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## TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION IN FAR-FLUNG SCHOOLS: BASES FOR POLICY RECOMMENDATION

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### ABSTRACT

The study determined the job satisfaction of teachers assigned in far-flung schools during the school year 2025–2026 as a basis for policy recommendation. It was found out that teachers in far flung schools consider contentment with teaching as a career by witnessing learners progress, professional growth, and financial stability. It was also found out that they experienced meaningfulness and purpose of their work in far flung schools by witnessing a class grow into a supportive learning community, learners' aspiration for professional growth, and developing positive values and attitudes. Teachers experienced enthusiasm for their job in far flung schools by shaping future citizens through learning, observing learners' motivation and engagement, and teaching as a passion. It was found out that their sources of inspiration in far-flung schools were through observing learners' courage and confidence, commitment to service and nation, and learners' motivation to learn. Teachers in far flung schools feel and experienced pride of being a teacher through alumni success as inspiration, expression of gratitude from former learners, and contribution to learners' achievement.

**Keywords:** *Teachers' Job Satisfaction, Far-Flung Schools, Policy Recommendation*

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## INTRODUCTION

The teacher's contribution is the most singular influence in an education system, and the most important in the quality of learning. The educational continuum is managed by the level of their receptivity and initiative. An equipped and self-fulfilled teacher reign supreme. A teacher has always been the fulcrum of the education system.

The McClelland & Porter Theory states that a teacher's job satisfaction is the emotional and mental evaluation of their position, duties, and working conditions, and of how content and fulfilled they are in their profession. (Tria, 2023). A teacher's job satisfaction is an important aspect of her well-being, because satisfied teachers tend to be more self-motivated and more committed and involved in classroom activities, which tends to improve the quality of teaching and the quality of students' learning (Ker et al., 2022). Shredof (2022) describes the factors that positively influence the working conditions of school practitioners, and the factors that are most likely to clarify their working conditions, are: school climate, the presence of support from the principal, an acceptable workload, opportunities for professional development, positive collegial relationships, and recognition of teacher's work (Soe & Alegado, 2024).

The encouraging and positive environment of a school that displays effective communication, leadership, and mutual respect increases the job satisfaction of teachers, while the environment with lack of poor working conditions, absence of administrative support, and an increase in job demands negatively impacts job satisfaction and increases burnout (Ker et al., 2022). In addition, teachers who are highly satisfied with their jobs are more likely

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to stay in the profession, become more resilient to the challenges that may arise, and participate more in activities that help to improve the school, thereby decreasing the turnover rate and increasing the stability of the school (Tria, 2023). Therefore, the job satisfaction of teachers is something that educators and policymakers should prioritize in working on improving the retention rate of teachers, their professional satisfaction, and the quality of education that is sustainable (Soe & Alegado, 2024). Recent studies show that external factors like school leadership, working conditions, and community support are instrumental in determining job satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2024). These factors often trump even the intrinsic motivated factors like the love for teaching, especially in remote areas, where teachers are often in isolated areas, and their roles are important; internal factors like a teacher's sense of purpose, resilience, and their perceived impact on the learners they teach are important (Liu et al., 2022). In areas where the institutional support is weak, combined with a lack of incentives, prolonged exposure to these challenges may lead to both a psychological increase in stress and burnout, and a real increase in the intention to leave the profession. Therefore, analyzing job satisfaction in remote schools is vital to gain an understanding of the impact of isolated areas, to improve the conditions and support frameworks for improving teacher retention and the quality of education (Zhang et al., 2024).

Teachers' job satisfaction is gauged by the responses to five statements spanning teachers' emotions and drives regarding their profession, operationalized by positive career and job sentiment, emotional job meaning and purpose, job eagerness, inspirational drive,

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and teaching pride. (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2021).

This research aims to evaluate the current job satisfaction of teachers to understand the factors affecting it, which will be the basis for developing focused intervention strategies to improve teachers' well-being and the quality of education in remote areas.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Methodology

This chapter elaborates on the research methods, research design, study participants, data collection strategies, research instruments, and data analysis techniques used in the study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the teachers' job satisfaction in schools located in remote areas to suggest an intervention program in the Schools District of Leon II for the academic year 2025-2026.

### Research Method

The method of research used in this study was in-depth interviews, qualitative research, and descriptive analysis.

The descriptive research method focuses on systematically describing a phenomenon as it exists in its natural setting, without manipulating variables. According to Elliott (2025), it aims to provide an accurate portrayal of current conditions, practices, or relationships within educational settings, enabling researchers to understand trends, patterns, and implications for practice. This approach is particularly useful in educational studies that seek to document

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and analyze real-world events, behaviors, or perceptions without altering the environment in which they occur (Elliott, 2025).

While the interviewer and the interviewee were conducting the interview, they were allowed to sit next to each other and contemplate the series of questions regarding a particular issue. The activity focused on obtaining the principal or relevant perspectives of a particular issue within a societal framework, based on the responses of the interviewee to the questions received.

