

Introspecting the Experiences of Beginning Administrators in Face-to-Face Classes: Elementary Teachers-in-Charge in Focus

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Abstract:- This study explored the experiences of the beginning elementary school teacher-in-charge from a rural school in Davao City District. Eight (8) elementary school heads participated in the study. The study used a phenomenological approach to extract the ideas of the teacher participants. The participants were purposely selected as representatives from the pool of teachers in the same division. The in-depth interview was employed to gather some information regarding their respective experiences as beginning administrators.

Using the thematic analysis, the following themes emerged as pertaining to their experiences: Continuance of school dynamism and operations, Multitasking roles of school heads, and Difficulties in making school resources available. The coping mechanisms of new school administrators were adaptability and flexibility with the situation, as well as learning from training and workshops. The insights gained from the participants showed three significant ideas, namely: Developing friendly relationships with community leaders, understanding individual differences, and Anticipating management changes. The new principals or new school heads should be more vigilant in observing new school management policies and standards. The school head may attend training and seminars to enrich his or her management skills in dealing with the new teachers and different stakeholders. The teachers may engage in various school activities with an open mind, considering the cultural values and practices of their stakeholders.

Keywords:- Experiences of Beginning Administrators, Face-to-Face Classes, Elementary- Teachers-in-Charge.

I. INTRODUCTION

Taking on a leadership role will always involve reflection and judgment. While advantages, incentives, power, and authority are tempting, obligations and responsibilities make one stop and think. Seniority and performance become the deciding considerations for promotion in the event that there isn't another competent applicant for the leadership position. The senior instructor receives a promotion even though she doesn't have the required credentials—especially in education. He or she is compelled to accept the offer as a result. Some are even forced into leadership roles since there aren't enough suitable applicants. The traditional standard for appointment is seniority because the person with the longest tenure seems

to be the most qualified applicant. This serves as a springboard for the difficulties a brand-new school administrator can encounter in the classroom. As has generally been noted, a person's lack of experience, education, or training may also increase the load that they bear in their area of duty.

The principal examination evaluates a number of performance domains, including school leadership, instructional leadership, the capacity to foster a positive learning environment, professional human resource development, parent involvement and community building, school management and day-to-day operations, interpersonal sensitivity and integrity, reading comprehension, and English language proficiency, according to the Department of Education (2019). In isolated regions, a teacher who has completed or passed the qualifying exam can still become the principal of a school. The issue stems from the appointment of teachers to become school principals with little training and preparedness.

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- *What are the experiences of beginning public elementary school heads handling various roles and responsibilities in the rural areas in the new normal?*
- *How do beginning school heads cope with the challenges they encounter in their role as leaders in rural schools in the new normal?*
- *What educational management insights can be drawn from the experiences and challenges of beginning public elementary school heads?*

The following individuals or organizations were the beneficiaries of this study in order to ascertain its outcomes and the intended audience for its conclusions. According to

these research, aspiring academic leaders will face a range of challenges, but with the right planning and guidance, they may be surmounted.

II. METHOD

Presented in this study is the method. It includes the Philosophical Assumption, Qualitative Assumption, Design and Procedure, Research, Participants, Role of the Researcher, Data Collection, Data Analysis, and Trustworthiness of the Study.

My study's philosophical presumptions were applied when evaluating and interpreting the data. Fundamentally, psychological research can be used to improve our understanding of the lived experiences of various groups of people, explain and predict aspects of the human experience, or critique and alter the current environments in which we live and strive for development (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2013). Creswell (2012) asserts that the ontological question has to do with the nature and properties of reality. The concept of many realities is accepted by qualitative researchers, who report on these numerous realities by examining a variety of data sources from the viewpoints and experiences of various individuals. As a result, as a qualitative researcher, I carry out studies on persons with the goal of reporting these various realities. The use of several types of evidence in themes, such as the actual statements of various people and the presentation of various viewpoints, is proof of multiple realities.

