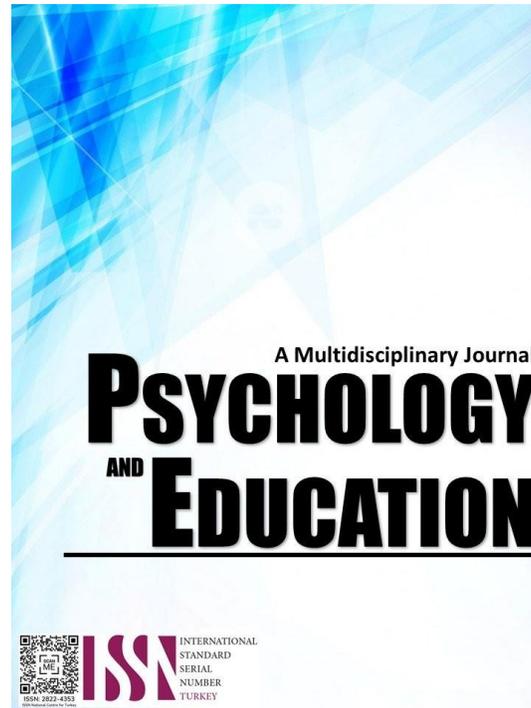


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Utilization of School Resources in Basic Education: A Multiple Case Study

Jeltwiene C. Ondong*

For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

Teachers-in-charge and principals in basic education are responsible for the school operations and yet they encounter challenges in utilizing school resources. With this, a multiple case study was conducted to discover teachers-in-charge and school principals' unique experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights about utilizing school resources. Case one involved seven teachers-in-charge who were subjected to in-depth interviews. Case two, on the other hand, involved seven principals who participated in the focus group discussion. Thematic analysis was used to identify essential themes and followed the cross-case method to identify similarities between the two cases. The common experience themes between the two cases were multitasking due to insufficient personnel and adjusting to the lack of existing facilities. The coping mechanism that was common to the two cases was welcoming community support. Lastly, the common theme between the two cases for insights and lessons was fostering positive relationships is essential in building trust. The study further found that adequate funding is necessary for school heads to maintain smooth school operations. Flexibility and adaptability in addressing the real-time needs of the school are paramount. Prioritizing resource allocation and implementing innovative strategies to maximize resource utilization were also highlighted as essential. Creating an open and supportive environment allows school heads to build strong relationships with the school community, fostering higher engagement and commitment to the school's mission. This study serves as valuable information for researchers planning to investigate related topics.

Keywords: *educational management, multiple case study, budget, resources*

Introduction

The utilization of school resources in Basic Education in the Philippines presents a complex and multifaceted problem that demands critical examination. While schools are entrusted with providing quality education, numerous challenges arise in effectively deploying available resources. More funding must be needed to acquire up-to-date learning materials, technological advancements, and adequate infrastructure. This results in a persistent inequality of access, particularly for underprivileged students. Additionally, the mismanagement of allocated resources within schools led to a disparity in resource distribution among different subjects or grades. Furthermore, addressing these challenges necessitates comprehensive analysis, strategic planning, and collaborative efforts to ensure equitable access to resources, enhance teaching methodologies, and empower educators to provide a well-rounded education for all students.

Moreover, factors such as limited funding and inequitable distribution of resources created a barrier to effective resource utilization. These things play a critical role in school heads' leadership style with the strategic decisions implementation that prioritize resource allocation based on the unique needs of their students and communities. A National Bureau of Economic Research study found that increased spending on school resources, such as hiring additional teachers or providing high-quality instructional materials, improved student achievement (Jackson, Johnson, & Persico, 2015). Additionally, Reardon and Owens (2014) revealed that equitable distribution of resources, particularly for schools with high proportions of low-income and minority students, can help reduce achievement gaps. However, there are also significant challenges to effective resource utilization in schools. According to Gruenewald and Delgado (2016), limited funding, competing priorities, and inadequate leadership and management can hinder efforts to allocate resources in ways that promote student success.

In many countries, school leaders face significant challenges in effectively utilizing school resources to promote student success. In South Africa, secondary school leaders found inadequate funding, limited resources, and ineffective management among the key barriers to resource utilization (Vally, Chisholm, & Lake, 2018). Similarly, a survey of school leaders in the United Kingdom found that many felt under pressure to reduce costs and allocate resources in ways that did not necessarily align with the needs of their students (Jenkins, Brown, Green, & Wikeley, 2019). Despite these challenges, there are also examples of effective resource utilization by school leaders in various parts of the world. As found out by Rinne, Nokelainen, and Virtanen (2021), school leaders in Finland were able to use resources effectively through collaborative decision-making, strong leadership, and a focus on student well-being.

In the Philippines, the utilization of school resources has been plagued with various issues and problems. One major issue is the need for more funding and allocation of resources for public schools. The lack of resources such as classrooms, books, and other instructional materials hinders the effective utilization and proper implementation of quality education, resulting in poor academic performance of students (Sison, 2015). Moreover, corruption and mismanagement of funds within the Department of Education (DepEd) is also a

significant concern in utilizing school resources. Cases of fund misuse and diversion by some school officials have been reported, impacting the quality of education and depriving students of their right to access basic education (David, 2017). Implementing the K-12 program has also posed challenges regarding additional resources, classrooms, teachers, and instructional materials, which some public schools need to improve (Nanquil, 2016).

Across the local region, one of the significant issues school leaders face regarding utilizing school resources is the inadequate allocation of funds for the schools. As a result, many schools need more resources to provide quality education to their students, including textbooks, equipment, and facilities (Caballes & Aportadera, 2016; Hernando, 2018). In some cases, the limited knowledge and skills of some teacher-in-charge and school principals in managing school resources and finances have led to the mismanagement of funds, resulting in the loss of resources, and hindering the delivery of quality education to students (Baclagon, Cueva, & Perez, 2017).

Moreover, they often need help prioritizing resource utilization, especially in schools with limited resources. They need to balance the needs of students, teachers, and the school while ensuring that the resources are used effectively and efficiently (Garcia, Quintos, & Marquez, 2019; Orale, 2016). However, Mirasol, Necosia, Bicar, and Garcia (2021) found that there are still disparities in formulating policies for utilizing school resources in the K-12 system, particularly at the basic education level. Additionally, Trinidad (2020) suggested that further studies be conducted on utilizing and monitoring material resources in schools in the Philippines. These gaps in the existing literature became the primary basis and impetus for I, the researcher to pursue this study.

As mentioned above, I recognized the significance of studying the utilization of school resources for teachers-in-charge and principals in the Island Garden City of Samal and even for other regions. This area of research needs to be explored more than studies focusing on school administrators. I aimed to describe the profiles of teachers-in-charge and principals, explore their experiences in utilizing school resources and uncover their coping mechanisms. By providing research-based insights, this study aimed to offer valuable information to other school heads and policymakers to utilize school resources effectively.

