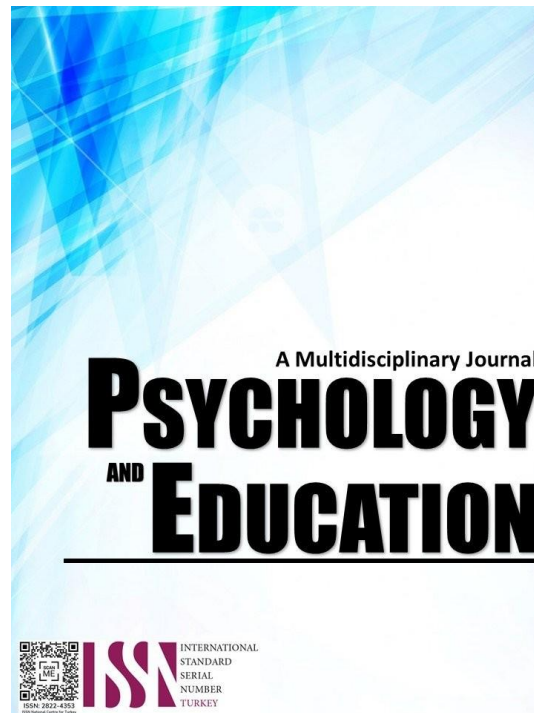


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Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) and the Performance of the Schools in Selected Local Government Units across CALABARZON: Basis for a Theory-Based BE-LCP Localized Implementing Guidelines

Dennis S. Agudo*, Leodegario M. Jalos, Jr.

For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

The study investigated the relationship between the implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) in CALABARZON's local government units (LGUs) and school performance, focusing on curriculum implementation, challenges faced, and coping strategies. It employed a descriptive-causal comparative-correlational design, involving school heads, coordinators, and data collection through questionnaires and retrieval forms. The researchers used a stratified random sampling technique in the selection of the research samples. Moreover, the researchers used different statistical tools in treating the data, including the weighted mean, rank, ANOVA, and Spearman's Rho. BE-LCP implementation involved teacher training, stakeholder alliances, parent involvement, learning space reconfiguration, and technology utilization. Results highlighted teacher-parent collaboration, encouragement for home study spaces, and preference for electronic lesson plans. Schools demonstrated strong leadership networks, localized curriculum, and improved resource management. Performance differences across CALABARZON were noted in leadership, governance, accountability, and resource management, but not in curriculum or instruction. The study found no significant relationship between BE-LCP extent and school performance in leadership, governance, accountability, or resource management. However, a notable relationship existed between curriculum/instruction and collaboration with stakeholders.

Keywords: *Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan, Pandemic, School Performance, School-Based Management*

Introduction

The global education system is not immune to the consequences of the lethal virus. The effects of this deadly virus are not going to be avoided by the educational system on a global scale. The impact that COVID-19 is having on the lives of children, students, and young people is devastating. The disruption of society and economies caused by the pandemic is making an already-existing problem with education around the world even worse and is having an effect on education that is unprecedented. Even before COVID-19, the entire world was in the midst of a crisis related to education. There were 258 million children of primary and secondary school age who were not enrolled in school (WB, 2021). The Learning Poverty rate in low- and middle-income nations was 53%, which means that more than half of all children who were 10 years old could not read and understand a simple paragraph. In sub-Saharan Africa, the percentage was significantly closer to ninety percent (WB, 2021).

School closures and learning loss during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic can have long-term consequences for the current generation of students. Global evidence from previous health and disaster-related emergencies shows that the impact lasts far beyond the disaster or pandemic period. It is also likely to have an impact on children's future economic potential and productivity, undermining the country's competitiveness (Cho, 2021).

The Department of Education in the Philippines is continually developing new policies and programs to assist each student in improving the overall educational standard. This is part of the department's ongoing efforts. The PIVOT implementation, which will help the school to uplift the level of school performance, was on its pilot implementation during the school year 2019-2020. This was the most recent of the school improvement initiatives (Cabral, 2020). The programs that have been implemented by the Department of Education, most notably the DepEd CALABARZON banner program, have been made possible because of the continuous support of both public and private partners. The CALABARZON Pivot 4A QuBE is the region's flagship program in support of the Sulong Edukalidad program, which was established by the Department of Education with the intention of enhancing the level of service that is provided to young people.

