



Research Article

Exploring the Factors Influencing Faculty Retention and Turnover in Undergraduate Nursing Programs: Basis for Retention Policy and Program Enhancement

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Abstract. The global shortage of nursing faculty poses a significant threat to the standards and sustainability of undergraduate nursing education. However, the specific factors influencing faculty retention and turnover remain complex and multifaceted. This study explored the lived experiences and determinants of faculty retention and turnover in undergraduate nursing programs, offering a data-driven foundation for policy enhancement. Utilizing a descriptive-phenomenological qualitative research design, the study engaged nine nursing faculty members (N=9) through in-depth semi-structured interviews. Data analysis revealed six primary themes: the shift from extrinsic motivations to intrinsic meaning-making; the evolution of professional identity from clinician to educator; challenges in navigating contemporary pedagogical complexities, including AI integration; the adverse effects of heavy workloads and burnout; the influence of leadership and organizational culture as key retention factors; and the critical need for equitable professional development and competitive compensation. The findings indicate that while intrinsic passion and mentorship fulfillment promote retention, these are frequently undermined by systemic role strain and institutional inefficiencies. Sustainable faculty retention requires a comprehensive organizational strategy emphasizing workload balance, transparent leadership communication, and structured career progression. These results provide a strategic framework for academic administrators to develop targeted retention policies that cultivate a supportive and progressive environment for nursing educators.

Keywords: *Faculty retention; Nursing education; Organizational culture; Phenomenology; Faculty turnover.*

The nursing profession is experiencing a global crisis marked by a severe shortage of registered nurses, which has increased demand for nursing instructors to educate future healthcare professionals. This shortage represents not merely a recruitment challenge but a systemic threat to the stability of healthcare delivery. Poindexter calls this period the "Great Resignation," noting that healthcare systems have lost a substantial portion of their workforce due to burnout, exhaustion, and the pursuit of greater flexibility (Poindexter, 2022). The repercussions of this shortage are evident in academic settings, where disruptions to lectures, activities, and clinical rotations significantly hinder undergraduate nursing students' educational experiences (Antig et al., 2024).

To address these vacancies, institutions have increasingly recruited experienced clinicians into academic positions. However, this transition is frequently challenging. Wongpimoln et al. reported that chronic stress resulting from understaffed environments and insufficient support contributes to significant burnout among nurse faculty,



leading to elevated resignation rates (Wongpimoln et al., 2021). Novice educators often face role ambiguity and a substantial increase in workload, which are major challenges as they transition from clinical practice to academia (Laari et al., 2023). Additionally, Greenway et al. found that nurses transitioning to professor roles often lack adequate pedagogical preparation, resulting in feelings of inadequacy and a heightened intent to leave early in their academic careers (Greenway et al., 2025).

Budgetary stability and institutional support remain major concerns in academia. Mazinga reported that 77% of nursing programs are actively recruiting new faculty, yet nearly 40% struggle to offer salaries competitive with clinical positions (Mazinga, 2024). In the Philippines, this problem is intensified by the migration of experienced nurses abroad, resulting in a domestic "brain drain." This outmigration has compounded a documented scarcity of qualified nursing faculty within Philippine higher education. Although no consolidated national count of vacant nursing-faculty positions has been identified, available Philippine evidence shows the severity of the problem. A study conducted across 15 higher education institutions surveyed 185 faculty members and identified a shortage of nursing instructors as a concern affecting the clinical teaching and learning environment (Appiah, 2020). The same study found that 39.0% of faculty members had 1–5 years of clinical experience and 46.0% had 6–10 years of teaching experience (Appiah, 2020, 2021). A 2024 Philippine study of seven informants also showed that faculty scarcity substantially disrupted scheduled lectures, academic activities, and clinical rotations (Antig et al., 2024). Moreover, a recent study of 10 deans establishing BS Nursing programs identified securing qualified faculty as a major challenge in program development (Tuppal et al., 2025). Philippine nursing education standards also require faculty-student ratios of 1:8 for second-year related learning experiences, 1:10–12 for third-year students, and 1:12–15 for fourth-year students, as well as 2,436 related learning experience hours across the program (Alaban et al., 2023). Collectively, these findings indicate that the Philippines faces a serious nurse-educator capacity problem, even though a current nationwide estimate of nursing-faculty vacancies remains unavailable.

Although some local studies, such as Alcomendas's research in Cavite, have documented identity disruption and pedagogical insecurity among Filipino nurse educators, qualitative evidence specific to the Davao region remains limited (Alcomendas, 2026). Understanding educators' lived experiences in this context is essential to developing localized strategies that promote faculty well-being and retention. The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the lived experiences of faculty members in undergraduate nursing programs as they navigate issues of retention and turnover. Specifically, the research seeks to elucidate the fundamental structure of the educator's journey, including professional identity formation, internal meaning-making of academic roles, and interactions with institutional environments, to identify factors influencing decisions to remain or depart. This research is significant because it provides a data-driven foundation for academic leaders in Davao City to strengthen retention policies and foster environments where faculty feel valued. By prioritizing faculty well-being and reducing turnover, institutions can ensure students benefit from a wealth of expertise, ultimately producing nursing graduates who are better equipped to deliver safe, high-quality patient care.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a descriptive phenomenological qualitative design, grounded in Husserl's philosophy of consciousness as a rigorous science of description rather than an interpretive co-construction of meaning. Colaizzi's seven-step method was selected as the analytical procedure because it is explicitly Husserlian in orientation and operationalizes epoché and eidetic reduction via systematic, stepwise procedures. The design was appropriate for the present study because the central aim was to assess the essence of nurse educators' experiences rather than to test *a priori* hypotheses; the philosophical stance required preservation of the "perceptual NOW" of participants; and Colaizzi's framework provided a defensible audit trail from significant statements to the fundamental structure (Im et al., 2023).