### Research Design

The study employed a phenomenological research design. Phenomenology, in a general sense, can be viewed as a philosophical approach to qualitative research. The essence of qualitative research is to comprehend other people's perspectives of the world and understand how and why these differ from the consensus by concentrating on a specific individual's interpretation of a given situation. This is achieved through interviewing, and is a common method utilized in psychology, sociology, and social work.

Phenomenology focuses on the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from a first-person perspective. The central aim of phenomenology is to investigate and describe phenomena as they are consciously experienced, without resorting to theories about their causal explanations or being influenced by unexamined preconceptions (Biemel and Spiegelberg, 2024).

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## Participants of the Study

The identified participants of this study were twelve (12) purposely selected teachers in the Schools District of Leon II, wherein 3 participants (3) from Bulwang Camandag Integrated School, 3 participants (3) from Danao Elementary School, 3 participants (3) from Bucari Elementary School and another 3 participants (3) from Cabunga-an Elementary School who have been assigned to teach in far flung schools and still teaching in the same school up to this school year 2025-2026.

These 12 participants were all regular permanent with at least one year teaching experience in their current school assignment.

## Sampling Design

In this study, a purposive sampling design was utilized. According to Nikolopoulou (2023), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method where participants are chosen on the basis of the desired traits they possess. In purposive sampling, the participants are chosen "on purpose". Also known as judgmental sampling, this sampling method is based on the researcher's discretion on who to include in the study and who they perceive to best inform the study.

## Research Instrument

For this study, the research instrument used was a self-developed interview schedule.

In research methodology, an interview schedule is a written document containing a set of pre-formulated questions (which could be structured, unstructured, or a mixture of both) to assist an interviewer in gathering information in a uniform manner from the

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participants. It serves as a data collection instrument, standardizing how the same issues and questions are processed in multiple interviews in order to allow for the comparison and analysis to be done in a systematic manner. In face-to-face, virtual, or phone interviews, interviewers are expected to use the schedule to collect information from participants on the pre-formulated questions and to note the responses (Socio.health, 2024).

The interview schedule had five (5) major questions focusing the teachers' contentment with teaching as a career, meaningfulness and purpose of work, enthusiasm for the job, inspiration derived from teaching, and pride of being a teacher.

In this study, the participants' permission was sought for the use of voice and video recording for the purposes of data collection and documentation.

### **Validity of the Research Instrument**

In order to investigate validity, an attempt was made to contact the researcher's advisor, the Dean of the Graduate School, and a jury panel of experts who specialize in research, measurement and evaluation, and English, to validate individual items for revision and comment. Validity, in general, is construed in the context of measuring the degree to which the findings, interpretations, and conclusions of a given study are accurate, relevant, and representative of the phenomena under study, within a given context. With validity, a researcher is able to defend that what is being measured is what is intended, and that the results are a true representation of what is being measured, and that the results are worthy to be relied upon. In measuring the validity of an instrument, the researcher must demonstrate that the items and the format of the instrument are in harmony with the variables and

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objectives of the study to a given degree, and that there is a clear and logical construction of each element. This task relies upon the critique of experts in the field in order to determine the relevance, clarity, and representativeness of the items in reference to the scope of the study. When a study's framework is aligned with its content and structure, a researcher is able to gather data that is as accurate and relevant as possible in relation to the study's objectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

With respect to the comments, corrections, and recommendations of the panel of validators concerning the interview schedule, the appropriate format of Good and Scates (1972) as cited in Soqueña (2021) was used.

### **Data Gathering Procedures**

School/site/community participant-specific permits were obtained by the researcher- advised from the Dean of the Graduate School, the Schools Division Superintendent, the District Supervisors, and the School Heads. The researcher travelled to each school/community/location to accommodate participant interviews.

Before the interviews, the researcher asked participants to sign consent/permission forms related to the study.

In addition to the in-depth interviews, the researcher used voice recorders and video recorders to document the interviews in their entirety, paying attention to every detail of the interviewee's comments. The researcher added the data acquired from the interviews to the existing information.

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## Data Analyses

Using the interview schedule, the researcher collected and analyzed the data employing thematic analysis, a qualitative technique aimed at articulating and analyzing recurrent themes or patterns within the context of the data. The researcher derived themes from participants' responses in relation to their satisfaction with their Teaching Career, the Meaning and Significance of the Work, Job Enthusiasm, Motivation to Teach, and Professional Identity.

Braun and Clarke (2023) assert that thematic analysis is able to offer a rigorous framework for qualitative analysis that allows researchers to develop an understanding of the explicit and implicit meanings of participants' stories. It is particularly useful for educational research that aims to make sense of intricate social and organizational structures. In terms of analysis, thematic analysis is able to provide an added value to qualitative research because of its systematic coding and interpretation (Nowell et al., 2021)

The interview transcripts were analyzed using Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2023), which is effective for determining, analyzing, and documenting patterns (themes) in qualitative data.

