Exploring The Influence of Leadership Styles on Faculty Turnover: A Qualitative Case Study of FDSA

CARL JOMEL S. GARCIA[1], GIAN CARLO B. GANIA[2], REI MARK M. RAMOS[3], LORINDA E. PASUAL[4], NOEL T. FLORENCONDIA[5]

[1]FDSA Aviation College of Science and Technology Inc., Mabalacat City, Pampanga, Philippines
[2]Jocson College Inc. Angeles City, Pampanga, Philippines
[3]WCC Aeronautical & Technology College, Caloocan City, Philippines
[4, 5]Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, Cabanatuan City, Philippines

Abstract - The impact of leadership styles on faculty turnover at FDSA Aviation College of Science and Technology Inc., a specialized aviation school in the Philippines, is examined in this qualitative case study. Since instructors at FDSA frequently leave in the middle of a semester, faculty turnover has been a persistent issue, necessitating an investigation into the underlying reasons for attrition. This study investigated the effects of leadership behavior on faculty motivation, job satisfaction, and resignation decisions, guided by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Bass and Avolio's Transformational and Transactional Leadership Theory. Open-ended questionnaires were used to gather data from former faculty members who left their positions between 2022 and 2025. The results of the thematic analysis showed that faculty experiences were adversely impacted by inconsistent leadership practices, specifically in the areas of communication, acknowledgment, support, and handling of subpar performance. Autocratic leadership, a dearth of opportunities for professional development, and inadequate administrative responsiveness were cited by many participants as major reasons for their departure. Leadership style turned out to be a significant factor in faculty turnover, despite certain personal and professional factors. The study emphasizes how critical it is that FDSA foster consistent, encouraging, and emotionally intelligent leadership behaviors. For educational leaders and policymakers looking to improve faculty retention, particularly in specialized academic institutions, the findings provide insightful information.

I. INTRODUCTION

In an academic institution it is very important to have instructors that are consistent to provide a quality education and training. Moreover, Wedenoja, J. Papay, and M. Kraft (2022) discovered that there is strong evidence that students' academic and behavioral outcomes are improved when they have the same teacher. The enhanced match quality from a repeat student-teacher assignment is probably due to both the teacher adjusting to a student and teaching that student more successfully, as well as the student adjusting to and learning from the teacher, even though they discuss these estimates using the terminology of teacher effects.

FDSA Aviation College of Science and Technology INC. is a college institution primarily focused on aviation related programs, it is located at Camachiles Mabalacat City. The institution has been operating for 10 years already and most of the students wonder why their instructors change every semester and some leave in the middle of the semester. This study aims to identify the leadership factors that affect faculty decisions in leaving the organization.

A. Theoretical Framework

This study will be guided by the principles of the transformational and transactional leadership theory by Bass and Avolio (1994). The framework will highlight the effect of leadership style on employees' performance and organizational commitment. Moreover, Herzberg's Two-Factor theory will also be used to understand how strongly leadership affects employees' job satisfaction and faculty turnover. Combining these two frameworks will provide insight

into how leadership behaviors can either motivate or demotivate faculty members or how the leadership contributes to the decision to leave the institution

B. Scope and Limitations of the Study
This study will be exploring the leadership styles experienced by the previous and present faculty members at FDSA Aviation College. It will deepen the dive and understand how these leadership practices influence the decision of the faculty members to leave or remain at the academic institution. This study is qualitative and will involve samples of former instructors, selected through purposive sampling.

This study is limited, nor does it not aim to quantify the turnover rate or generalize the findings to all academic institutions. Moreover, some personal aspects unrelated to leadership like intrinsic and extrinsic factors (e.g., salary issues, family matters, career shifts) will be mentioned but will not be elaborated. Those who relate directly to leadership practices are the only ones that will be discussed. Time constraints and participant availability may also limit the depth of data collection.

C. Significance of Study
In most academic institutions, especially in the specialized field of aviation, faculty turnover is a recurring problem. The primary objective of this study is to highlight how a certain academic institution's leadership style and practices affect faculty member's decision whether they stay or leave. It is anticipated that the results and findings of this study will greatly help various interested parties in the fields of academic and organizational leadership.