This case study aimed to examine the similarities and differences in experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights between teachers-in-charge and school principals in basic education on utilizing school resources. At this stage in the research, the experiences of school heads in the utilization of school resources will generally be defined as the perceptions of the teachers-in-charge and school principals on how they utilized the school resources in basic education, the coping mechanisms they utilized, the challenges encountered and the insight they valued most based on their experiences as the utilization of school resources are constantly changing following the needs of the time. Poor utilization of resources exacerbated inequalities in access to quality education. Schools with limited resources struggled to provide equal opportunities for all students, leading to disparities in educational outcomes (Inequality in the Distribution of Educational Resources, 2022).

Moreover, the mismanagement of funds within educational institutions raised concerns about their misuse, compromising the quality of education and student access to resources. Further, school heads have only limited discretionary funding to implement their school improvement plans (World Bank, n.d). Considering the school head's experiences in utilizing school resources in basic education, I believe their responses to this study will benefit the Department of Education Officials, School Heads, Teachers, Community Partners, Students, and Future researchers.

Department of Education Officials. The Department of Education may use the result of this study to create programs that will encourage school heads to utilize the school resources more efficiently and effectively for students' teaching and learning process. They may conduct training and workshops for school heads managing the school resources and adequately utilizing them at the maximum level.

Teachers-in-charge and School Principals. This study will show and draw them to utilize school resources effectively. They will also realize the importance of financial literacy skills, human resources expertise, and budgeting material assets for school operations.

Teachers. The teachers, as the facilitator of learning, may also find this valuable study by addressing some lacking issues of curriculum instructional materials used in teaching students interactively. They could also have an idea in advance if they pursued higher responsibilities like managing curriculum and governance school operations.

Students. The students will also benefit from this study because the teachers will be informed and aided on the materials needed for teaching. The teacher-in-charge or principal will also provide for the needs of students in terms of the ideal learning environment. Moreover, chances are this will significantly help improve the student's academic performance in both personal and academic life.

Community Partners. This study will serve as their voice and motivation to emphasize the needs of the learners, especially the scarcity of school resources. They can also help the local government and school authorities devise an effective strategy to meet the needs of the students and the schools.

Future Researchers. This study will enhance awareness and knowledge regarding utilizing school resources involving the teacher-in-charge and principal in Basic Education. It equips future researchers to be more proficient analysts and serves as a valuable source of information for further research endeavors.

Research Objectives

The primary goal of this research study is to examine the similarities and differences in the experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of the responses between teachers-in-charge and school principals in basic education as they encounter the utilization of school resources for regular school operations. Specifically, this study is guided by three objectives:

1. To describe the unique experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of teachers-in-charge in the utilization of school resources in basic education;
2. To describe the unique experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of school principals in the utilization of school resources in basic education; and
3. To discover the similarities in the responses between teachers-in-charge and school principals in the utilization of school resources in basic education.

Literature Review

A review of current research and literature is offered in this section. This section discussed the role and offered insights into the research. As a result, it created a strong foundation for the discussion on the subject, which is about the experiences of the public school heads of basic education on their utilization of educational resources.

The main goal of education is to change undesirable behavior by helping students develop the necessary knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and critical and creative thinking. Teaching must be a challenging and labor-intensive task involving highly specialized resources, abilities, and knowledge to impact student learning significantly. The availability and utilization of resources in an organization are essential for achieving its goals and objectives. The appropriate utilization of school resources influences students' learning outcomes. Investing in educational resources is the key to transforming schools into environments where students collaborate, learn from one another, and thrive within a supportive atmosphere. As highlighted by Magak (2015), this notion not only enhances student learning but also enables all students to achieve their maximum capabilities. The World Bank (2018) emphasized that the quality of an education system depends on crucial elements such as physical infrastructure, human resources, and curriculum, further underscoring the significance of investing in these essential components.

Experiences of school heads on the utilization of school resources

The utilization of school resources in basic education has been a global issue for several years. According to a study by Glewwe and Muralidharan (2016), school resources are scarce in many developing countries, which limits their access to educational resources. Inadequate resources significantly impact the quality of education, which can impact students' learning outcomes. This issue is common in developing countries but also prevalent in developed countries. For instance, a study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) revealed that schools in many developed countries have limited resources, leading to inadequate support for students with special needs (OECD, 2018). Technological advancements and the digital age require schools to invest in digital resources, infrastructure, and innovative teaching methodologies. However, more resources are needed for school heads to provide access to these resources for all students (Cheng & Tsui, 2015). Additionally, globalization and the increasing emphasis on international benchmarking place pressure on school heads to ensure that resources are effectively utilized to meet global standards (Peña, 2018).

Over an extended period, the effective utilization of educational resources has been a notable hurdle in the Philippines. The allotment from the Philippine government for the education sector stands at a mere three percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which is lower than the internationally recommended benchmark of six percent (Hernando, 2018). Consequently, numerous schools need more textbooks, adequate classroom facilities, and limited access to technology. These issues profoundly impact the quality of education in the country. School heads hold a crucial responsibility in efficiently utilizing and maximizing school resources. However, teachers-in-charge, serving as school heads, encounter various challenges in resource management. A study by Das, Kuyini, Yeboah, Alhassan, and Mangope (2016) reveals that teachers-in-charge often need more skills and training to manage resources effectively. Additionally, they face pressure from stakeholders, such as parents, students, and government officials, which can influence their decision-making process.

Despite these challenges, teachers-in-charge have implemented various strategies to maximize the utilization of school resources in basic education. A study by Kaur, Gupta, Singh, and Perano (2019) revealed that teachers-in-charge in India had developed partnerships with local businesses and community organizations to access additional resources. In the Philippines, teachers-in-charge have implemented similar strategies, such as partnering with local government units and non-government organizations to access additional resources (Quitortiano, 2019). These strategies have enabled teachers-in-charge to stretch the utilization of school resources and provide a better learning environment for their students. Moreover, school principals, as the school head, experienced challenges regarding the limited availability of resources. Many schools need more funding, which hampers their ability to provide essential facilities, materials,

and equipment for effective teaching and learning (Pajarillo, Faller, & Nacino, 2016). Budget constraints and funding gaps create difficulties in addressing the diverse needs of students and maintaining a conducive learning environment. Additionally, the unequal distribution of resources among schools showed disparities and can be observed across different regions, with some schools receiving more resources than others. This inequality leads to educational inequity, as schools with fewer resources face difficulties in providing quality education to their students (Silao & Articulo, 2018).

Further, effective resource utilization is also a challenge for public school principals. They must make strategic decisions to maximize the impact of available resources. However, factors such as a lack of training, knowledge, and support in resource management can hinder their ability to optimize resource allocation (Quitoriano, 2019). Additionally, bureaucratic processes and procurement procedures may cause delays and inefficiencies in acquiring necessary resources, impacting the utilization of school resources (Llobrera, Cadaoas, & Sagun, 2020). In their study, Vos, Van der Westhuizen, Mentz, and Ellis (2015) noted that school resource management, community relations, parental interest, and staff attention are the primary factors influencing the quality of education.