The analysis followed the standard six-phase process: Familiarization with Data: Reading and re-reading the transcripts (in local language and English translation). Generating Initial Codes: Assigning short phrases or labels to meaningful segments of data (e.g., "shared phone," "fear of judgment," "poor signal"). Searching for Themes: Grouping the initial codes into potential overarching themes and sub-themes that captured significant patterns (e.g.,

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Codes like "no insult," "private correction" will be grouped under a theme). Reviewing

Themes: Refining and checking the themes against the entire dataset to ensure they accurately reflected the participants' meanings and the study's focus. Defining and Naming

Themes: Developing clear, concise, and academically sound names for the final emergent

themes (will be presented in Chapter 4). Producing the Report: Weaving the themes,

supported by direct quotes, into the narrative structure of the presentation, analysis, and

interpretation of data (Chapter 4), and linking them to the theoretical framework.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study aimed to determine the job satisfaction of teachers assigned in far-flung schools in the Schools District of Leon II during the school year 2025–2026 as a basis for policy recommendation. It employed a qualitative phenomenological design using in-depth interviews with 12 purposively selected teachers who are currently teaching in far-flung schools. Data were gathered through a researcher-made interview schedule that underwent expert content validation, along with voice or video recording with participants' consent. Necessary permits were secured from relevant authorities before data collection, and the gathered information was analyzed and interpreted using a thematic approach.

The following are the findings of the study:

Based on the results of the in-depth interview with the participants, it was found out that teachers in far flung schools consider contentment with teaching as a career by witnessing learners progress, professional growth, and financial stability.

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It was found out that teachers experienced meaningfulness and purpose of their work in far flung schools by witnessing a class grow into a supportive learning community, learners' aspiration for professional growth, and developing positive values and attitudes.

It was also found out that teachers experienced enthusiasm for their job in far flung schools by shaping future citizens through learning, observing learners' motivation and engagement, and teaching as a passion.

The results of the in-depth interview found out that teachers' sources of inspiration in far-flung schools were through observing learners' courage and confidence, commitment to service and nation, and learners' motivation to learn.

It was found out based on the results of the in-depth interview that teachers in far flung schools feel and experienced pride of being a teacher in far flung schools through alumni success as inspiration, expression of gratitude from former learners, and contribution to learners' achievement.

## Insights

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

The meaning derived from teaching and seeing the resulting positive changes in the lives of students is the primary reason why teachers in remote schools choose to stay in the profession. Being able to witness positive changes in students' lives is emotionally fulfilling and maintains their sense of responsibility and dedication to the profession. Far-away teachers balance their needs and their work by engaging in self-improvement and professional development activities.

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Teaching in remote schools is emotionally rewarding. The professional meaning educators in distant schools derive for their work is the primary reason why they chose to endure the obstacles and hardships of their profession.

Watching students change for the better is what teachers want, and every educator from distant schools is emotionally invested in facilitating this development. In prolonged, difficult situations, teachers derive their motivation to work from positive changes that occur in students' lives. The positive impact of education on the lives of students is what sustains motivation even in difficult teaching situations.

Teachers working in remote locations are motivated in the first place by the determination and perseverance demonstrated by the students and the meaningful impact the teachers' efforts make in the community and society as a whole. The manifestation of students' growth and dedication motivates the teachers and gives them the necessary energy to carry on in spite of the complexities associated with remote teaching.

The impact teachers working in remote locations are able to create in society gives them a strong sense of pride. The impact celebration of students and the impact of students' celebration give teachers a sense of strength and appreciation, and a feeling of success, and with this, the teachers are encouraged to keep investing in themselves to continue to create impact in the lives of the students.

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## CONCLUSION

In light of the findings and insights arrived at in this study, the following recommendations are highlighted:

Continuing professional development, establishing recognition systems, and providing the necessary materials and remuneration can increase remote area teachers' motivation, skills, and commitment to teaching and learning.

Promoting student-centered, cooperative, and participatory learning, as well as providing the materials, can foster a climate of collaboration and goal achievement among students.

In challenging teaching situations, supporting teachers to create a flexible and open learning environment, and to maintain their enthusiasm and commitment.

Schools can provide teachers with more support to show students the impact of their work in the community. The more teachers show this, the more motivated they become, especially in remote teaching situations.

Providing teachers with supportive feedback enhances their professional teaching identity and their interest and effort in teaching students.

Educators and school divisions need to account for these suggestions and policies when creating school improvement plans and professional development programs for teachers to account for these suggestions. There should be collaboration among school administrators, teachers, the community, and educational offices for the support, monitoring, and resources to be in place. Suggestions for considering the impact of these practices should be ongoing.

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Future researchers should focus on the impact of these policies on teacher motivation, retention, and student success in remote schools. Teaching satisfaction can be investigated socioculturally. There can be comparisons of support programs intended to improve teacher satisfaction and educational quality in remote schools to focus on the best programs for teacher well-being.



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