

Reviewer 1 Report

Manuscript title: Ten Years and Counting: Exploring the Experiences of Senior High School Teachers Experiencing Career Stagnation in Public Schools

Version: 1

Comments:

This manuscript addresses an important and under-studied and uses a descriptive phenomenological approach to surface lived experience. The manuscript presents rich participant quotations and clear thematic findings that are likely to interest readers concerned with teacher retention and professional development. Before publication, the manuscript would benefit from clarification of some methodological details, tighter presentation of sampling and saturation, minor language polishing, and a clearer statement on ethics and reflexivity.

Major

1. Please clarify exactly how participants were recruited (names/roles of gatekeepers, whether any invited teachers declined) and how “theoretical saturation” was determined. State the timeline for recruitment and confirm whether any participants dropped out or refused participation.
2. The manuscript states that Colaizzi’s seven-step method was used. Please add a brief paragraph showing how significant statements were transformed into formulated meanings and then into themes.
3. The section on trustworthiness is helpful; please provide concrete examples of the audit trail items kept (e.g., raw audio files, coding memos) and explicitly state which participants took part in member checking and how their feedback affected the final themes.
4. Please add a short explicit ethics statement (institutional approval / IRB or exempt status, and date), and state that informed consent was obtained and whether participants were compensated or anonymized via codes.
5. The study is described as being in Davao City. Please more precisely state the school contexts (urban/rural mix) and expand the limitation paragraph to acknowledge transferability limitations beyond the local context.

Minor

1. A few tense inconsistencies and sentence starts with numerals should be corrected (e.g., spell out numbers at the beginning of sentences).
2. Ensure every subsection header has consistent formatting (e.g., 2.1, 2.2 etc.).
3. Double-check DOI/links in the references list for consistency.
4. Consider adding a simple flow diagram of participant recruitment (PRISMA-style or simple flow chart) for clarity.

Overall recommendation: Minor revisions. The contribution is valuable; if the above clarifications are added, the paper will be suitable for publication.

Reviewer 2 Report

Manuscript title: Ten Years and Counting: Exploring the Experiences of Senior High School Teachers Experiencing Career Stagnation in Public Schools

Version: 1

Comments:

This manuscript provides a compact and thoughtful phenomenological account of why teachers persist in the same rank for long periods. The writing is generally clear and organized. I suggest the authors strengthen theoretical links in the discussion, expand practical policy recommendations, and add brief verbatim examples to illustrate how reflective practices supported resilience.

Major

1. Connect more explicitly with theoretical frameworks. You cite Herzberg and Self-Determination Theory. Please add one or two sentences in the discussion that map each major theme to specific aspects of these theories (e.g., how “intrinsic motivation” maps to autonomy/competence/relatedness).
2. The policy implications are useful but somewhat general. Please include concrete items (for DepEd or school leaders) such as the structure and frequency of mentorship meetings, possible indicators for recognition awards, or an outline of a brief career-enrichment workshop.
3. Consider adding one short verbatim quote per theme to allow readers to see the direct voice of participants.
3. Add a short paragraph noting cultural/faith influences (several participants mention faith) and how this might mediate persistence in the Philippines compared to other settings.

Minor

1. A few phrases could be tightened (suggest a proofread).
2. Ensure the dates and sample size are stated clearly in the abstract (e.g., “ten teachers interviewed between July and September 2025”).

Overall recommendation: Minor revisions.

Reviewer 1 Report

Manuscript title: Ten Years and Counting: Exploring the Experiences of Senior High School Teachers Experiencing Career Stagnation in Public Schools

Version: 2

Comments:

Revisions are substantially complied. The paper is now recommended for publication.

Reviewer 2 Report

Manuscript title: Ten Years and Counting: Exploring the Experiences of Senior High School Teachers Experiencing Career Stagnation in Public Schools

Version: 2

Comments:

Revisions are substantially complied. The paper is now recommended for publication.