In the United States, public schools' declining academic performance has been a heated debate topic for over two decades, as it carries significant implications for the nation's labor quality and productivity growth. According to an article published by the American University School of Education (2020), educating millions of enrolled students rests with their teachers and school administrators. Ensuring all these students receive a high-quality education primarily depends on effective resource management. Administrators must manage both capital and human resources effectively. The resource management techniques employed by administrators should align with the overall goals and vision of the entire school community, especially when faced with potentially limited resources. Several studies have highlighted the significant impact of instructional monitoring on school success.

One of the studies by Fikuree, Meyer, Le Fevre, and Alansari (2021) emphasized the importance of the effectiveness of principals' tasks and their relationship to student achievement. This finding is further supported by a study by Ma and Marion (2021), which found that instructional leadership strategies had a more significant indirect impact on teachers' effectiveness. The research paper titled "Influence of School Heads' Direct Supervision on Teachers' Role Performance in Public Senior High Schools, Central Region, Ghana," conducted by Ampofo, Onyango, and Ogola (2019) discovered that school heads dedicate minimal time to supervision, particularly during lessons. To ensure effective management, operation, and utilization of resources in creating a safe, efficient, and productive learning environment, educational leaders must gather, assign, align, and effectively employ human, financial, and technological resources (Tobin, 2015). Resource planning is a crucial part of effective and efficient school utilization management. This identifies and assigns resources to the Department of Education (Acido & Kilongkilong, 2022). According to Karanja and Mwaura (2017), resource planning is essential in ensuring the efficient and effective utilization of school resources. Proper resource planning involves the identification of resource needs, the allocation of resources, and the monitoring of resource use. The authors argue that resource planning enables school leaders to make informed decisions and prioritize resource allocation based on the school's needs, goals, and objectives.

A study by Ruan, Li, Zhang, Cheng, and Liu (2020) found that resource planning positively correlates with student achievement in basic education. The authors note that resource planning can help schools to optimize resource allocation and ensure that resources are directed toward initiatives that support student learning. In addition, resource planning can enhance transparency and accountability in using school resources, leading to improved educational outcomes. The importance of resource planning is further emphasized by Rizvi and Jacobsen (2018), who argue that it is essential in addressing the challenges of resource scarcity and inequity in education. The authors note that resource planning can help identify gaps in resource provision and allocate resources to ensure equitable access to quality education for all students. In this way, resource planning can contribute to promoting social justice and inclusive education. In the Philippine context, resource planning and utilization in basic education are particularly crucial due to limited resources and the high demand for quality education.

Further, a study conducted by Mendoza and Bagtasos (2019) found that resource management is one of the most critical areas in school administration, particularly in rural areas where resources are scarce. Teachers-in-charge and school heads need help managing resources, such as financial resources, inadequate physical facilities, and limited instructional materials. According to a study by Billedo (2019), teacher competencies in resource planning and management are vital for efficiently utilizing school resources. They emphasized the importance of training and capacity building for teachers-in-charge and school principals to enhance their financial and resource management skills. The study by Rizvi and Jacobsen (2018) highlighted the need for effective communication and collaboration among stakeholders to maximize the use of available resources.

In addition, efficient and effective utilization of school resources is essential for improving the quality of basic education in the Philippines. Resource planning and management, as well as teacher competencies in financial management, are crucial in ensuring the efficient allocation of resources. Collaboration among stakeholders is also necessary to maximize available resources and address educational system constraints.

Challenges in financial, human resources, and materials in school

Fiscal management is essential to effectively utilizing school resources in basic education. In the global context, financial constraints are one of the significant challenges that impact the utilization of school resources. The study by Awaluddin and Ahmad (2020) emphasized that inadequate funding poses a significant barrier to providing quality education in many countries. It underscores the importance of effective fiscal management in maximizing the utilization of available resources. In the Philippine context, financial resources are a critical factor in the utilization of school resources in basic education. Billedo and Bagtasos (2020) emphasized the importance of strategic financial planning and budgeting in ensuring the efficient use of available resources.

However, implementing financial management strategies can be challenging due to several factors, including inadequate funding, complex bureaucratic processes, and limited financial management skills among school leaders (Mendoza & Bagtasos, 2019). Thus, it is necessary to address these challenges and improve the capacity of school leaders to manage financial resources effectively. Effective financial management in the utilization of school resources can have a significant impact on basic education. According to Awaluddin and Ahmad (2020), appropriate budgeting and financial planning can enhance the quality of education and increase student performance. Billedo and Bagtasos (2020) pointed out that proper financial management can lead to better teacher training, improved school facilities, and increased student enrollment.

Therefore, it is critical to develop effective financial management strategies to ensure the efficient utilization of school resources and improve the quality of education. The physical, human, and monetary resources dedicated to schools' impact not just the instruction given to pupils but also elements of teacher and student motivation and, as a result, the educational outcomes. Resources are scarce, affecting education and lowering student achievement; according to the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), such inequalities in students' educational performance often reflect disparities in school resources (OECD, 2019). In some education systems, there are concerns that schools need more resources to meet the educational requirements of their students and that schools may need more resources to provide instruction to their students (OECD, 2018). In schools, various resources are directly or indirectly related to educational outcomes.

The research conducted by Fatima, Shahzadi, and Shah (2017) in their study titled "Financial Management Competence of Selected and Promoted School Heads: A Demographic Comparison" suggests that providing orientation and training programs for school heads in financial management can enhance their competencies. Furthermore, Okpa (2016) highlights the importance of ensuring adequate financial resources to support the operational functioning of various services. Like leaders in any organization, school principals are responsible for making decisions regarding utilizing funds allocated to public schools (Atieno, 2015). According to Brigham and Houston (2012, as cited in Espinosa, 2017), these decisions have financial implications that significantly influence the financial management of school principals, who hold a critical role in ensuring the effectiveness and performance of schools, particularly in their day-to-day operations. The idea of financial management in schools ensures that administrators plan, organize, delegate, and manage the school's finances to accomplish their objectives. Ani and Ajaegbo (2015) stressed that financial management is crucial in knowing how the school effectively manages or if it can realize its objectives. The Department of Education outlines the principal's responsibilities concerning financial management in the school setting as the government meets the financial demands of the Philippine public schools (Bucud, 2018). Financial resources are the best means of enhancing a school's physical and personnel resources. With this, in addition to curriculum changes and capacity-building initiatives, the Department of Education (DepEd) can help public schools in their primary goal of educating students to become better citizens of the country (DepEd Order No. 13, s. 2016) by continuing to provide them with more significant funding.