In this study we will have insights into the advantages and disadvantages of the current leadership philosophies of the administrations and school heads of FDSA Aviation College of Science and Technology Inc. In this manner, School leaders will have a great view on how their management practices affect faculty motivation, job satisfaction, and their long-term retention by knowing the effects of their own leadership styles. Moreover, this will give the faculty the opportunity to discuss their viewpoints and experiences with the leadership in the organization. It will recognize how critical leadership is in shaping company culture, employee satisfaction, and career progression. The results can empower faculty members by bringing attention to their problems, which will foster a supportive culture.

Although the students have indirect relationships with the leadership, they will be the ones who will benefit from faculty retention. According to Sides, Meredith L.C.; Williams, Dan E.; Martirosyan, Nara M.(2022) Students with ongoing instructor relationships show increased engagement, motivation, and sensitivity to academic or personal difficulties, which can translate into resiliency and higher GPA . Therefore, having effective leadership will lower faculty turnover which will benefit students' academic and personal growth by creating a more suitable learning environment.

By providing a targeted case study in a Philippine aviation college setting—an area with little qualitative research the study adds to the body of knowledge on faculty retention and leadership in the larger academic and research community. This study can serve as a benchmark for future investigations into the ways in which leadership conduct affects employee retention in specialized educational fields.

Finally, the study emphasizes the significance of creating leadership development programs within academic institutions for policy makers and educational planners. For institutions to retain a skilled and reliable teaching staff, it emphasizes the necessity of strategic planning in faculty management.

II   METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A. Research Design
A qualitative method of research will be used in this study. According to Hammarberg (2016), Questions about experience, meaning, and viewpoint are addressed using "qualitative" methods, usually from the participant's point of view. Typically, this data cannot be measured or counted. Among the methods used in qualitative research include "small-group discussions" to examine attitudes, beliefs, and notions of normative behavior; "semi-structured interviews" to gather opinions on a specific subject or, with key informants, to gather background data or an institutional viewpoint; in-depth interviews' understanding an event, and experience from personal perspective. In this study, the said research method is

very useful to explore the influence of leadership style that contributes to faculty turnovers at FDSA Aviation College of Science and Technology Inc.

B. Local of the Study
The study is conducted at FDSA Aviation College of Science and Technology Inc.; a specialized institution located in Bkn Bldg. Mc Arthur Highway Brgy. Camachilles Mabalacat City, Pampanga, which serves as a premier center for aviation education and training. The institution is strategically positioned to provide access to state-of-the-art facilities, industry-relevant programs, and a diverse student population. This locale has numerous technical instructors since 2022 up to date that have been frequently resigning, making it an ideal setting for the research focus.

C. Samples and Sampling Procedure
This study used a non-probability sampling technique called Purposive sampling since the samples are selected based on specific characteristics relevant to the research. All faculty members who resigned from 2022-2025, and Faculty members of Second Semester of School Year 2024-2025.

D. Respondents of the Study
The respondents of this study consist of 10 respondents that have been resigned to the institution from the year 2022 up to date.

E. Research Instrument
In this study, the main research instrument is a self-administered open-ended questionnaire. It was developed to collect detailed and personal insights from former faculty members of FDSA Aviation College of Science and Technology Inc. The questionnaire was created using Google Forms, allowing respondents to participate remotely and anonymously.

The questions are designed to explore the leadership styles experienced by the respondents during their employment and how these leadership behaviors may have influenced their decision to leave the institution. The instrument was constructed based on the theoretical frameworks of Bass and Avolio's Transformational and Transactional Leadership Theory (1994) and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959).

The questionnaire consists of four parts:

Part I – Background Information

This section gathers basic contextual data from the respondents, such as:

1. Length of service at FDSA
2. Employment status (part-time/full-time)

This section helps the researchers understand the participant's teaching background while keeping identities anonymous.

Part II – Leadership Experience and Perceptions

This section explores how former faculty members perceived the leadership styles of their immediate supervisors. It focuses on experiences of inspiration, discipline, feedback, support, and management response—elements related to transformational and transactional leadership.

1. How would you describe the leadership style of your department head or immediate supervisor?
2. Would you say your motivation at FDSA was driven more by fear of consequences or by encouragement and vision?
3. How did leadership manage underperformance among faculty? Was it constructive or punitive?
4. How did leadership respond when problems or mistakes occur? Did they intervene fairly and consistently?
5. Did you ever feel that a leader personally cared about your professional growth or challenges?