In addition to this, the CALABARZON Pivot 4A QuBE has four strategic thrusts, which are as follows: aligning focus and intervention; advancing handholding initiatives; amplifying defined technical assistance to target delivery units; and appraising stakeholders on the progress of the intervention. This program aims to achieve three goals: excellence, empowerment, and efficiency. These goals are in line with the program thrusts as described.

According to Briones (2020), the dissemination of novel concepts is the one and only means by which a civilization can make forward progress. Teachers should begin experimenting with new teaching methods as early as possible, rather than waiting until their students reach the university level. Our students need to have the concept of innovation, a desire for knowledge, and the capability to create something useful based on what is going on in the world around them instilled in them at a young age so that they can become successful adults. The department will have to make some changes to the instructional approach that it takes with the pupils. The task of preparing students for a world that is always changing is one that falls squarely on the shoulders of educators.

The goals of Sulong Edukalidad and CALABARZON's Pivot 4A will be put into action through the implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP). The responsibility for the Learning Continuity Plan does not fall solely on the shoulders of one individual. It is a product of the department that is thoroughly integrated. BE-LCP is the result of conversations held with various stakeholders, including partners and advisers, legislators, executives and directors, teachers, parents, students, and members of the general public. The Department of Education is making the BE-LCP accessible to anyone who has an interest in education and is dedicated to furthering their education. Even before COVID-19 wreaked havoc on the global community and the country, the Department of Education (DepEd) recognized the growing importance of technology in the educational system. At the same time, it cast its sights further afield than COVID-19. It has come to the attention of the department that there is a pressing requirement to improve the humanities in order to guarantee that it is fostering and instructing humans rather than robots.

The BE-LCP was developed with a legal framework that is responsive to the new normal while keeping in mind the constitutional mandate to protect the right of all citizens to receive an education of sufficient quality at all times. In addition, the Department of Education examined and evaluated the plan's programs, projects, and activities, as well as the implications those items had for the budget. Maximizing, reprogramming, or realigning the currently available program funds to programs, projects, and activities that will require additional funding is currently taking place. Despite this, a significant amount of additional financial resources, derived from both established and possible sources of funding, are still required.

School performance has suffered as a result of the issues that developed during the introduction of the BE-LCP. Although online education allows for self-study, the biggest problem that online education faces in veterinary medical science is determining how to provide practical teachings. Because most disciplines are practical, it is difficult to master them online. Students believe that fulfilling veterinary skills alone through an online education system is challenging. Online education could be improved by making it more interactive, displaying medical procedures in real-life scenarios, providing succinct information, and providing virtual instruments to simulate real-life scenarios (Mahdy, 2020).

The researcher used this to determine the extent to which the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan is being implemented in the selected Local Government Units across the CALABARZON region. As a result, the researcher developed a theory-based BE-LCP localized implementing guidelines focusing on the teachers' training, improving stakeholders' participation, parents' orientation, learning space, and technology system. Moreover, the said BE-LCP implementing guidelines will help to improve curriculum instruction, school governance, accountability, and continuous improvement and management of resources.

Research Objectives

This study aimed to determine the relationship between the extent of implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) in the Schools in Selected Local Government Units across CALABARZON and the school performance. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following objectives:

1. Determine the extent of implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan in the Schools in selected Local Government Units across CALABARZON, with emphasis on curriculum implementation in terms of:
 - 1.1 Teachers' Training;
 - 1.2 Alliance with Stakeholders;
 - 1.3 Conduct of Parents' Orientation and Capability Building;
 - 1.4 reconfiguration of learning space; and
 - 1.5 technology system.
2. Determine the significant difference in the extent of implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan in the Schools in selected Local Government Units across CALABARZON.
3. Determine the level of performance of the schools in selected Local Government Units across CALABARZON as to:

- 3.1 Leadership and Governance;
 - 3.2 Curriculum and Instruction;
 - 3.3 Accountability and Continuous Improvement; and
 - 3.4 Management of Resources.
4. Determine the significant difference in the school performance in selected Local Government Units across CALABARZON.
 5. Determine the significant relationship between the extent of implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan in the schools in selected Local Government Units across CALABARZON and the school performance.

Literature Review

The research delves into the implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) in CALABARZON, drawing insights from a range of local and foreign literature. The COVID-19 pandemic, declared by the WHO in 2020, disrupted global education systems, leading to widespread school closures and a shift to remote learning (Davis, 2020; De Torres, 2021). In the Philippines, this transition exacerbated existing disparities in digital access, especially for students from disadvantaged backgrounds (De Torres, 2021).