In educational institutions, managing resources and accounting for financial utilization are all responsibilities of the principals. Therefore, the school must plan the financial requirements, which include budgeting, goal setting, managing human resources, scheduling, buying instructional materials, and doing the necessary costing. While the Philippine government encourages budgeting, principals must insist on competent financial management to guarantee education for everyone in the context of available resources (Espinosa, 2017). However, various challenges are associated with school financial management, which affects the efficient and effective use of available resources. One of the significant challenges is inadequate budget allocation, which limits the availability of funds for implementing school programs and activities (Almalki, 2017). This situation is prevalent in many countries, including the Philippines, where budget constraints hinder providing quality education (Imbuido, 2018). Another challenge is school leaders' limited knowledge and skills in financial management. Most teachers-in-charge and school heads need more training and expertise to manage school finances effectively (Jensen & Meckling, 2017). This challenge often leads to poor financial planning, budgeting, and

In addition to inadequate budget allocation and lack of financial management skills, corruption is a significant challenge in financial management in schools. Corruption practices, such as embezzlement and kickbacks, often occur in schools, leading to the misappropriation of funds and wastage of resources (Cruz & De Jesus, 2019). These practices reduce the availability of funds for essential school programs and activities, negatively impacting the quality of education provided. Therefore, school financial management challenges pose significant implications for utilizing school resources. Addressing these challenges requires adequate budget allocation, training, and development of school leaders' financial management skills and effective measures to combat corruption in school financial management (Atieno, 2015).

The human resources have been recognized as the most important of all resources. However, human resources also are a crucial component of the school system, and their efficient utilization is essential to ensure the optimal utilization of school resources. Establishing and implementing a meticulously designed teacher development program is essential to optimize human resources' potential in the teaching profession (Felix, Ahmad, & Arshad, 2016). In the global context, studies have shown that the shortage of teachers, especially in developing countries, is a significant challenge affecting quality education delivery. According to UNESCO (2021), a global shortage of 69 million teachers is expected to increase to 74 million by 2030. The shortage of teachers leads to increased workloads, which can impact the quality of teaching and learning in schools. In the Philippines, the shortage of teachers is also a significant challenge in the basic education sector. The Department of Education (DepEd) reported a shortage of 27,068 teachers in 2020, which affects the quality of education in some areas of the country (Department of Education, 2020). Moreover, deploying teachers is also a problem, as some schools in remote areas need more qualified and experienced teachers. As Bacdayan and Almuete (2015) highlighted, the inadequate number of teachers, particularly in remote and underserved areas, poses significant obstacles to delivering quality education.

In addition, the utilization of human resources in schools is also affected by teacher turnover, burnout, and motivation. A study by DeMatthews, Carrola, Knight, and Reyes (2021) revealed that teacher turnover in the Philippines is high, which impacts the stability of school systems and the quality of education. Another study by Billedo and Bagtasos (2020) found that teacher burnout is prevalent in the Philippines, affecting teachers' efficiency in utilizing school resources. Further, the retention and motivation of teachers remain critical concerns. According to Reyes and Sablan (2016), issues such as low salaries, heavy workloads, and limited career advancement opportunities contribute to high turnover rates and impact the stability of the education system.

Furthermore, effective management of human resources in schools is critical to maximizing the utilization of school resources. Providing teachers with adequate support, training, and resources can improve their motivation and efficiency in delivering quality education (Castillo, 2018). In the Philippines, the DepEd has implemented various programs and policies to address the shortage of teachers and improve their efficiencies, such as the Teacher Induction Program and the Results-Based Performance Management System or RPMS (Department of Education, 2020). Teachers have long been expressing their grievances regarding the overwhelming effects of the size of the DepEd bureaucracy. They frequently voice concerns about excessive workloads, inadequate compensation, and the heavy burden of clerical, administrative, and non-teaching responsibilities (Gonzales & Mabalay, 2016).

Moreover, a Philippine House of Representatives member has urged the administration to address this issue by increasing the recruitment of regular non-teaching personnel in public schools (Martin, Guevarra, & Domingo, 2018). In addition, the professional development of teachers in the Philippine basic education system faces various challenges. Research conducted by Santos and Abante (2018) highlighted the need for comprehensive and sustained teacher training programs to enhance pedagogical skills and keep up with emerging educational trends. However, the lack of financial resources, time constraints, and limited access to professional development opportunities hinder the implementation of effective training initiatives. Consequently, educators may need help adapting to new teaching methodologies and innovative approaches, which can harm student learning outcomes and overall educational quality. The Philippine News Agency (2021) mentions various action plans proposed by the DepEd Secretary, including the strict implementation of merit-based selection policies for hiring, training, and capacity development programs, expedited promotion processes, reduced non-teaching workloads, and enhanced benefits. However, effectively addressing the challenges associated with human resource utilization in the basic education sector remains a longstanding issue that requires further efforts (Balagtas, Grageda, Tiongson, & Del Mundo, 2017).

In recent years, there have been various issues, problems, and challenges related to using material and physical resources in basic education. In the Philippines, Limon (2016) conducted a study that revealed that within the teaching and learning process, the sufficiency of physical facilities emerges as a critical factor that significantly impacts students' educational outcomes. This is attributed to its role in reinforcing skills and knowledge acquisition. According to a study by Salazar and Bagtasos (2015), many schools in the Philippines lack basic facilities such as classrooms, chairs, tables, and textbooks, which has a negative impact on the quality of education. As supported by the study of Torres and Solano (2017), more access to up-to-date textbooks, reference materials, and technological tools is needed to improve effective teaching and learning. This scarcity disproportionately affects schools in remote and underserved areas, exacerbating educational disparities. This has been verified that many schools in rural areas face a pressing need for essential physical resources like libraries, laboratories, and classrooms. Consequently, many of these schools have witnessed a decline in their performance in national examinations (Bosibori, Ngao, Rop, & Wesonga, 2015). The findings of Ilomo and Mlavi (2016) study further substantiated this, indicating that the absence of essential physical facilities like dormitories, libraries, staff houses, and classrooms has contributed to the underperformance of community-based secondary schools.

Moreover, this issue is further exacerbated by the lack of funding and support from the government, as highlighted by a study by Eslava and Umali (2016). Another problem is the inefficient management and utilization of existing resources. Unfortunately, Uwameiye (2016) stressed in his study that despite having physical resources available, they needed to be improved for school needs. A study by Sabatin and Talla (2018) revealed that some schools need proper inventory and monitoring systems, leading to the loss and damage of resources. Furthermore, there are cases of corruption and misuse of resources by school officials, as mentioned by Yap and Serrano

(2019). Another challenge is the maintenance and utilization of school facilities. Ramos and Alipio (2016) highlight those issues such as aging infrastructure, inadequate maintenance budgets, and inadequate facilities management contribute to suboptimal learning environments. This affects students' overall educational experience and compromises their safety. These challenges pose a significant barrier to improving the quality of education and achieving equitable access to learning opportunities.

However, efforts have been made to address these challenges and maximize the utilization of material and physical resources. For instance, some schools have implemented community involvement programs to encourage local participation in constructing and maintaining school facilities (Liao & Luceño, 2016). Additionally, some schools have adopted innovative solutions such as modular classrooms and e-books to address the shortage of physical and material resources (Gonzales & Sagun, 2017). Muhammad (2017) stressed that insufficient availability or inadequate utilization of physical resources within a school could harm various aspects. Short and long-term, it can affect student performance, teaching services quality, and overall administrative functioning (Amadi & Ezeugo, 2019).

Further, the neglect to address this issue can lead to negative consequences for the school's goals and objectives, ultimately adversely affecting all activities within the institution. The significance of physical infrastructure in supporting the learning process must be considered for an effective education system. Achieving educational objectives and fostering academic excellence dramatically relies on effectively managing these physical resources throughout their lifespan (Ibrahim, Umar & Igbaji, 2017). However, more support and resources from the government are needed to sustain and scale up these initiatives. The Department of Education (DepEd) prioritizes addressing two significant concerns: overcrowded classrooms and the impact of natural disasters on school infrastructure.