➤ *Qualitative Assumptions*

People use Social Constructivism as an interpretive framework for qualitative assumptions in order to make sense of their reality and create personal meanings that are connected to their experiences (Creswell, 2013). Every human does not naturally possess these meanings. Instead, meanings come from interacting with other people (Creswell, 2013). The multiplicity and diversity of these meanings prompt the researcher to focus on the complexity of viewpoints rather than trying to distill the meanings into a small number of concepts or categories. In addition, my goal as a researcher is to depend as much as I can on the participant viewpoints. In social and historical contexts, these individualized interpretations are regularly contested. Stated differently, they are not just ingrained in people; rather, they are shaped by social interactions as well as historical and cultural norms that function in people's lives.

Open-ended questions were used in a qualitative inquiry-based phenomenological research design for the study. A type of study known as phenomenological research involves the researcher distilling the main ideas from participant accounts of a phenomenon. In order to comprehend the experiences of the study participants, the researcher brackets or sets aside his or her own experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In presenting the "living worlds" of the participants, the study ultimately revealed the significance of each one in relation to the experience as a design that encapsulates the experiences of a "chosen few" dealing with particular phenomena. Additionally, an In-

Depth Interview (IDI) with participants was used in this study to obtain their observations. This method entails the utilization and collecting of a range of interviews, observations, histories, and interactional and visual texts that depict the routines, challenges, and significance of individual lives, according to Denzel & Lincoln (2000), as referenced by Lee (2007) in Pelobello (2015). It is an investigation process of comprehension that examines a social or human issue and is founded on several methodological traditions. It creates a comprehensive image, examines statements, records, and in-depth perspectives of informants, and carries out the research in an organic environment.

In addition, it is necessary to investigate real-life scenarios from the perspective of the participants regarding their contextual nature. Phenomenology is thus a suitable and useful approach to investigate the subjects of school heads' actual experiences in public elementary schools. We'll examine, categorize, and extract recurring themes from each interview.

Through informed consent, the participants were provided with sufficient information about the research project. The participants freely provided their consent, and the researcher ensured that they understood the nature of the request and that their participation was entirely voluntary. Written informed permission was obtained from each participant. Potential volunteers were contacted one-on-one over the internet, and they were informed of the study's objectives and the procedure for gathering data. The study's participants' anonymity and confidentiality were maintained through the withholding of their names and identities during the data collection, analysis, and reporting phases. The Data Privacy Act of 2012, also known as Republic Act 10173, governs the secrecy of data management.

This study was carried out in one of the Davao City Division's districts, specifically in DepEd Region XI. Ten key informants from various primary schools were included in the study; these individuals were specifically chosen based on their expertise as first-year school heads and their length of service in the Department of Education, which required at least three years of experience. In qualitative research, the investigator's job is to investigate research participants' thoughts and emotions regarding the phenomenon under study while attempting to obtain the necessary data. I created an interview guide throughout the data collection process, consisting of three (3) major questions that delve into the experiences of inexperienced elementary school heads. Determining the issues teachers face in their quest to become the new, productive heads of schools was a topic of careful consideration. I ensured that my interview guide was verified by the specialists. In addition, I ensured that all ethical guidelines were followed and applied during the data collection process. All of the data that were gathered for this study were thoroughly reviewed and properly analyzed. First, the researcher discussed her own experiences with the topic she was studying. The researcher began by describing in detail the phenomenon as it had personally affected her. This is an attempt to remove

the researcher's personal experiences from the picture so that the participants are the main emphasis. She compiled a list of noteworthy claims. Subsequently, she gathers statements pertaining to people's experiences with the subject, assigns equal weight to these noteworthy claims, and endeavors to compile a list of distinct and non-overlapping statements.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following conclusions and the themes that went along with them emerged from the thematic analysis of the study participants' responses: The first-hand accounts of public elementary school heads assuming diverse tasks and responsibilities in rural locations under the current paradigm.

➤ *The Following are some of the Participant Remarks that were Recorded:*

She first discovered how to strike a balance between strategic leadership and instructional duties in her role as school leader. The exercises in the classroom have multiple requirements. Despite the distance between the school and the city proper, the second participant ensured that the student's needs were addressed. The third participant underlined the necessity of providing instruction of the same caliber as that which was provided prior to the pandemic.