To address these challenges, the Department of Education (DepEd) formulated the BE-LCP, a comprehensive plan involving contributions from various stakeholders (Briones, 2020). This plan introduced diverse distance learning methods such as modular, online, and TV/radio-based instruction, emphasizing the importance of assessment and evaluation (DepEd, 2020). Despite the pandemic's limitations, national examinations continued, highlighting the need for adaptable evaluation methods (DepEd, 2020).

The study stressed the crucial role of teacher training and continuous professional development in adapting to evolving educational trends (Smalley, 2020). It emphasized the significance of educators in navigating the challenges posed by the pandemic and their role in shaping the learning process and society's development (Dayagbil et al., 2021; Illanes et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 outbreak profoundly affected the educational system, demanding swift action from schools to implement responsive and preventive measures. To effectively address these challenges, educational institutions must establish a robust learning system based on evidence-based and needs-based data (Smalley, 2020). Inclusivity of various stakeholders—administrators, students, faculty, parents, community, and external partners—is crucial for consultations and decision-making processes (Dayagbil et al., 2021).

Amidst a pandemic, schools must grasp the short-, medium-, and long-term implications on instruction, student experience, operations, and employee well-being, necessitating scenario analysis and resilience-building efforts (Frankki et al., 2020). Teachers, as primary agents in education, require ongoing professional development to adapt to 21st-century learning needs and ensure students' success (Boudersa, 2016). The role of educators in providing quality education and adapting to crises is pivotal. Resilience in teaching practices and continuous professional development are urgent needs, ensuring effective instruction during and after crises (Boudersa, 2016). With the threat of COVID-19, schools must consider various learning modalities outlined in the BE-LCP, aligning with health guidelines and community risk classifications (Llego, 2021). Training educators in these modalities benefits learning outcomes despite the pandemic's challenges (Llego, 2021).

The Department of Education (DepEd) responded by rolling out VINSET programs to equip teachers with online teaching tools and strategies. VINSET 2.0 trained teachers in platforms like DepEd Commons and DepEd TV, enhancing their ability to deliver education remotely (DepEd, 2021). Further advancements in teacher training were planned with VINSET 3.0, focusing on digital transformation and excellence in education (Madrona, 2022). This program aimed to update educators on the latest technology for in-person classes, offering continuous professional development units for participants (Madrona, 2022). These initiatives, including VINSET programs, underscore the DepEd's commitment to enhancing teachers' digital competencies and preparing them for evolving educational landscapes amidst the pandemic.

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the importance of integrating online education as an essential part of teaching and learning. Instead of using technology only for crisis management, educators can harness online tools to enhance curricula, engage students, and personalize learning experiences, fostering the development of crucial 21st-century skills (Janssen, 2021). The pandemic necessitated extensive global efforts to implement remote learning, unveiling challenges rooted in technology disparities, particularly the lack of access to computers and the Internet (Janssen, 2021). Digital technology not only transforms what and how people learn but also reshapes the roles of educators. AI-powered systems can go beyond teaching, monitoring students' learning patterns, and tailoring content to

individual learning styles with precision unmatched in traditional classrooms (Janssen, 2021).

Teacher involvement in planning and adequate training are critical factors in successful online education adoption. If instructional technology doesn't meet their needs, educators might abandon it once normalcy returns. Local technology champions who share best practices are essential in this process (Janssen, 2021). The DepEd's teacher-broadcaster training program aims to empower candidates to present effectively on television, supplementing traditional classes with educational broadcasts. However, challenges like navigating production elements and ensuring engaging content have been encountered in implementing TV-based instruction (Baustista, 2021; Labesig, 2021). Despite the obstacles, the DepEd acknowledges and appreciates the efforts of teacher-broadcasters and production teams in their commitment to providing education through innovative means (Labesig, 2021).

So, essentially, the study focuses on evaluating the progress of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) in CALABARZON regarding various aspects like teacher training, stakeholder collaboration, parent orientation, learning space reconfiguration, and technology system integration. The assessment includes metrics such as learner and teacher performance, school efficiency, and the effectiveness of School-Based Management (SBM) in predicting academic success. The SBM pillars—leadership, curriculum, accountability, and resource management—will be analyzed to gauge their implementation in schools.

Challenges have surfaced in implementing the BE-LCP, particularly in curriculum preparation, school governance, teacher well-being, stakeholder engagement, and managing the impact of COVID-19. In response, an intervention program was devised by educational institutions in CALABARZON and other parts of the Philippines to tackle these issues. The researcher aims to propose recommendations for localized BE-LCP implementation in CALABARZON, aiming to address the identified challenges and concerns encountered during implementation. In essence, this study aims to assess the progress, challenges, and potential solutions for the successful implementation of BE-LCP in CALABARZON's educational institutions.

Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative approach, utilizing a descriptive-causal-comparative correlational method. The researcher used a self-structured research question based on the literature of the study and aligned with the study's objectives. This draft underwent expert review in educational management, with feedback incorporated into a revised version. The revised questionnaire underwent pre-implementation testing for reliability and validity. Permissions were obtained from the Department of Education CALABARZON and five school division offices to conduct the study in schools affected by high COVID-19 cases. Target respondents were selected using a stratified random sampling technique. The questionnaire was distributed and collected through Google Forms. Ethical guidelines, including adherence to the Data Privacy Act, were strictly followed. Statistical tools such as weighted mean, ranks, Spearman's Rho Rank Correlation Test, and Kruskal-Wallis H-Test were employed for data analysis.

Results

Part 1. The extent of Implementation of BE-LCP in CALABARZON Region

Teachers underwent a comprehensive training regimen, combining in-person and virtual sessions, aiming to enhance their instructional techniques ahead of the pandemic. Schools collaborated with stakeholders, transforming individual partnerships into more effective alliances, and aligning goals with the school's objectives. A joint effort between teachers and parents aimed to elevate student performance, fostering a collaborative approach. Schools in CALABARZON urged parents to allocate study spaces at home for their children. Embracing technology, teachers preferred electronic lesson plans to reduce educational expenses. Boudersa (2016) emphasized the significance of teacher training, underscoring its role in equipping educators with essential skills, improving teaching practices, and fostering student engagement and achievement. Schools played a crucial role in nurturing students' social, communicative, and academic skills while serving as a platform for parental and stakeholder involvement in educational reforms. De Torres (2021) highlighted that higher education institutions shouldn't shoulder the entire responsibility for improving educational standards, emphasizing the collaborative effort of various stakeholders in achieving educational goals.

Part 2. Significant Difference in the Extent of Implementation of BE-LCP in CALABARZON Region

The null hypothesis regarding the similarity in BE-LCP implementation across schools in selected LGUs in CALABARZON was supported by statistical analysis in various aspects. Teachers in schools of different sizes received similar training, and there was consistency in stakeholders' alliances, parental orientation, reconfiguration of learning spaces, and technology systems. However, research by Abril and Callo (2021) indicated that while principals implemented LCP-related variables significantly, instructors did so to a limited extent.

Both groups recognized the importance of learning modalities, assessment, and resources, correlating their adoption with overall school success. Their perceptions of LCP implementation differed significantly. The study emphasizes the need for collaboration among schools and stakeholders to leverage the LCP framework in addressing challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Part 3. Performance of the Schools in CALABARZON Region

In CALABARZON schools, robust leadership networks foster effective communication between school and community leaders, aiding informed decision-making and problem-solving at the school-community level. Schools prioritize localized curricula to connect with students' lives and enhance community relevance. Selected schools engage in participatory assessments for learner performance, emphasizing accountability and continuous improvement. Additionally, their resource management systems involve regular monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

Effective school management based on reliable data leads to improved planning, supervision, and better academic outcomes. Successful administration requires strong leaders, active community support, and comprehensive training in resource management and data administration. Collaborative decision-making among school management teams, governing bodies, teachers, students, and parents enhances planning and learner outcomes (Supriadi et al., 2021). Amid the pandemic, designing courses guided by effective instructional theories becomes critical. These courses aim to motivate students, support home-based learning, promote intellectual development, develop key competencies, and facilitate systematic knowledge construction (Li, Zhang, Dai & Hu, 2021).

Part 4. Significant Difference in the School Performance in CALABARZON Region

Statistical analysis indicates significant differences in leadership and governance, accountability, and resource management among schools in CALABARZON, as reflected by p-values of 0.002, 0.033, and 0.009, respectively. This rejects the null hypothesis of uniform performance across regional schools in these aspects, suggesting variation. However, in curriculum and instruction, the p-value of 0.082 supports the null hypothesis, indicating similar performance across schools of different sizes in CALABARZON.

Bustamante (2022) highlights the pivotal role of school leadership in driving stakeholder responsibility, emphasizing close monitoring and evaluation of programs. Capacite (2021) emphasizes the importance of focusing on both overall school performance and efficient administration, urging greater involvement of school leaders in evaluating services and addressing student feedback. Additionally, there's an emphasis on continual improvement in leadership, educational planning, and resource administration.