These challenges persistently affect the educational spaces of learners, as classroom congestion and damages caused by natural calamities remain significant issues ("Philippine News Agency, 2021"). Therefore, the issues and challenges related to using material and physical resources in basic education have significant implications for the quality and equity of education. Policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders must address these challenges and ensure all learners can access safe, functional, and well-equipped learning environments (Dacanay, Tamayao, & Asuncion, 2017).

Methodology

Research Design

In this study, a qualitative design was employed, specifically utilizing a multiple-case study approach. As defined by Stake (2013), a multiple case study is a qualitative research method that entails in-depth examination and analysis of multiple cases to gain a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. By adopting this approach, the researcher sought to explore various instances of the phenomenon under investigation, allowing for a richer and more nuanced perspective. The primary objective of the multiple-case study design was to delve deeply into the intricacies and complexities of the phenomenon being studied. By investigating multiple cases, I could explore the subject matter from diverse angles, unearthing unique insights and identifying potential patterns or themes that may be overlooked in a single-case study.

In this paper, the fundamental goal of the approach is to arrive at the description of unique experiences, the discovery of coping mechanisms, and concluded insights of teachers-in-charge and school principals in basic education in utilizing school resources. Furthermore, the design provided information about the experiences, difficulties, and strategies encountered in managing the school resources: human, material, and financial resources implemented. This way, teachers-in-charge and school principals in basic education could share valuable information on their coping mechanisms to the challenges they had encountered in developing school operations and our educational system.

Participants

Since the objective of the qualitative research method is for data saturation rather than statistical significance, the sample size employed is smaller than that used in quantitative research methods (Crossman, 2020). I utilized a purposive sampling technique to gain detailed knowledge of specific phenomena. Fourteen participants in this study were invited. For case one, seven participants were teachers-in-charge and handled schools without principal school items. They were residents of the Island Garden City of Samal. They had been in the DepEd for not less than five years, including time when they were assigned as teachers-in-charge. Sex, educational attainment, religious affiliation, and civil status were disregarded in the criteria. Moreover, for case two, they were seven participants who were school principals in basic education. They were residents of the Island Garden City of Samal; and they are full-fledged principals with the national item or plantilla. They have also been in the DepEd for not less than five years, including the time they served as public school principals. They were chosen regardless of sex, educational attainment, religious affiliation, and civil status.

According to Yin (2017), the participants for qualitative–multiple case study research should be four to ten cases and suggested that this number allows for cross-case comparisons and enables researchers to identify patterns, themes, or commonalities across cases. As

to general guidelines, these recommendations were not fixed rules. The number of ideal participants for a multiple case study ultimately depends on various factors, including the research objectives, the phenomenon's complexity, the available resources, and the depth of analysis required to address the research questions effectively. To ensure and preserve privacy and confidentiality, the researcher allocated pseudonyms to all public schools, teachers-in-charge, and public school principals who participated in the Division of the Island Garden City of Samal for this qualitative research. This practice was implemented considering the nature of the study and aimed to maintain the anonymity of the participants.

Instruments

I used a semi-structured instrument composed of questions purposely designed to answer the objectives of this study. It comprised a sequence of open-ended questions and objectives with probing questions. The research was a qualitative multiple case study since it discerned teachers-in-charge and principals' experiences as administrators in a school. The instrument was validated by three internal and one external validator with the same doctoral level. It underwent a validation process regarding its content validation, where it reviewed and assessed the interview guide's relevance, clarity, and appropriateness for measuring the intended variables. They provided feedback and suggestions for improving the content and structure of the instrument.

Moreover, they assessed the instrument's comprehensibility and suitability for the study's objectives and target participants. Based on the evaluated sheets, it generated an overall mean of 4.375, which earned a very good rating. Bird (2016) stated that in the past, an interview guide consisted of a straightforward compilation of the main topics the researcher intended to address during the interview, along with high-level questions aimed at obtaining specific answers for each case. Certain questions were frequently spontaneously addressed during the conversation with the interviewee, eliminating the need to ask them explicitly.

Further, I also utilized the guide to tick off the questions they wanted to ask later without saying them aloud. It was critical to remember that the interview guide was just that—a guide. It did not need to proceed in the exact order, and it was acceptable to occasionally deviate from the plan if a particular path of inquiry that they had not planned on appeared worthwhile. I, then decided partway through that an entire line of questioning was not appropriate for a specific interviewee. However, the guide could help with pacing during an interview. In addition, Creswell (2014) emphasized that research questions in qualitative studies should focus on understanding the "how and what" aspects that contribute to a described experience. By exploring these dimensions, researchers can promote more profound openness and inquiry. In this study, the researcher dedicated significant attention and effort to formulating comprehensive, deliberate, and well-thought-out qualitative research questions. These questions were designed to thoroughly understand the subject matter and facilitate meaningful exploration of the research topic.

Ethical Considerations

The following ethical guidelines were closely observed when collecting data. This qualitative investigation is explicitly affected by a substantial ethical dilemma. This work's relevant ethical problems include proper study design, confidentiality, and anonymity. I further upheld ethical standards to ensure the participants' security and safety, which is specified under the Department of Science and Technology – Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (DOST-PHREB) and with Holy Cross of Davao College – Research Ethics Committee (HCDC-REC) and nine elements such as social value, informed consent, risks, benefits, and safety, privacy and confidentiality of information, justice, transparency, qualification of researcher, adequacy of facilities, and community of involvement.

Social Value. The results of this study will enable the Department of Education to investigate alternative methods of providing quality education and establish workable and developed strategies for the efficient and effective usage of school resources. This may be a basis for formulating training and workshops for school heads managing the school resources and adequately utilizing them at the maximum level. Moreover, this study is also relevant to teachers-in-charge and school principals who are school heads in the whole region. They will also understand how crucial it is to have knowledge of human resources, budgeting for material resources, and financial literacy. The inadequate provision of school resources, specifically machinery and equipment for teaching and non-teaching personnel, was planned thoroughly in line with the proper utilization. Additionally, they can locate additional resources to keep students interested in studying and identify sources of the materials required for students to achieve their full potential as learners.

Informed Consent. Informed consent is crucial and essential for both the researcher and the participants. Hence, their participation was entirely voluntary, with no coercion, and they had the right to decline or withdraw at any time before and during the study. The informed consent was carried out through face-to-face contact following the IATF guidelines and protocol, such as wearing of face mask, sanitizing hands, getting body temperature, and observing social distancing. In addition, I provided an orientation regarding the research conduct and the interview procedure. The participants affixed their signatures as an agreement consenting to participate in the study.