Part III – Job Satisfaction and Workplace Environment

This section is guided by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. It focuses on motivators (e.g., achievement, recognition) and hygiene factors (e.g., salary, conditions, policies) that shaped the respondents' job experience.

1. Were your efforts and contributions regularly recognized by leadership or the institution?
2. Did you feel a sense of achievement in your role as an instructor at FDSA? What contributed to or hindered that feeling?

Part IV – Decision to Resign

This section investigates the key reasons that led to the respondent's decision to leave the institution and reflects on whether leadership style played a major role.

1. What were your main reasons for leaving the institution?
2. To what extent did leadership behavior influence your decision to leave?
3. In your opinion, what leadership changes could help retain faculty members in the future?
4. If leadership practices were different, would you have considered staying? Why or why not?

The instrument was reviewed by academic peers and mentors for content relevance and clarity. A short pilot test was also conducted to ensure that the questions were understandable, neutral in tone, and capable of generating detailed responses.

A. Data Gathering Procedure
The questionnaire's link will be sent to the participants through messenger, and they were given 3 days to complete and answer it.

B. Data analysis Technique
To examine the responses gathered using the open-ended questionnaire, the current study will apply the Thematic Analysis. As the purpose of the study is to gain insight into the impact of leadership styles on the faculty members' decision to exit FDSA, thematic analysis can be used to determine repeating patterns or themes that are common among participants.

The answers will be gathered using Google Forms, and the researchers (we two) will collaborate in examining every answer. Initially, we will attentively read all the answers to become familiar with the overall content. As we read, we will make notes and mark out whatever appears significant, like descriptions of behavior leadership, dissatisfaction feelings, or reasons for resignation.

Next, we start manually coding the data. That is giving simple labels or "codes" to short pieces of text. For instance, when a respondent states, "My department head never gave feedback," we might code it as "lack of feedback." We then bring together codes that are alike and create themes that represent broader ideas, such as "poor communication" or "lack of motivation".

Once the themes have been established, we shall go through and refine them, where necessary merging, splitting, or re-naming them to ensure that they accurately reflect what the participants intended. Once we have established the themes, we shall discuss them individually in our paper, with some verbatim quotes of the participants to underpin our interpretation.

Finally, to ensure that the analysis is fair and balanced, we will review each other's work and resolve any inconsistency in how we both interpret or classify the data. This will prevent personal bias and ensure that our results are credible.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Perception of Leadership Styles
This chapter presents and discusses the results gathered from interviews conducted with former faculty members of FDSA, aimed at exploring how leadership styles influenced faculty turnover. The responses were analyzed thematically and are discussed according to recurring patterns and significant insights derived from the data.

Participants provided varying descriptions of their department heads' leadership styles. Some explicitly identified autocratic leadership, where decisions were made without consulting faculty. Others described a mixed or average leadership approach, while some gave positive yet vague descriptions such as "good" or "balanced."

This variation indicates a lack of consistent leadership style across departments. The presence of autocratic leadership may have discouraged collaboration and open communication, which are essential for faculty retention.

2. Sources of Motivation
 Most respondents reported that their motivation was driven by encouragement, vision, and a supportive work environment. Only one respondent mentioned

that neither encouragement nor fear influenced their motivation.

This reflects that inspirational and transformational leadership behaviors positively impacted faculty motivation. However, where such motivation was absent, faculty felt disconnected, which could influence their decision to leave.

3. Management of Underperformance
The responses indicated a lack of a standardized approach to managing underperformance. While a few reported constructive methods like private discussions, others said leadership ignored underperformance altogether.

This inconsistency suggests a leadership gap that affects team performance and morale. Leaders who do not actively address underperformance may contribute to a sense of unfairness and inefficiency among faculty.

4. Handling of Mistakes and Problems
Some faculty noted that leaders intervened fairly and consistently when mistakes occurred, while others claimed that no action was taken.

These responses reflect a divided perception of leadership accountability. Effective intervention fosters a culture of learning, while inaction can breed frustration and disillusionment, eventually leading to resignation.

5. Support for Professional Growth
Most participants felt that their supervisors showed genuine concern for their professional growth and challenges, while at least one respondent did not share this view.

This inconsistency suggests that servant leadership qualities were present in some but not all leaders. Personalized support contributes significantly to faculty satisfaction and long-term commitment.

6. Recognition of Efforts and Contributions
There was a clear disparity in responses regarding recognition. Some faculty stated that their efforts were frequently acknowledged, while others reported infrequent or no recognition.