Although the broad notion of leadership is one of the most researched issues in academia, the more focused problem of educational leadership has received increasing attention recently as a result of public schools' heightened pressure to raise student accomplishment. Being the principal of a school can be a very rewarding job. It's true that hardly many jobs allow one to assist as many pupils on a daily basis. School principals have an impact on children through every decision they make, whether directly or indirectly. There is never been a more widespread impact of school leaders, whether it is by funding teaching materials, advocating for school safety, or just listening to student concerns. Although principalships have always been important positions in public education, they have seen significant transformation in recent decades (Creekmore, 2023). The leaders of the schools have openly acknowledged that they have dealt with multitasking in their various settings. These new school administrators assumed that their tasks would need them to do more than just carry out policy implementation. Their ability to multitask allowed them to manage their time more creatively and dynamically while also supporting the teachers' and students' teaching and learning activities.

➤ *During the in-Person Interview, the Participants Provided the Following Responses:*

Participant 1 clarified that although taking on the role of new school head is challenging, she overcame it by assigning clear assignments to the instructors according to their qualifications. P2 is under a lot of strain, particularly when they resume in-person instruction. Regarding P6, she believed that her position necessitated multitasking and that she needed to develop her abilities in a variety of ways. P7 claimed that she was honored to be the leader of the

institution. She was able to hone her skills in a variety of ways in these roles. According to a study by Buenaventura and Arenga (2021), school principals consistently engage in community engagement, instructional supervision, and school administration, leadership, and operation. Teachers who responded to surveys about the level of productivity development in schools overwhelmingly agreed that principals should focus on improving the academic, non-academic, and physical aspects of their institutions. Orpilla (2024) clarified that multitasking is actually in right now. Therefore, it's intriguing to learn about how it affects people's performance and overall wellbeing as well as potential solutions to mitigate the bad impacts of this behavior. Doing two or more things at once is known as multitasking. It entails managing several things at once or quickly switching focus between activities. Personal and professional examples of multitasking include, but are not limited to, answering emails or texts while watching television, finishing research while reading, operating a vehicle while conversing with someone, answering the phone while extending a greeting, taking notes during a lecture, participating in two simultaneous online activities or webinars, and similar activities. According to Encanto (2021), school administrators face obstacles in their efforts to prepare instructors for high-quality teaching. These obstacles significantly impact how well they are able to carry out their supervisory duties. The ability to comprehend oneself and one's subordinates is essential for a supervisor to succeed. a challenge in providing educational resources. The challenges faced by newly appointed school administrators or heads in providing access to school resources surfaced as one of the study's themes. These new leaders had a difficult time meeting the demands for school resources because of where their schools were located. Sadly, other resources—like the creation of new school buildings, to mention one—were out of their control.

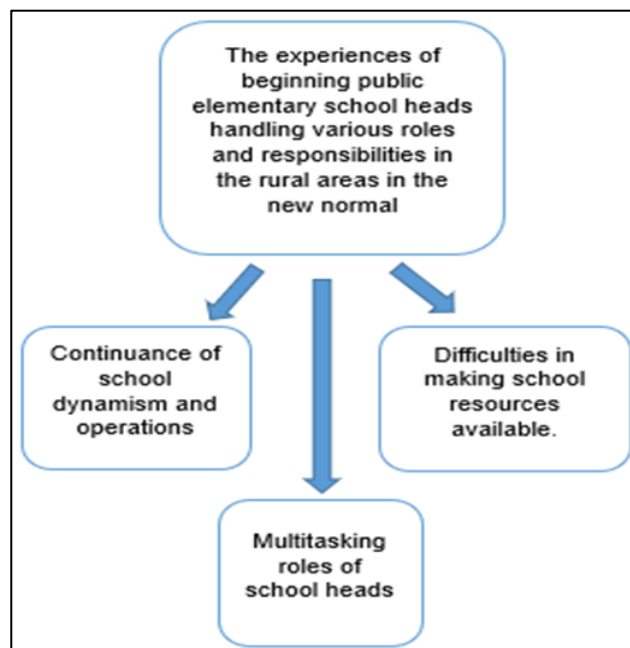


Fig 1 The Experiences of Beginning Public Elementary School Heads Handling Various Roles and Responsibilities in the Rural Areas in the New Noramal