Researcher Reflexivity

The researcher is a registered nurse and nurse educator, lecturer, and clinical instructor at a University in Davao City, with 9 years of nursing practice and 7 years of teaching experience. This insider positioning helped establish rapport and contextual understanding during the interview (Saime et al., 2025) but also posed the risk of assumed shared understanding, wherein personal preconceptions about workload, compensation, and leadership might be imposed on participants' accounts (Twist et al., 2024). To manage this, the researcher maintained a reflexive journal

before and after each interview to support bracketing, engaged in peer debriefing with the adviser and an independent data analyst, and verified themes through member checking.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The target population comprised nurse educators employed in colleges and universities offering undergraduate nursing programs in Davao City. Inclusion criteria were: (a) aged 25 to 60 years; (b) at least six months of teaching experience; and (c) current employment as full-time regular, full-time probationary, or part-time faculty. No exclusion criteria based on gender, specialty, or institutional type were imposed, allowing maximum variation across the sample. A purposive snowball sequence was used. Initial participants were purposively selected to represent variation in institutional size and employment status; subsequent participants were identified through referrals from earlier respondents. The final sample consisted of nine nurse educators ($N = 9$) from nine institutions of varying sizes. The sample size was determined by data saturation: by the ninth interview, no new themes emerged, and meaning units regarding workload, transition, and motivation became repetitive. This was consistent with the expectations of descriptive phenomenology, which aims for idiographic depth rather than statistical generalizability. The study provided a thick description of the institutional and demographic context to support transferability.

The following are the key details of the participants:

- R1 is female, 29-45 years old, with 1.5 years of experience as a nurse educator. She worked part-time as an instructor at a large institution, overseeing students during clinical rotations.
- R2 is male, 29-45 years old, with 7 years of experience as a nurse educator. He is a full-time employee at a large institution, serving as a level coordinator and lecturer while also overseeing students during clinical rotations.
- R3 is male, 29-45 years old, with 2 years of experience as a nurse educator. He is a full-time probationary employee at a large institution, serving as a lecturer and clinical instructor overseeing students in clinical rotations.
- R4 is female, 29-45 years old, with 8 years of experience as a nurse educator. She is a full-time probationary employee at a small institution as a level coordinator, lecturer, and clinical instructor.
- R5 is male, 29-45 years old, with 3 years of experience as a nurse educator. He is a full-time probationary employee at a large institution, serving as an RLE coordinator overseeing students' clinical rotations.
- R6 is female, 25-29 years old, with 2 years of experience as a nurse educator. She is a part-time employee at a large institution, overseeing students during their clinical rotation.
- R7 is male, 29-45 years old, with 6 years of experience as a nurse educator. He works part-time at a large institution but has a full-time load as a lecturer and clinical instructor.
- R8 is male, 29-45 years old, with 13 years of experience as a nurse educator. He is a full-time probationary employee at a large institution as a lecturer and clinical instructor.
- R9 is male, 29-45 years old, with 2 years of experience as a nurse educator. He is a part-time lecturer and clinical instructor at a large institution.

Research Instrument

After securing clearance from the St. Bernadette of Lourdes College Ethics Review Board, formal invitations were distributed to prospective participants. Interested educators were provided with the participant information sheet; written informed consent was secured before each interview, and consent documents were stored separately from study data. In-depth semi-structured interviews lasting 30 to 60 minutes were carried out using Zoom video calls. The researcher pre-verified participants' internet connectivity and maintained a backup connection. Throughout data collection, the researcher maintained a reflexive journal documenting preconceptions before and after each interview in keeping with bracketing epoché. The researcher transcribed audio and video recordings verbatim within three days of the interview to preserve data quality.

Data Gathering Procedure

After securing clearance from the St. Bernadette of Lourdes College Ethics Review Board, the researcher distributed formal invitations to prospective participants. Interested educators were provided with the participant

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Data Analysis Procedure

Colaizzi's seven-step method was applied to all data. The procedure comprised bracketing, horizontalization, formulation of meanings, clustering within themes and subthemes, development of textural and structural descriptions, combination into an exhaustive description, and identification of the fundamental structure (essence). From the participants' transcripts, 388 significant statements were initially extracted; 188 were retained after relevance screening and reformulated into meanings that were subsequently clustered into six themes with corresponding subthemes. To ensure trustworthiness, four criteria were addressed: credibility through member checking of transcripts and final themes with all participants; transferability through thick description of the site, participants, and socio-educational context, supporting relevance to similar urban or regional settings; dependability through code-recode procedures and an audit trail documenting analytic decisions; and confirmability through reflexive journaling, peer debriefing with the adviser and an independent data analyst, and bracketing of personal biases at every interview. Although embedded within a qualitative paradigm, these procedural safeguards are functionally analogous to validity and reliability checks in quantitative work.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with eight core ethical principles. Participants were selected using purposive and snowball sampling; voluntary, written informed consent was secured from all participants before each interview; and the right to withdraw at any point without penalty was upheld to ensure autonomy, while beneficence and non-maleficence were pursued by framing study outcomes as improvements in the quality of nursing education and faculty retention. The interviews were conducted online, and participants were asked to ensure they were in a private location, with referrals to psychological support offered where appropriate. Veracity and fidelity were maintained through strict adherence to the informed consent agreement regarding data use and through member checking to ensure the final themes accurately represented participants' voices. To uphold privacy and confidentiality, participants were de-identified using alphanumeric codes (R1–R9), digital files were stored behind password protection, and hard copies were kept under lock and key. The St. Bernadette of Lourdes College Ethics Review Board granted ethics clearance before any data collection began.

Results and Discussion

From the interview transcripts, 388 significant statements were initially extracted; 188 were retained after relevance screening and clustered into six major themes and 26 subthemes, expressing the essence of 9 nurse educators' lived experiences in undergraduate nursing programs in Davao City.

