanisms to support employee growth and retention, these mechanisms are not yet maximized in influencing long-term organizational commitment.

The correlational analysis revealed that age is the only demographic variable significantly associated with retention strategies, whereas gender, type of personnel, years of service, educational attainment, and salary did not demonstrate significant relationships. This implies that generational factors may shape retention perceptions more strongly than structural or positional characteristics. The absence of significant relationships across most demographic variables suggests that retention strategies may function as institution-wide mechanisms rather than being profile-dependent.

Qualitative findings further enriched the quantitative results by identifying additional retention determinants, including fair and motivating salaries, workforce well-being, and clearly defined career trajectories. These themes reinforce the dual importance of hygiene factors (e.g., compensation, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., growth, advancement, recognition), consistent with Herzberg's framework.

Overall, the study contributes empirical evidence to the discourse on employee retention in private higher education institutions. It underscores the need for integrated retention policies that simultaneously strengthen structural support systems and intrinsic motivational pathways to enhance institutional sustainability and workforce stability.

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