Part 5. Relationship between the Extent of Implementation of BE-LCP and School Performance

The statistical test results suggest no significant relationship between BE-LCP implementation and school leadership, governance, curriculum, instruction, resource management, or several BE-LCP variables like teacher training, parent orientation, learning space, technology, and accountability. However, contrasting findings from Abril & Callo (2021) indicate the critical role of leadership and governance in BE-LCP success. Effective policies, resource allocation, and crisis management are key responsibilities. De Torres (2021) emphasizes collaboration's role in sharing best practices and fostering innovation in teaching. Collaboration among stakeholders, as highlighted by Bustamante (2022), cultivates shared responsibility, leading to improved decision-making, policy development, and curriculum relevance, catering to diverse learner needs.

Part 6. BE-LCP Localized Implementing Guidelines Developed from the Study

The study delved into the implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) in CALABARZON, merging various organizational and educational theories to gain profound insights. This holistic approach not only illuminated the dynamics at play but also allowed for the formulation of supplementary guidelines tailored to the region's context. It identified key factors influencing implementation, touching upon organizational effectiveness, educational dynamics, evaluation mechanisms, technological integration, and resilience strategies. The resulting guidelines aimed to address specific observations during BE-LCP implementation, offering a comprehensive framework rooted in existing theories to support effective educational initiatives in the region. The study showcased the intersection of theories like the Quinn Model, Creemers' Model, Realistic Evaluation Theory, Distance Learning and Technology Integration, and Resilience Theory, highlighting their relevance in understanding and guiding BE-LCP implementation.

Discussion

The study scrutinized the implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) in CALABARZON, revealing both strengths and challenges within the educational landscape. Across schools, teachers underwent comprehensive training, engaging stakeholders and parents while adapting learning spaces and technology to navigate the pandemic. Interestingly, the study found uniformity in these practices across different school sizes, suggesting a cohesive implementation strategy. Schools showcased remarkable leadership and effective curriculum adaptations, yet variations emerged in areas of accountability, continual improvement, and resource management. Challenges surfaced, encompassing curriculum alignment difficulties, stakeholder management, financial constraints for teacher support, and inadequate COVID-19 facilities. However, innovative coping strategies emerged, including resource acquisition, mentorship for teachers, improved stakeholder communication, and establishing robust COVID-19 support mechanisms. Moreover, the study's output, the Pandemic Mitigation in Education Theory, provides localized guidelines aimed at refining BE-LCP implementation in the region. Overall, the research not only identified successful practices but also illuminated areas for improvement and devised practical strategies to navigate these challenges, potentially strengthening the educational framework in CALABARZON amidst ongoing disruptions.

Conclusion

In the implementation of BE-LCP, teachers received in-person and virtual pandemic preparation training. Likewise, the school transforms stakeholders into more efficient alliances to achieve its goals and objectives. The study also found that teachers and parents collaborated to improve students' orientation and capability. Moreover, each school in the region encourages parents to give their children a study room at home. And, teachers prefer electronic lesson plans because they reduce technology system costs. There is no significant difference in the extent of implementation of the BE-LCP in the schools in selected LGUs across CALABARZON in terms of teachers' training, alliance with stakeholders, conduct of parents' orientation and capability building, reconfiguration of learning space and technology system.

Schools in the CALABARZON region had an excellent leadership network that allows schools and community leaders to communicate for informed decision-making and problem-solving. They localized their curriculum to make it more relevant to the students and the community. They assessed students' performance for accountability and continuous improvement. In resource management, they had a better system that monitors, evaluates, and reports financial matters. There is a significant difference in the performance of schools across CALABARZON in terms of leadership and governance, accountability and continuous improvement, and resource management. However, no significant difference in school performance was found in terms of curriculum and instruction. There is no statistically significant relationship between the extent of BE-LCP implementation and school performance in terms of leadership and governance, accountability and continuous improvement, and resource management. Curriculum and instruction, however, as well as collaboration with stakeholders, revealed a significant relationship. Other variables of the extent of BE-LCP implementation and curriculum and instruction, did not show a significant relationship.

As the output of this research, Theory-Based BE-LCP Implementing Guidelines were developed aimed at addressing the issues and concerns in the implementation of BE-LCP in the region

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Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Dennis S. Agudo

Schools Division Office of Sto. Tomas City – Philippines

Leodegario M. Jalos, Jr, Ed.D

Marinduque State College – Philippines