Risks, Benefits, and Safety. The data was gathered through a face-to-face interview following the COVID-19 Inter-Agency Task Force protocol and guidelines such as wearing a face mask, sanitizing their hands, getting the body temperature, and observing social distancing. Safety for the participants was always ensured before, during, and after being interviewed. Personal questions were asked of them in the interview. The questions were crafted in a way that they would not feel uncomfortable answering them. The study will benefit teachers-in-charge and school principals in basic education as its findings will contribute to ongoing efforts to improve the

education system and empower educational leaders. By leveraging their unique experiences in the utilization of school resources, teachers-in-charge and school principals can continue to drive positive change and foster a supportive and conducive learning environment for students.

Privacy and Confidentiality of Information. I protected the privacy of my research participants by always keeping the information confidential. This approach embodied respect for the rights of privacy and served as a mechanism to ensure confidentiality. Any data used in the reports were carefully presented to prevent the identification of participants and schools, safeguarding individual identity. As stated in Republic Act 10173, commonly referred to as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, Section 8 imposes the responsibility to uphold the confidentiality of any personal information obtained. All forms of information, whether private, personal, or sensitive, were protected. In addition, to maintain anonymity, pseudonyms were assigned to the transcribed interviews. The recorded interviews were securely stored in a hard drive for transcription purposes. Subsequently, the transcribed interviews were electronically stored using a password-protected word processing software program. Printed copies of the transcribed interviews and other research materials were safely kept in a folder and placed in the drawer, while digital copies were stored in the hard drive. Once the study concludes, the research data files, including electronic copies, will be deleted to ensure the secure management of sensitive information. Likewise, any printed data copies will be appropriately disposed of through shredding.

Justice. I employed a purposive sampling technique in the study to eliminate bias in the selection process. The inclusion criteria of selection were the following: teachers-in-charge handling schools without school principal school items or plantilla, they were residents in the Island Garden City of Samal, they have been in the DepEd for not less than five years, including the time when they were assigned as teachers-in-charge regardless of sex, educational attainment, religious affiliation, and civil status. Another were school principals in basic education; they were residents in the Island Garden City of Samal, they were full-fledged principals with the national item or plantilla, and they have been in the DepEd for not less than five years, including the time they serve as public school principals regardless of sex, educational attainment, religious affiliation, and civil status. Moreover, they were served nutritious snacks during the interview. More importantly, I duly acknowledged their participation in the preliminary section of my paper.

Transparency. There was no conflict of interest experienced in the data-gathering process because it was primarily driven by the objective nature of its purpose. The goal is to collect accurate and reliable information without bias or personal agenda and operates within a framework of neutrality and objectivity. After the research is completed, the hardbound copy of this dissertation paper will be submitted to the Graduate School, Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and Division Office of IGACOS. If an opportunity arises, the research will be presented at fora and research conferences to share the findings and recommendations with a broader audience. Moreover, it is anticipated that the findings of this study will be prepared for publication in the future.

Qualification of Researcher. I am qualified to conduct this research study because I have technical knowledge based on the school courses I attended. I am a full-fledged master's degree holder, Master in Management. In addition, I am enrolled in Dissertation B in the degree of Doctor of Philosophy major in Educational Management and was guided by my adviser. Additionally, I am a Licensed Professional Teacher (LPT), and I taught research subjects to senior high school students in the institution where I am currently employed. Moreover, I attended various meetings regarding the research study at the Holy Cross of Davao College Graduate School.

Adequacy of Facilities. The interview was conducted in a well-ventilated, well-lit, and spacious classroom with enough chairs to observe social distancing. Moreover, this venue was considered a convenient place for gathering participant data. During the interview, the study adhered to the health and safety regulations set by the school and followed the IATF protocol mandated by the government. These measures included temperature checks, mandatory face mask usage, and maintaining physical distance throughout the interview. I used paper and pen to record their responses. With permission from the participants, I made use of a mobile voice recorder during the conduct of the interview.

Community Involvement. In the research study, an interview guide was carefully crafted to ensure the absence of bias against participants' gender, culture, beliefs, and traditions within the community. The wording of the questions made the participants feel welcome regardless of the response. Also, I oversaw and managed the data collection procedure under ethical standards. Furthermore, I ensured that the participant's and the community's cultural beliefs, customs, traditions, and practices were respected while collecting data. Thus, the data collection processes included respecting participants' and the community's viewpoints without regard for their representations and respecting their customs, practices, beliefs, and so on. To maintain ethical standards and ensure respectful and responsible data collection, I upheld informed consent, respect and sensitivity, privacy and confidentiality, and clear communication with participants.

Results and Discussion

This section discusses the study's results, which sought to delve further into the unique experiences of the teachers-in-charge and school principals and ascertain how they overcame obstacles. The informants' point of view was used to derive insights from the findings.

The main objective of this research endeavor was to examine the similarities of unique experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights between teachers-in-charge and school principals in the utilization of school resources in basic education. Specifically, the study was guided by three primary objectives: to describe the unique experiences, coping mechanisms, insights and lessons of the teachers-in-charge in the utilization of school resources in basic education; to describe the unique experiences, coping mechanisms, insights and lessons of the school principals in the utilization of school resources in basic education; and to discover the similarities on the responses between the two cases.

Meanwhile, the study utilized a qualitative design that follows the multiple case study approach to describe the unique experiences of the two cases. For Case 1, the informants of this research were seven teachers-in-charge handling schools without principal school items in the Davao Region, specifically in the Division of Island Garden City of Samal, and have been in the DepEd for not less than five years, including time when they were designated as teacher-in-charge regardless of sex, educational attainment, religious affiliation, and civil status. Meanwhile, for Case 2, seven school principals in basic education in the same division served as the informants. They were full-fledged principals with the national item or plantilla. They have been in the DepEd for not less than five years, including the time being public school principals, regardless of sex, educational attainment, religious affiliation, and civil status.

The results of the study uncovered the following major themes:

The unique experiences of the informants for Case 1 in the utilization of their school's resources are encapsulated into four major themes. The first theme relates to their frustration because of the inadequate budget. Next, they are compelled to take on multiple tasks and responsibilities due to insufficient personnel. The third theme concerns the difficulties in utilizing limited resources, including classrooms, chairs, concrete, textbooks, printers, and other necessary facilities and supplies. Finally, they often must confront the challenge of adjusting to unforeseen expenses. On the other hand, the coping mechanisms revealed five major themes. The first is embracing the challenge by showing commitment as a teacher-in-charge mandated to properly utilize the school's resources. Next, the informants stressed that engaging in professional and personal development is highly important. Furthermore, the third theme revolves around welcoming community support through collaborating with the PTA or conducting fund-raising activities to augment the school's existing budget. The fourth theme encourages the application of resource allocation criteria to help identify priorities for resource utilization. Lastly, the informants discussed the immense value of designating a property custodian. The thematic analysis of the insights and lessons learned by the informants unraveled two five themes. The first theme involves seeking the support of various stakeholders foster collaboration and synergy. Further, the second theme generated consists in ensuring they are continuously committed to their oath as public servants that instill a sense of accountability and responsibility. The next theme revolves around maximizing the use of existing resources by showing productivity and efficiency. The fourth theme was that fostering positive relationships is essential to building trust. Finally, the informants unanimously described the need to increase the current MOOE allocation since the school's and the student's demands always increase.