Table 1. *Summary of Themes and Subthemes*

Theme	Subthemes
Theme 1: Dynamic Motivations and Meaning-Making in Academic Work	1.1 Entry Motivations; 1.2 Evolving Intrinsic Motivation and Passion; 1.3 Teaching as Fulfillment and Purpose; 1.4 Conditional Commitment and Retention Decisions
Theme 2: Formation of Educator Identity and Expanding Professional Roles	2.1 Transition from Clinician to Educator; 2.2 Multifaceted Teaching Roles; 2.3 Mentorship and Holistic Development; 2.4 Continuous Learning and Growth
Theme 3: Navigating Contemporary Teaching–Learning Complexities	3.1 Generational Shifts in Learners; 3.2 Adaptation of Pedagogical Approaches; 3.3 Technology and AI Integration; 3.4 Theory–Practice Gap
Theme 4: Workload Pressures, Burnout, and Work–Life Integration	4.1 Heavy Workload and Role Strain; 4.2 Burnout and Emotional Exhaustion; 4.3 Work–Life Imbalance; 4.4 Need for Sustainable Work Structures
Theme 5: Institutional Environment, Leadership, and Organizational Culture	5.1 Supportive Leadership and Work Culture; 5.2 Leadership Gaps and Organizational Issues; 5.3 Communication and Faculty Voice; 5.4 Resource and Infrastructure Constraints; 5.5 Organizational Systems and Inefficiencies
Theme 6: Professional Development, Compensation, and Retention Mechanisms	6.1 Access to Development Opportunities; 6.2 Inequities in Development; 6.3 Need for Structured Training; 6.4 Compensation, Benefits, and Incentives; 6.5 External Opportunities and Retention Challenges

Theme 1: Dynamic Motivations and Meaning-Making in Academic Work

This theme captures the evolution of motivation among nurse educators, showing how entry into academia is often grounded in pragmatic realities but gradually transforms into a deeply meaningful professional commitment. Participants' narratives reveal a continuum from necessity-driven engagement to purpose-driven dedication, while pointing out that retention is conditional and circumstance-dependent.

Subtheme 1.1: Entry Motivations

Extrinsic drivers overwhelmingly shaped participants' initial entry into academia. Financial necessity, perceived scheduling advantages, and salary considerations functioned primarily as hygiene factors, preventing dissatisfaction rather than inspiring vocational commitment (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). National workforce data reinforce this pattern: 34.3% of nursing schools could not offer competitive salaries, and faculty positions were regarded as less attractive than other jobs (Mazinga, 2022), with 57% of full-time faculty relying on a second job to meet basic living expenses (Malin et al., 2024). Within Roy's Adaptation Model, the transition from clinical practice to academia represents a focal stimulus that requires adaptation in the role-function and self-concept modes (Terela, 2025). Recruitment that emphasizes intrinsic purpose without addressing tangible considerations is likely to fall short.

- R1: *"To be honest... additional income."*
- R4: *"Financial need was also a motivation after my mother passed away."*
- R5: *"My first motivation is the flexible time academia affords me."*
- R6: *"Salary is a key factor in long-term commitment."*
- R8: *"Overseas work offers better financial compensation."*

These accounts indicate that motivations for academic entry were largely necessity-driven, whether by a need for additional household income (R1; R4), a preference for work scheduling over hospital duty (R5), or salary expectations (R6). The recurring reference to overseas compensation (R8) suggests that the extrinsic comparison set extends beyond the immediate institution. This implies that recruitment and retention efforts must address concrete financial and scheduling considerations before intrinsic purpose can take root.

Subtheme 1.2: Evolving Intrinsic Motivation and Passion

The shift from external to intrinsic motivation aligns with Self-Determination Theory, which holds that satisfying basic psychological needs for self-governance, competence, and relatedness internalizes motivation over time. As novice instructors gain mastery and meaning, commitment deepens, and vocations form (Kourkouta et al., 2025). Without structured institutional support, however, this latent potential remains underleveraged.

- R1: *"At first it was additional income, but later on I realized... I found fulfillment in educating these student nurses."*
- R4: *"Teaching has always been my primary motivation."*
- R6: *"I grew to love teaching over time."*
- R8: *"My motivation evolved from teaching concepts to mentoring students holistically."*

These accounts show that passion is rarely innate; it develops through sustained engagement. The progression articulated in R1 ("at first... but later on") illustrates the gradual internalization described by Self-Determination Theory, while R6 and R8 show that intrinsic motivation consolidates once educators perceive meaningful effect. This finding reinforces the idea that institutions should design early-career experiences that help novice teachers discover vocational meaning through sustained student engagement.

Subtheme 1.3: Teaching as Fulfillment and Purpose

Fulfillment strongly motivates and sustains engagement even when other conditions are imperfect (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Participants found deep purpose in witnessing student success and in being supported by their institutions; some reported fulfillment as the single most important reason to stay. This psychosocial buffer meets the relatedness need in Self-Determination Theory and reflects the role-function and interdependence modes in Roy's Adaptation Model (Terela, 2025).

- R3: *"I feel fulfilled in my role despite burnout."*
- R4: *"Teaching is fulfilling and aligns with my passion."*
- R8: *"Seeing students succeed and pass the licensure exam is fulfilling."*
- R9: *"I feel quite fulfilled because the dean and institution support my teaching methods."*

The most telling observation is that the participant who reported severe burnout still described sustained fulfillment (R3), suggesting that intrinsic purpose is genuinely durable. Institutional validation magnifies this feeling of purpose (R9), while the emotional reward of student success anchors continued commitment (R8). Structured recognition programs that celebrate student and faculty achievements can convert this latent fulfillment into a concrete retention lever.

Subtheme 1.4: Conditional Commitment and Retention Decisions

Even the most vocationally fulfilled educators considered leaving, showing that intrinsic motivation alone cannot compensate for inadequate structural support. National evidence demonstrates that effort–reward imbalance drives turnover in full-time nursing faculty (Christianson et al., 2026). Work-life interference elevates burnout, employee turnover intentions, and lowers career satisfaction among nurse educators (Boamah et al., 2022); intent to stay is shaped across four interconnected domains — manager, work, organizational, and nurse characteristics (Myint et al., 2023) — and intensifies when weekly hours exceed forty (Boamah et al., 2023). These outcomes confirm that, even with motivators, the absence of hygiene factors destabilizes retention (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Roy's Adaptation Model identifies this as the point at which contextual stimuli overwhelm adaptive capacity (Terela, 2025). Philippine-context qualitative evidence similarly documents role overload and emotional strain in early faculty years (Alcomendas, 2026).