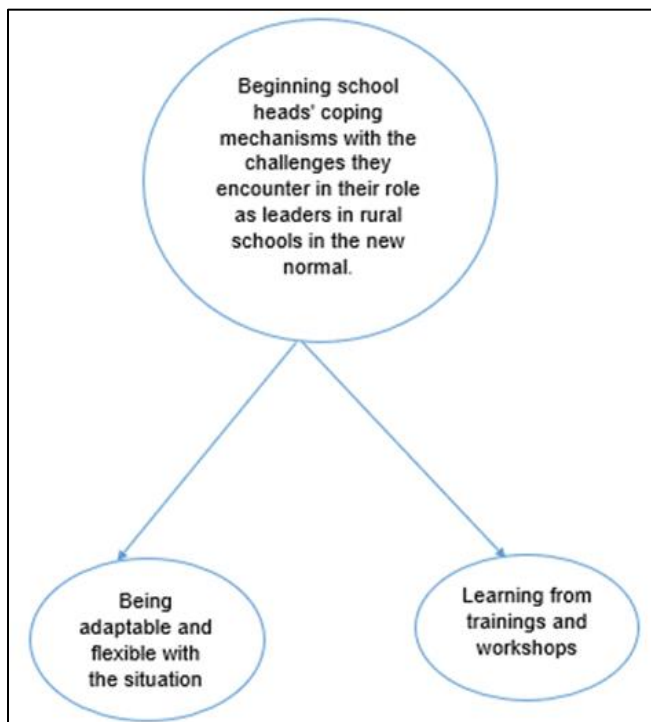


Fig 2 Beginning School Heads' Coping Mechanisms with the Challenges they encounter in their Role as Leaders in Rural Schools in the new Normal

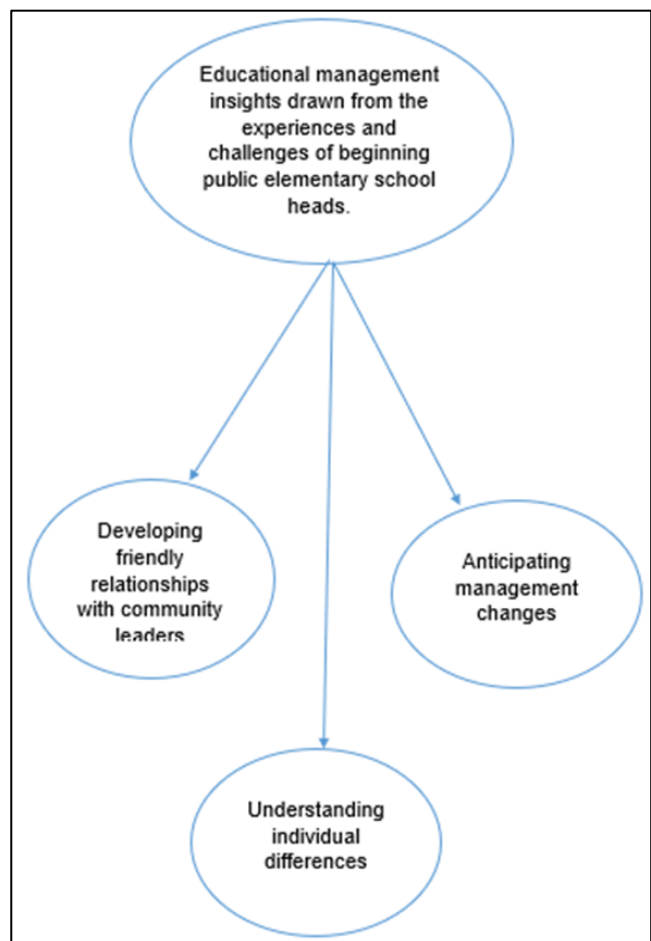


Fig 3 Educational Managements Insight Drawn from the Experiences and Challenges of the beginning Public Elementary School Heads

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

➤ Based on the results of the thematic analysis of the responses from the beginning school administrators, the following findings and their corresponding themes were revealed:

The experiences of beginning administrators revealed three themes, namely: Continuance of school dynamism and operations, Multitasking roles of school heads, and Difficulties in making school resources available. The coping mechanisms of new school administrators were adaptability and flexibility with the situation, as well as learning from training and workshops. The insights gained from the participants showed three significant ideas, namely: Developing friendly relationships with community leaders, understanding individual differences, and Anticipating management changes.

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