Meanwhile, the unique experiences of the informants for Case 2 are summarized into three major themes. Like Case 1, the informants are also adjusting to the lack of existing resources and facilities and are required to multitask since their schools lack personnel. Moreover, they were challenged by the attitudes projected by school personnel. However, the informants of Case 2 shared the one coping mechanisms through focuses on enlisting community support through partnerships with the PTA or the execution of various fundraising efforts to supplement the school's current operating budget. Another theme emerged is the need to repurpose facilities, such as using laboratories as classrooms. The final theme emphasizes the implementation for budget adjustments if circumstances arise along school operations. For insights and lesson, the following themes were generated. The first encompasses conducting a needs assessment to identify and prioritize the school's most pressing needs. Next, the informants stressed the importance of providing allocation for contingency funds. The last theme involves fostering positive relationships with the local community, the parents, and all stakeholders.

During the cross-case analysis, the following common themes were identified. For both cases' unique experiences utilizing school resources in Basic Education, the shared themes were multitasking due to insufficient personnel and adjusting to the lack of existing resources and facilities. In terms of the coping mechanisms, the two cases had only one common theme, which is welcoming community support. Lastly, regarding insights and lessons learned, the two cases generated a common theme: fostering positive relationships is essential in building trust.

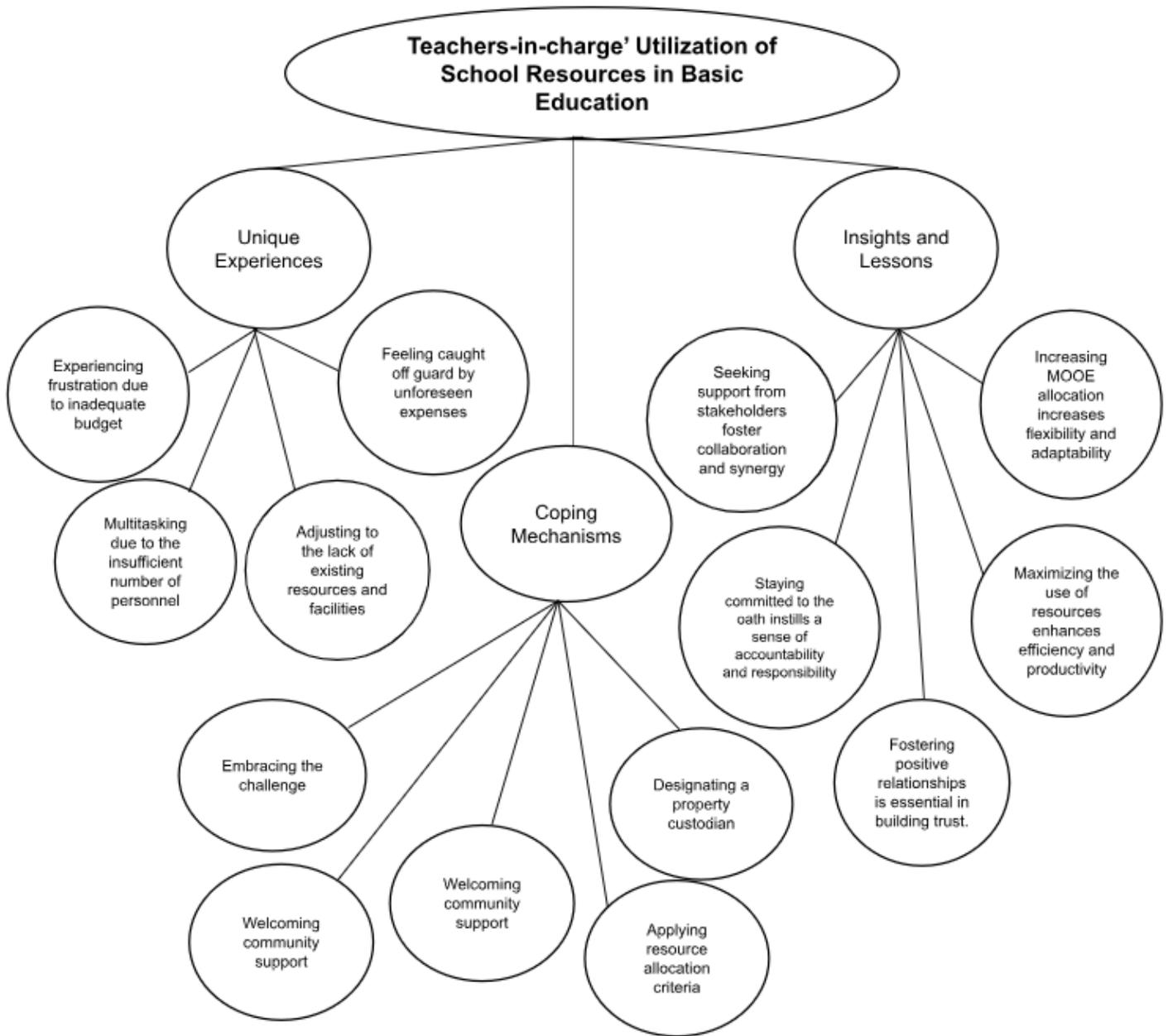


Figure 1. Unique experiences, coping mechanisms, insights and lessons of teachers-in-charge in the utilization of school resources in basic education

