

**LIFE OF THE UNEMPLOYED: UNCOVERING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF
RETRENCHED FACULTY MEMBERS**

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

People and work are intimately connected. A career can provide one with a sense of purpose and significance, a sense of determination, a means of social connection, and a source of fulfillment. Work provides one with the means in terms of salary and wages and to contribute to and provide for one's family and relationship maintenance. Retrenchment is a reality in the workplace, and more employees face retrenchment and life after retrenchment. Retrenched faculty members also undergo such experience. The switch from being employed to unemployed is change in itself and certainly will cause changes whether for better or for worse in the life of people. Retrenchment may affect people differently due to varying backgrounds and situations. This study aimed to explore and interpret the meaning of the lived experiences of faculty members after retrenchment in a private university. The participants were chosen purposively and saturation principles were applied. Seven participants who were retrenched faculty members were interviewed. Data were analyzed using the Van Manen methodological interpretation and thematic analysis to categorize and discern patterns. In-depth interview was used to collect data. All interviews were audiotaped, transcribed, and translated by the researcher. There were four major themes that emerged. The major themes were: (1.) Sets-off Various Emotions; (2.) Challenges; (3.) Effect on

Relationships; and (4.) Support System and Coping Strategies. The retrenched faculty members looked at the meaning of their lived experience as the end of happiness, a

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feeling and sense of uselessness, end of career, unanticipated retirement, and valuable life lessons. These lived experiences are true to those who have experienced such phenomenon. These findings cannot be generalized to all retrenched faculty members. The identified themes formed the basis for the formulation of recommendation guidelines on the lived experiences of retrenched faculty members. It was recommended that they may carry out an analysis of alternatives for retrenchment and ensure that all potential alternatives have been considered in order to avert retrenchment or reduce the number of faculty members affected. This may include alternative employment within the organization. They can conduct transiting trainings and self-development programs that focus on psychological counselling, job placement, small business training, re-training, and skills upgrading so that retrenched faculty members find alternative sources of income and minimize the impact of retrenchment such as financial constraints. The faculty members may experience the same situation and can help themselves by seeking financial advice and counselling and engaging in activities that will promote self and professional growth. These activities may include reading books, attending seminars, workshops and trainings, and enrolling in formal education.

The family members can help by providing the support system which is found to be beneficial, to overcome the burden of life after retrenchment. Lastly, this study may be used as a basis for other studies that would contribute to a better understanding of life after retrenchment, especially of faculty members. This can be used as a baseline for quantitative or mixed method-research that can further validate the findings.