R1: *"I don't have any plans to leave academia because I am content."*

R2: *"If not for teaching, I would leave the institution."*

R3; R6; R7; R8; R9: *"I have considered leaving academia."*

R5: *"I have considered working abroad as an alternative career."*

Five of nine participants reported considering leaving academia, while one said teaching alone kept her at the institution (R2). The literature indicates that when faculty work excessive weekly hours, the risk of burnout symptoms and turnover consideration rises significantly (Boamah et al., 2023). This evidence confirms that, even when motivators are present, the absence of adequate hygiene factors can destabilize retention (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Roy's Adaptation Model identifies this as the point at which contextual stimuli begin to overwhelm the educator's adaptive capacity (Terela, 2025). Institutions must therefore operationalize "stay factors," including competitive compensation, workload caps, and leadership support.

Theme 2: Formation of Educator Identity and Expanding Professional Roles

This theme captures the transformative process through which nurse educators reconstruct their professional identity as they move from clinically oriented practitioners to multifaceted academic professionals. Becoming an educator is neither immediate nor linear; it is characterized by initial uncertainty, progressive adjustment, and eventual integration of teaching, mentorship, and continuous learning into an integrated professional identity.

Subtheme 2.1: Transition from Clinician to Educator

The transition into academia was marked by unplanned entry, fear, and low confidence. These accounts frame the shift as a key stimulus that disrupts the educator's self-concept mode in Roy's Adaptation Model (Terela, 2025). Self-Determination Theory explains this developmental arc through the gradual satisfaction of competence: as educators master teaching skills, their motivation becomes internalized and self-sustaining (Kourkouta et al., 2025).

R3: *"I have never seen myself as an educator before because I am intimidated by speaking in front of many people."*

R3: *"It is by accident that I became a clinical instructor."*

R6: *"I declined the opportunity initially because I was scared and lacked confidence."*

R7: *"Transitioning from clinical practice to teaching was challenging."*

R1: *"I overcame my fear of talking or becoming an instructor."*

These descriptions suggest that most educators did not enter the academy as a deliberate career shift; instead, they took up teaching by accident or through circumstance (R3; R1). Initial fear often delayed acceptance of the role (R6), but mastery, as expressed in R1, demonstrates that novice instructors can move from intimidation to professional confidence within the academy. The data highlight the need for organized onboarding programs that provide pedagogical mentoring, classroom observation opportunities, and cohort-based peer support.

Subtheme 2.2: Multifaceted Teaching Roles

The nurse educator role extends beyond instruction into clinical supervision, curriculum development, research mentoring, and student advisement. Under Herzberg's framework, role breadth motivates when paired with appropriate recognition (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025), but without support, it strains the role-function mode in Roy's Adaptation Model (Terela, 2025). A 2024 meta-synthesis found that nurse educators routinely juggle classroom teaching, clinical accompaniment, student advisement, exam review, and research supervision simultaneously—multitasking that yields "increased anxiety, depression, burnout, and lowered productivity" (Erasmus et al., 2024). Burnout risk rises measurably when weekly hours exceed forty (Boamah et al., 2023), and cross-national evidence shows mental workload among nurse educators is consistently elevated when job demands outpace coping resources (Vauhkonen et al., 2024).

R1: *"I am more in the clinical component... overseeing students during clinical rotations to ensure safe and effective learning."*

R3S: *"My roles include adviser, lecturer, and clinical instructor in OR and ER."*

R7: *"I handle both lecture and clinical responsibilities."*

R8: *"My role includes teaching, clinical instruction, curriculum development, and research mentoring."*

R9: *"To guide student organizations and provide mentorship in leadership and conflict resolution."*

Across participants, the role consistently surpassed the narrow definition of "teaching." Mission-driven responsibilities such as student advisement (R3), curriculum design (R8), and oversight of student organizations (R9) reveal a multi-domain portfolio that, when properly resourced, can serve as intrinsic motivation but, when unsupported, becomes a source of overload. Institutions must therefore balance the multiplicity of developmental roles with explicit workload ceilings and dedicated clerical support.

Subtheme 2.3: Mentorship and Holistic Development

Mentorship emerged as the relational core of educator identity. Participants described their roles as encompassing not only knowledge transfer but also cultivating professional values, confidence, and holistic development.

R4: *"I hope students internalize learning beyond compliance."*

R5: *"I immerse students in staffing and head nurse roles."*

R7: *"My role evolved from teaching to mentoring students."*

R8: *"I guide students not only academically but also in professional values."*

R8: *"Students need guidance in confidence, growth, and responsibility in caring for lives."*

These accounts show that participants viewed their influence as extending far beyond examination results into the formation of nurses as professionals and as people. This relational orientation activates the interdependence mode in Roy's Adaptation Model (Terela, 2025) and aligns with the relatedness need in Self-Determination Theory (Kourkouta et al., 2025). Within Herzberg's framework, relational recognition constitutes a powerful motivator (Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Institutional recognition of mentorship as core scholarly work, not an add-on to teaching, would meaningfully reinforce educator identity.

Subtheme 2.4: Continuous Learning and Growth

Continuous learning emerged as both a personal value and a professional necessity. A 2022 integrative review confirms that nurse educators' CPD needs are heterogeneous across roles and countries, yet share enough commonality to justify institution-wide support (Smith et al., 2023). A 2021 metasynthesis shows that nurses regard CPD as "fundamental to professionalism and lifelong learning," with adequate organizational funding as the decisive factor in converting learning into practice change (Mlambo et al., 2021).

R1S6: *"Engaging with students and challenging them encourages lifelong learning."*

R1S7: *"The dynamic environment keeps me intellectually stimulated and up to date."*

R2S21: *"I was given opportunities for travel and training due to performance."*

R7S15: *"I had to update myself with new teaching styles and trends."*

(R9S4): *"I continue updating my specialization in infectious diseases and clinical practice."*

These narratives show that participants found intellectual vitality in dynamic academic exchange (R1) and in pursuing ongoing clinical specialization (R9). Where institutions supported learning (R2), the experience was rewarding; where adaptation was required without scaffolding (R7), it placed personal demands on each educator. Formalized continuing education pathways, including tuition support and dedicated time for scholarship, would convert latent motivation into durable retention.