The absence of regular recognition can diminish job satisfaction and impact on a faculty member's sense of belonging. Leadership that regularly affirms individual contributions can enhance retention rates.

7. Sense of Achievement
Despite institutional challenges, most respondents expressed a personal sense of achievement in their role. Contributing factors include their own professional development, such as graduate studies or intrinsic motivation.

While this sense of fulfillment is positive, it was often independent of the institution's leadership, suggesting that the organization itself may not have been a strong contributor to professional satisfaction.

8. Reasons for Leaving
The most common reasons for faculty resignation included:
- Career growth
- Better compensation
- Issues with leadership and administration
- Personal goals or misalignment with teaching profession
- Leadership issues, including poor decision-making and lack of responsibility at higher levels, were explicitly cited by several respondents, highlighting the direct influence of poor leadership on faculty turnover.

9. Influence of Leadership on Turnover Decision
While a few participants stated that leadership behavior had a minimal influence on their decision to leave, most agreed that leadership had a moderate to significant impact, especially concerning poor decision-making, lack of empathy, and irresponsibility.

This finding reinforces the conclusion that leadership behavior is a key determinant in an individual's decision to remain in or leave the institution.

10. Suggested Leadership Improvements
Respondents recommended several changes to improve leadership and retain faculty:
- Demonstrating empathy and emotional intelligence

- Improved communication
- Consistent check-ins and support
- More growth opportunities

These suggestions align closely with transformational and servant leadership models, which emphasize relational leadership and staff development.

11. Potential for Retention if Leadership Were Improved

When asked whether improved leadership could have influenced their decision to stay, most responded "yes" or "maybe." Some highlighted that compassionate and supportive leadership could have made a difference. A few, however, indicated that they would have still left due to personal or career-related reasons.

This suggests that while leadership is not the only factor, it is a substantial contributor to faculty retention and must be addressed to build long-term institutional loyalty.

IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The data indicates that leadership style and behavior play a significant role in shaping faculty experiences and turnover decisions at FDSA. Inconsistencies in leadership practices, especially in recognition, communication, support, and accountability contributed to dissatisfaction and, ultimately, faculty resignations.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:
1. Most respondents said that the leadership style they were in is autocratic. Which discouraged honest feedback and open communication.
2. Management underperformance affected the faculty's morale and performance.
3. Even with a supportive workplace, employees will always consider leaving if the prospects for advancement and compensation are significantly better elsewhere. Career growth and fair pay remain decisive factors in retention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were drawn:
1. Managers and Leaders need to continually improve themselves to retain respect and trust from the employees. Additionally, along with this developing emotional intelligence will greatly ensure that they can respond effectively to employees' needs, foster a positive and open working environment, and handle conflicts with empathy and fairness.
2. The institution needs to prioritize having a structured, consistent, and supportive leadership culture aimed to help leaders grow in areas like communication, recognizing faculty contribution, offering genuine support, being fair and accountable.
3. Faculty members are professionals and would likely stay if the institution provided clear opportunities for career growth and better compensation.

REFERENCES

[1] Instructor Continuity: A Tool for Increasing Student Success in First-Year Composition Sequences. - Free Online Library. (2015). Thefreelibrary.com.https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Instructor+Continuity%3a+A+Tool+for+Increasing+Student+Success+in...-a0715769331

[2] Hammarberg, K., Kirkman, M., & De Lacey, S. (2016). Qualitative research methods: when to use them and how to judge them. Human Reproduction, 31(3), 498501.https://doi.org/10.1093/humrep/dev334

[3] Wedenoja, L., Papay, J., Kraft, M. A., Rockefeller Institute of Government, & Brown University. (2022). Second Time's the Charm? How Sustained Relationships from Repeat Student-Teacher Matches Build Academic and Behavioral Skills. In EdWorkingPaper.https://edworkingpapers.com/sites/default/files/ai22-590.pdf

[4] Klein, G. (2023). Transformational and Transactional Leadership, Organizational Support and Environmental Competition Intensity as Antecedents of Intrapreneurial

Behaviors. European Research on Management and Business Economics, 29(2), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iedeen.2023.100215

[5] Simply Psychology. (2025, April 18). Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation-Hygiene. https://www.simplypsychology.org/herzbergs-two-factor-theory.html