Theme 3: Navigating Contemporary Teaching-Learning Complexities

This theme captures the multifaceted challenges that nurse educators face within an evolving educational landscape marked by generational shifts, pedagogical transformation, technological advancement, and persistent gaps between theory and practice.

Subtheme 3.1: Generational Shifts in Learners

Generational differences emerged as the foremost pedagogical challenge, requiring educators to replace rigid, authoritative styles with empathic and adaptive approaches (Sharma et al., 2025). These dynamics constitute a focal stimulus within Roy's Adaptation Model, demanding adaptive responses in the educator's role-function and self-concept modes (Terela, 2025). Participants reported that traditional pedagogical styles are insufficient for contemporary learners (Balahur & Chen, 2021).

R2: *"The generational gap is the number one challenge."*

R2: *"Strict teaching styles do not work well with current students."*

R4: *"The current generation of students is more sensitive and emotionally fragile."*

R4: *"Students take corrections personally and become easily discouraged."*

R7: *"Students today are more challenging and require adaptive teaching approaches."*

Across participants, generational differences emerged as "the number one challenge" (R2), suggesting a system-wide shift that no individual educator can navigate alone. The emotional sensitivity described by R4 represents a qualitative change in the learner profile that demands new professional competencies, often without corresponding professional development. Without structured institutional support, generational adaptation becomes a personal rather than collective responsibility, increasing the risk of role strain and disengagement (Sharma et al., 2025).

Subtheme 3.2: Adaptation of Pedagogical Approaches

Pedagogical adaptation was evident across participants' narratives, with descriptions of shifts toward student-centered, well-being-oriented teaching, generational proximity facilitating smoother relationships, and ongoing updates to teaching styles. Herzberg's framework treats the work itself as a motivator; however, sustained adaptation under heavy workload can become a stressor when unsupported (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Self-Determination Theory frames this adaptation as fulfilling relatedness and competence needs, whereas Roy's framework frames curricular and pedagogical change as a contextual stimulus that requires adaptive responses in the role-function mode (Terela, 2025).

R2: *"You cannot 100% implement the traditional style of teaching."*

R3: *"Teaching now is more student-centered and focused on mental health."*

R6: *"I relate well with students because we belong to the same generation."*

R7: *"I had to update myself with new teaching styles and trends."*

R8: *"Adapting to curriculum changes and technology is challenging."*

These accounts demonstrate both the willingness to evolve (R2; R3) and the personal cost of doing so without scaffolding (R7; R8). The practical implication is that pedagogical flexibility workshops, peer learning communities, and protected preparation time would institutionalize adaptation, transforming personal striving into collective capability.

Subtheme 3.3: Technology and AI Integration

Participants acknowledged AI as a double-edged tool. Infrastructure limitations, such as unreliable connectivity and inadequate digital platforms, further complicated integration. Within Herzberg's framework, poor

technological infrastructure is a hygiene factor whose absence leads to sustained dissatisfaction; AI-related pedagogy can function as either a motivator or a stressor, depending on institutional support (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). When faculty are required to teach beyond forty hours per week, as documented in burnout studies among nursing faculty, instructional quality is further compromised (Boamah et al., 2023).

- R4: "AI is both beneficial and problematic in teaching."
 R4: "Students misuse AI for compliance rather than learning."
 R4: "Students do not critically check or edit AI-generated outputs."
 R7: "Technological advancements and AI remain ongoing challenges."
 R8: "Internet connectivity affects teaching and learning."

These narratives show that participants were cautious about AI's pedagogical value (R4) and concerned about erosion of critical engagement (R4). Beyond pedagogy, infrastructural realities such as connectivity directly affected delivery (R8). Institutions should pair technology provisioning with ethical-use frameworks and ongoing digital-pedagogy training to convert technological change from a stressor into a growth opportunity (Rony et al., 2025).

Subtheme 3.4: Theory–Practice Gap

The persistent theory–practice gap emerged as a system-level stressor, evident in pedagogical frustration and the educator's desire to bridge classroom instruction with bedside practice. Roy's Adaptation Model identifies this structural misalignment as a contextual stimulus that disrupts the educator's role-function mode (Terela, 2025). From Herzberg's perspective, persistent frustration with workplace conditions is a hygiene-factor deficiency that drives dissatisfaction even when intrinsic motivators remain strong (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025).

- R3: "I want to impart my experience as a nurse to the new generation."
 R5: "There is a mismatch between classroom lectures and clinical exposure."
 R5: "Students are assigned to areas not aligned with their current lessons."
 R5: "This mismatch creates frustration in teaching and learning."
 R7: "I want to bridge the gap between theory and bedside practice."

These accounts show that misalignment was experienced both systemically (R5) and emotionally (R5). Educators nevertheless saw themselves as agents of integration, expressing intent to "impart" their clinical experience (R3) and to "bridge the gap" (R7). Coordinated alignment of academic scheduling with clinical placement, alongside faculty development focused on bridging pedagogy, would address this structural stressor at its source.

Theme 4: Workload Pressures, Burnout, and Work-Life Integration

This theme reveals the pervasive impact of workload demands on faculty well-being and retention. Excessive responsibilities, emotional strain, and work-life imbalance collectively shape educators' experiences and career decisions.

Subtheme 4.1: Heavy Workload and Role Strain

These data confirm that nurse educators in Davao City routinely work beyond a 40-hour workweek, with some working up to 16 consecutive hours of duty to compensate for staffing shortages. Such workload profiles align with evidence showing that nursing faculty working extended weekly schedules face an elevated risk of burnout symptoms (Boamah et al., 2023). From Herzberg's perspective, an unmanageable workload is a hygiene factor deficiency that produces intense dissatisfaction, even among intrinsically motivated educators (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025).

- R3: "Workload includes clinical duties, lectures, and major subjects."
 R3: "I render up to 16 hours of duty due to staffing shortages."
 R7: "Workload is heavy, especially with part-time status but a full-time load."
 R7: "I work more than 40 hours a week."

These narratives show that the workload burden is widespread (R3; R7) and is intensified by structural conditions such as part-time status with full-time-equivalent duty (R7). The data position R3 as particularly alarming, with sixteen-hour continuous duty long considered a patient-safety hazard in clinical practice and equally a faculty-sustainability hazard in academic work. Staffing reform and explicit workload caps would meaningfully reduce the strain.

Subtheme 4.2: Burnout and Emotional Exhaustion

Burnout was identified as a direct driver of turnover. The literature well documents the relationship between workload and burnout among nursing faculty, with extended weekly hours significantly increasing the likelihood of burnout symptoms (Boamah et al., 2023). From Herzberg's perspective, the absence of rest and stable scheduling constitutes a hygiene-factor failure; sustained fulfillment cannot fully compensate for these systemic pressures (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Roy's Adaptation Model describes burnout as an ineffective adaptive response that occurs when contextual demands exceed coping capacity (Terela, 2025).

R3: *"There are times of severe burnout due to a shortage of clinical instructors."*

R3: *"Burnout limits my ability to prepare and enhance lectures."*

R3: *"Burnout is a major reason for considering leaving."*

R8: *"Teaching demands are emotionally exhausting."*

R8: *"Lack of protected rest time affects well-being."*

These accounts demonstrate that burnout was not merely a hypothetical construct for participants; it was a daily reality (R3), evident in compromised quality (R3), directly prompting consideration of turnover (R3), and degrading emotional well-being (R8; R8). Effective interventions must therefore be structural rather than purely motivational: workload caps, protected rest days, and mental health support programs would directly address the observed drivers.

Subtheme 4.3: Work-Life Imbalance

Participants described work consistently spilling into personal life. Self-Determination Theory conceptualizes work-life intrusion as a sustained threat to the autonomy need (Luck et al., 2025; Villamin et al., 2025), whereas Herzberg's category of working conditions falls within the hygiene-factor domain, in which imbalance reliably produces dissatisfaction (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Roy's Adaptation Model predicts that persistent intrusion constitutes a chronic focal stimulus that leads to ineffective responses, such as disengagement (Terela, 2025).

R3: *"Work-life balance is a major challenge."*

R3: *"I bring work home due to heavy workload."*

R8: *"Continuous communication outside working hours increases stress."*

R7: *"Peace of mind and a non-toxic environment are more important than salary."*

R7: *"Work-life balance is important for long-term retention."*

These narratives show that intrusion took varied forms (R3; R8), but the consequences were uniform: cumulative stress. The most telling observation is R7, in which one participant prioritized a non-toxic environment above salary, indicating that psychological safety operates as a fundamental hygiene factor shaping commitment. Structural interventions, including right-sized workload allocations, defined off-duty hours, and protected personal time, would substantially improve this imbalance (Erasmus et al., 2024).

Subtheme 4.4: Need for Sustainable Work Structures

Participants consistently called for sustainable work structures, including increased staffing, clerical support, and protected rest. The literature supports this lived experience, confirming that a workload exceeding 45 hours per week strongly predicts burnout symptoms among nursing faculty (Boamah et al., 2023). According to Herzberg, addressing hygiene factors such as administrative policy and working conditions is essential to prevent sustained job dissatisfaction (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025), while Roy's Adaptation Model predicts that sustainable structures create the predictable context required for adaptive responses (Terela, 2025).

R3: *"Additional manpower is urgently needed."*

- R5: "Increasing hiring through better incentives can address manpower shortages."
 R7: "The administration tries to ease workload through support staff and initiatives."
 R8: "Reducing non-teaching workload is essential."
 R8: "Protected rest days should be respected."

Although institutional efforts to ease workload were visible (R7), participants perceived them as inadequate relative to actual need (R3; R5; R8; R8). This implies that pilot initiatives must be evaluated, scaled, and protected by formal policy to translate into sustainable workload conditions.

Theme 5: Institutional Environment, Leadership, and Organizational Culture

This theme clarifies how the institutional environment (including leadership practices, organizational culture, communication frameworks, resources, and systemic processes) significantly influences faculty experiences, satisfaction, and retention decisions.

Subtheme 5.1: Supportive Leadership and Work Culture

When leadership is approachable, communicative, and transformational, faculty report a strong sense of belonging and a strong intent to remain. Supportive environments meet the relatedness need of Self-Determination Theory (Luck et al., 2025; Villamin et al., 2025) and align with Herzberg's supervision category, which functions as a 10. Roy's Adaptation Model further predicts that supportive leadership provides the contextual stimuli required for adaptive responses across all four modes (Terela, 2025).

- R1: "There is open communication among educators, seniors, and coordinators."
 R1: "They are approachable and supportive."
 R4: "Leadership demonstrates transformational and supportive qualities."
 R4: "The dean is approachable, supportive, and actively involved."
 R9: "Supportive institutional environment is the main reason to stay."

These accounts refer to leadership not as authority but as accessibility, with participants emphasizing approachability (R1; R4), open communication (R1), and visible institutional support (R9). The strongest signal is R9, in which a participant identified the supportive environment as the main reason for remaining. Institutions seeking to retain faculty must invest deliberately in leadership development programs that emphasize distributive governance, communication practices, and empathy.

Subtheme 5.2: Leadership Gaps and Organizational Issues

Leadership characterized by resistance to change and organizational conflict fosters a toxic climate directly associated with resignation. From Herzberg's perspective, these deficiencies represent a failure of administrative policy and supervision as hygiene factors, generating profound dissatisfaction even in the presence of fulfilling teaching (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Empirical evidence confirms that inadequate institutional support predicts faculty burnout and turnover, particularly when workload exceeds sustainable weekly hours (Boamah et al., 2023). Roy's Adaptation Model frames unsupportive leadership as a negative contextual stimulus producing ineffective responses across role-function and self-concept modes (Terela, 2025).

- R2: "Leadership is traditional and resistant to change."
 R2: "Organizational conflicts create a toxic work environment."
 R2: "There is a divide between faculty and administration."
 R2: "Poor leadership contributes to faculty resignations."
 R5: "There is a lack of strong and experienced leadership."

These narratives paint a picture of the opposite of supportive leadership: resistance to change (R2), conflict (R2), administrative distance from faculty (R2), and a lack of strong leadership (R5). The direct link between poor leadership and actual resignations (R2) underscores that institutional culture is not merely a soft variable but a hard retention factor.

Subtheme 5.3: Communication and Faculty Voice

The presence or absence of structured communication channels directly shapes faculty experience. Self-Determination Theory treats faculty voice as essential to the basic psychological needs for autonomy and relatedness, and as foundational to intrinsic motivation (Luck et al., 2025; Villamin et al., 2025). Within Herzberg's framework, recognition through genuine two-way communication motivates, whereas the absence of feedback mechanisms constitutes a hygiene-factor deficiency (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Roy's Adaptation Model indicates that open communication serves as a positive contextual stimulus that helps faculty adapt to institutional change (Terela, 2025).

R1: *"We are able to voice our concerns and seek guidance."*

R1: *"If I cannot handle student concerns, I refer them to coordinators."*

R5: *"Faculty are open to collaboration and sharing ideas."*

R5: *"There is a need for open communication, such as focus group discussions."*

R5: *"Lack of voice and feedback mechanisms leads to frustration."*

These accounts suggest a clear bifurcated experience: in some institutions, voice and referral pathways functioned well (R1; R1), while in others, faculty experienced institutional silence and were forced to call for basic structures such as focus group discussions (R5; R5). Formalizing structured feedback mechanisms, including quarterly focus groups and transparent grievance channels, would institutionalize the voice participants identified as critical to satisfaction.

Subtheme 5.4: Resource and Infrastructure Constraints

Resource scarcity, from printers to simulation laboratories, shaped both teaching effectiveness and faculty satisfaction. Herzberg categorizes physical working conditions as hygiene factors; their absence ensures dissatisfaction regardless of intrinsic motivators (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Roy's Adaptation Model treats infrastructure as a residual stimulus that, when inadequate, requires disproportionate adaptive energy from the educator (Terela, 2025). Empirical evidence corroborates this: when faculty work beyond 45 hours per week, resource constraints intensify the strain and contribute to burnout (Boamah et al., 2023).

R1: *"Access to updated educational resources is needed."*

R2: *"Lack of resources (e.g., shared printer) affects efficiency."*

R6: *"Lack of equipment and materials is my main challenge."*

R6: *"Limited resources affect the delivery of instruction and return demonstrations."*

R9: *"We lack simulation laboratories and essential training facilities."*

These narratives indicate that resource gaps operate not only at the technology layer (R2) but also at the foundational clinical-learning layer (R6; R6; R9). Simulation laboratories, essential to quality nursing education, were explicitly identified as lacking (R9). Institutions must therefore treat infrastructure investment, particularly simulation laboratories and clinical equipment, as foundational to retention rather than discretionary.

Subtheme 5.5: Organizational Systems and Inefficiencies

Bureaucratic inefficiency and reactive administrative cultures significantly diminished faculty time and institutional loyalty. Hiring delays and resistance to digital systems directly impeded the institution's capacity to address the staffing and workload pressures identified earlier. Herzberg's framework positions administrative policy as a hygiene factor; persistent inefficiency operates as a chronic source of dissatisfaction (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Roy's Adaptation Model further predicts that bureaucratic friction generates role strain by continually diverting adaptive energy from core academic responsibilities (Terela, 2025). Burnout research reinforces this dynamic, showing that inadequate institutional support significantly increases the risk of emotional exhaustion and turnover intention (Boamah et al., 2023).

R2: *"Institutional processes are inefficient and resource-limited."*

R2: *"There is resistance to paperless and technology-based systems."*

R3: *"Hiring is delayed due to board approval processes."*

R5: *"Actions are often reactive (e.g., during audits) rather than planned."*

R8: *"Clerical tasks reduce time for teaching and mentoring."*

These narratives show that bureaucratic friction emerged at multiple levels: form-level inefficiencies (R2), digital reluctance (R2), approval bottlenecks affecting staffing (R3S29), and reactive rather than planned administrative behavior (R5). Workflow digitization, process re-engineering, and predictive (rather than reactive) institutional planning would meaningfully reduce systemic strain.

Theme 6: Professional Development, Compensation, and Retention Mechanisms

This theme captures the structural and career-related conditions that sustain or weaken long-term commitment. Participants' narratives reveal that intrinsic motivation and professional fulfillment are necessary but insufficient without adequate institutional support.

Subtheme 6.1: Access to Development Opportunities

Participants acknowledged the availability of development opportunities while also emphasizing uneven access. Herzberg identifies growth and advancement as intrinsic motivators essential to long-term job satisfaction (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). According to Self-Determination Theory, inconsistent access undermines the basic psychological need for competence, thereby weakening educators' long-term commitment. Roy's Adaptation Model treats development as a contextual stimulus that, when equally distributed, supports adaptive role-function responses (Terela, 2025).

- R4: "Professional development opportunities are provided (seminars, trainings)."
- R4: "The university shoulders expenses for training and seminars."
- R8: "The institution provides seminars, workshops, and development programs."
- R3: "Professional development opportunities exist but are not equally accessible."
- R9: "Professional development opportunities are still limited in our college."

These accounts show a recognized supply of professional development (R4; R4; R8), yet access remained uneven (R3) and often constrained by institutional factors (R9). Expanding the scope and standardizing access, particularly for part-time and probationary faculty, would address structural inequities identified throughout the dataset.

Subtheme 6.2: Inequities in Development

Inequities in access to development were reported across multiple institutional categories, including part-time status, probationary tenure, and budgetary constraints. Herzberg's theory indicates that when administrative policies exclude employees from advancement opportunities, the hygiene factor of fair policies is violated, resulting in sustained dissatisfaction (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Self-Determination Theory frames exclusion as a direct threat to the competence need and a predictor of reduced intrinsic motivation (Luck et al., 2025; Villamin et al., 2025). Roy's Adaptation Model treats exclusionary policies as negative contextual stimuli disrupting role-function adaptation (Terela, 2025). Empirical evidence indicates that nursing faculty working extended hours face a heightened risk of burnout, a vulnerability that is further amplified when professional development support is also limited (Boamah et al., 2023).

- R1: "As a part-time employee, I cannot fully appreciate professional development opportunities."
- R6: "As a part-time instructor, I do not have access to professional development opportunities."
- R3: "Newer instructors are not prioritized for trainings."
- R8: "Regular faculty are prioritized over probationary faculty."
- R8: "Limited slots and budget restrict access to trainings."

These narratives consistently document exclusion patterns driven by employment category (R1; R6), tenure (R8), and resourcing (R8). The implication is that transparent eligibility criteria, expanded training budgets, and routinized inclusion of probationary and part-time faculty would close the developmental gap that participants identified.

Subtheme 6.3: Need for Structured Training

Participants advocated for sustained, pedagogy-focused, nursing-specific training rather than sporadic seminars. Herzberg identifies advancement and growth as sustained motivators whose effectiveness depends on continuous

investment rather than episodic activity (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Self-Determination Theory indicates that structured, ongoing development is essential for internalizing the competence need and reinforcing long-term commitment (Luck et al., 2025; Villamin et al., 2025). Roy's Adaptation Model further predicts that regular training acts as a contextual stimulus that strengthens adaptive responses in the educator's role (Terela, 2025).

R2: *"There is a lack of training focused on pedagogy and student management."*

R2: *"Professional development programs are not tailored to nursing education."*

R2: *"Limited seminars (about once per year) are insufficient."*

R3: *"Regular trainings and updates are needed for skill enhancement."*

R9: *"Structured training programs and certifications are more valuable than seminars alone."*

These narratives repeatedly contrast episodic, generic seminars with what participants desired: discipline-tailored (R2), pedagogically focused (R2), regular (R2; R3), and credentialed (R95). Structured training programs, including pedagogical certification and AI-in-education modules, would convert latent professional aspirations into measurable institutional benefits (Smith et al., 2023).

Subtheme 6.4: Compensation, Benefits, and Incentives

Compensation emerged as a non-negotiable determinant of retention. Participants consistently identified salary as a key factor and called for competitive, transparent pay structures. Herzberg treats pay as a hygiene factor; while adequate compensation alone does not motivate, its absence generates intense dissatisfaction and turnover intent (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Self-Determination Theory frames compensation as a precondition for autonomy, as economic security enables the pursuit of intrinsic goals. Roy's Adaptation Model conceptualizes fair compensation as the primary contextual stimulus enabling sustained adaptation in the role-function and interdependence modes (Terela, 2025). Burnout research further suggests that workload reform must be paired with compensation reform, because faculty working extended hours require proportional compensation (Boamah et al., 2023).

R1: *"Providing a competitive salary would help retain faculty."*

R3: *"Higher compensation is necessary."*

R5: *"Improved compensation would enhance retention."*

R6: *"Salary is a key factor in long-term commitment."*

R8: *"Compensation structure should be transparent and fair."*

These accounts frame compensation as foundational rather than discretionary. Each participant highlighted fairness (R8) and competitiveness (R1) as essential, suggesting that any renewal of the compensation policy would need to address both external competitiveness and internal transparency (Malin et al., 2024; Mazinga, 2022).

Subtheme 6.5: External Opportunities and Retention Challenges

International and clinical alternatives exert sustained pull on faculty. Participants identified significant salary differentials and noted that compensation considerations often prompt them to consider leaving. Herzberg's framework predicts that external opportunities offering superior hygiene factors intensify perceived inadequacy of the current institutional environment, accelerating turnover (Kourkouta et al., 2025; Zhang & Gandham, 2025). Self-Determination Theory frames this as an autonomy-competence tension in which the perceived availability of better-resourced external roles undermines internal motivation. Roy's Adaptation Model shows how external stimuli continuously challenge the educator's role-function mode, especially without strong institutional buffering (Terela, 2025). Recent burnout research confirms that inadequate institutional support, particularly when paired with extended weekly workload, sharpens intention to leave (Boamah et al., 2023).

R5: *"I have considered working abroad as an alternative career."*

R5: *"Salary differences between local and international settings are significant."*

R6: *"Higher salary opportunities influence my decision to leave."*

R8: *"Overseas work offers better financial compensation."*

R9: *"Better financial compensation is available outside academia."*

These narratives demonstrate that external opportunities are not abstractions; they are concrete calculations (R5). One participant explicitly identified overseas compensation (R8) as a competitive alternative to local academic employment, while another described opportunities outside academia as financially superior (R9). Comprehensive retention strategies must therefore address professional autonomy, career development, workload sustainability, and pay in tandem; improving only one lever without the others will leave faculty exposed to the cumulative pull of external options.

Conclusion

This descriptive-phenomenological study provides a contextually grounded, idiographic account of nurse faculty retention and turnover that quantitative work cannot, drawing on the lived voices of nine participants in Davao City and anchored in an integrated theoretical frame that combines Self-Determination Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Roy's Adaptation Model. Its substantive additions to the discipline include a unified typology of stay factors, surfaced dimensions of inequity affecting part-time and probationary educators, and a set of practitioner-oriented recommendations directly tied to participants' narratives rather than to abstract ideals—collectively offering transferable evidence for analogous Philippine and international academic settings.

The findings carry clear implications for practice, policy, education, and research: nurse leaders must engineer structural supports such as workload caps and clerical assistance rather than rely on individual resilience; policymakers must adopt holistic retention architectures that pair competitive compensation with equitable development, mental-health benefits, and tenure-protected reforms; nursing programs must prepare clinicians for academic roles through structured mentoring and continuous pedagogical development, including AI ethics and Generation Z pedagogy; and researchers are invited to test the typology longitudinally, quantitatively, and across other regions. Above all, the study compels the academic community to treat faculty voice as a non-negotiable governance input and to coordinate reforms across all four domains in ways that remain anchored in the lived realities of nurse educators themselves.

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