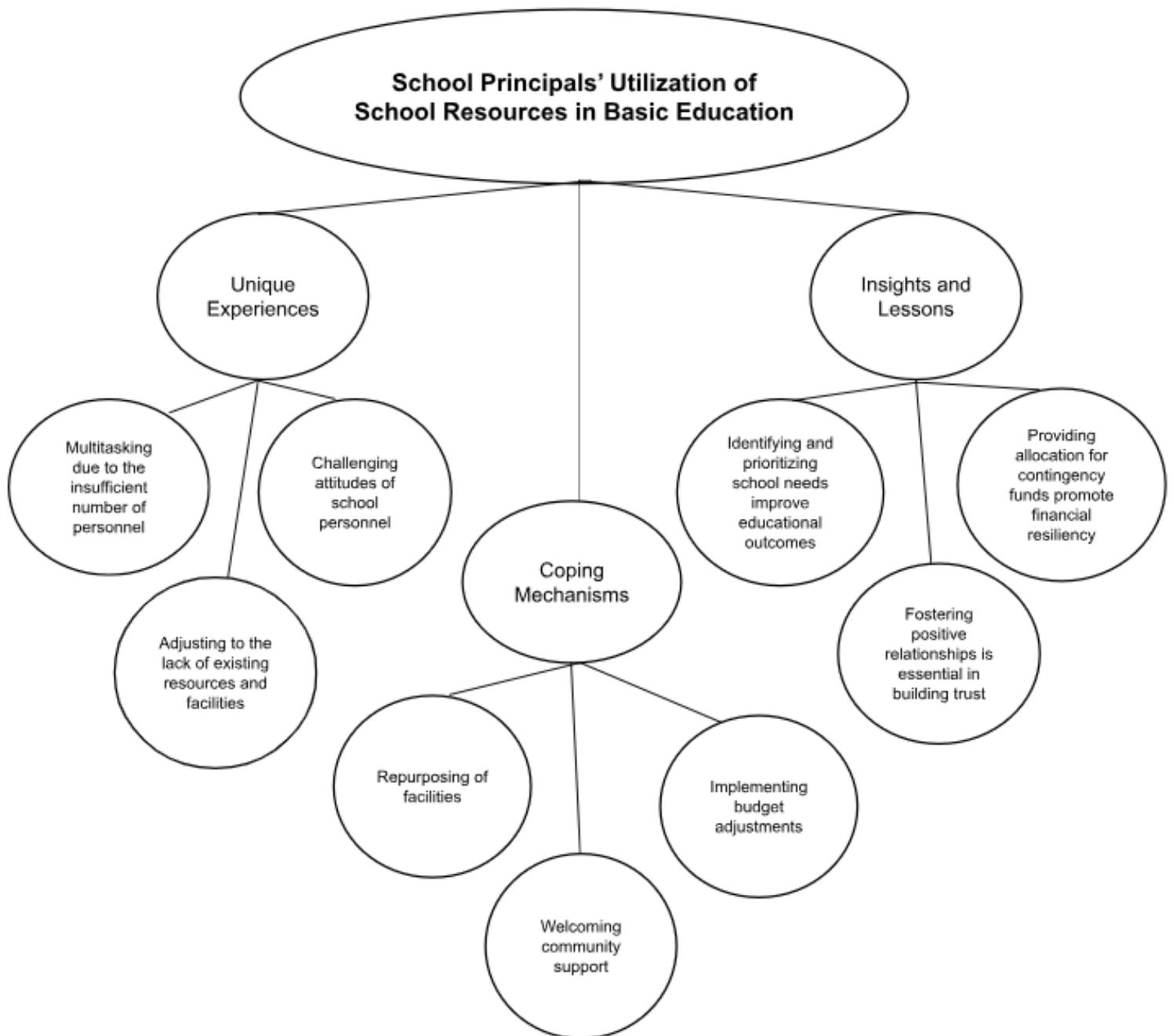


Figure 2. Unique experiences, coping mechanisms, insights and lessons of school principals in the utilization of school resources in basic education

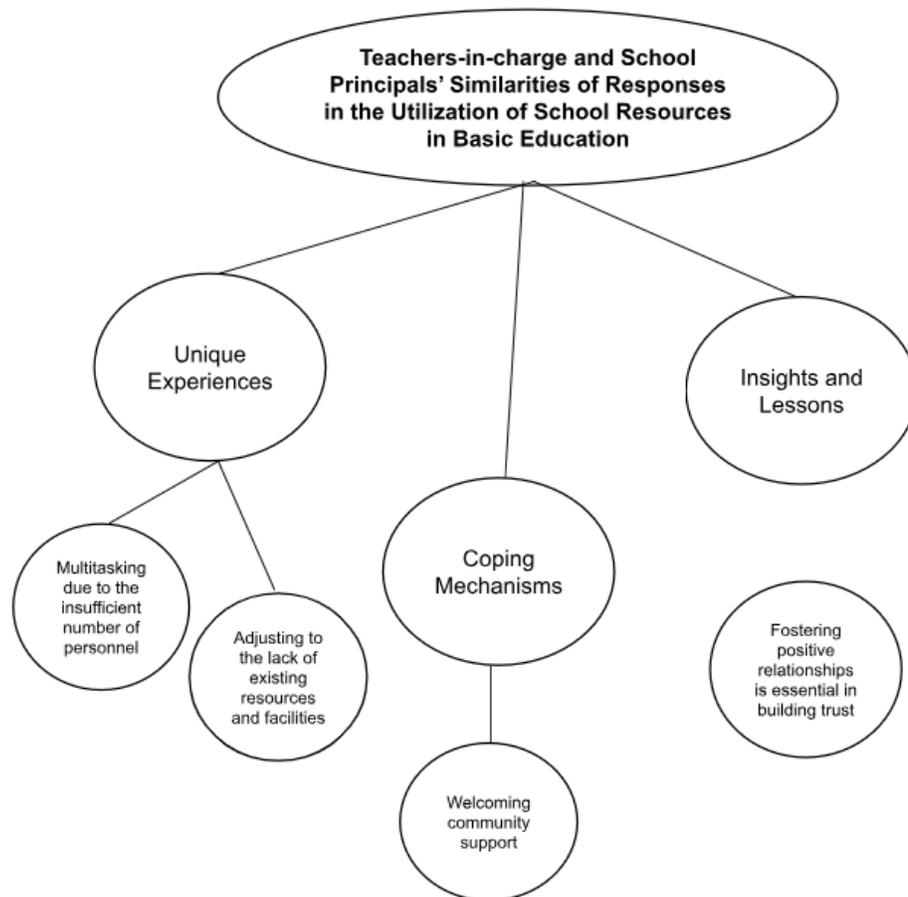


Figure 3. Discovered similarities on unique experiences, coping mechanisms, insights and lessons between teachers-in-charge and school principals in the utilization of school resources in basic education

Discussion

Based on the unique experiences of the informants of Case 1, utilization of the resources is crucial in achieving the objectives of schools under basic education. Additionally, flexibility and adaptability to meet the real-time needs of the school are paramount. Schools are dynamic environments where circumstances might change, necessitating regular adjustments in resource utilization. Furthermore, the given money for schools needs to be increased to meet their demands appropriately. Schools may then need help to get the funds needed to sustain various areas of their operations. This emphasizes the need to lobby for enough financing to ensure schools can efficiently perform their responsibilities.

Moreover, due to limited resources, schools need more resources to promote successful teaching and learning. Schools with limited resources may need to prioritize resource allocation and develop inventive methods to maximize their resources. These identified implications shed light on the experiences of teachers-in-charge tasked with the utilization of school resources. It emphasizes the importance of adaptation, the influence of budgetary restrictions on resource availability, and the scarcity of key resources. Based on the identified experiences, coping mechanisms are necessary to overcome those obstacles. They must demonstrate a commitment to their tasks and obligations as teachers-in-charge to properly utilize the school's resources. This means they recognize the necessity of sound resource management and accept responsibility for maximizing available resources. It demonstrates their commitment to ensuring that resources are used in a way that benefits students and supports the school's goals.

Finally, this highlights the importance of personal commitment and responsibility in addressing resource-related obstacles. Moreover, they actively collaborate with the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) or hold fundraising events to complement the school's existing budget. This means that the participants are proactive in seeking outside assistance and using community involvement to supplement the available resources. It emphasizes the importance of forming strong partnerships with parents, community members, and

stakeholders to alleviate resource restrictions. To address these implications, teachers-in-charge would need to establish a culture of dedication and accountability, pushing them to embrace the challenge of resource management. Lastly, this would entail increasing community engagement and collaboration and providing opportunities for parents, community members, and other stakeholders to support the school financially or otherwise. Meanwhile, it is often assumed that smarter budgeting is essential to overcome the challenges of limited resources and a lack of facilities or materials. This implies the cognizance of the restrictions and constraints imposed by insufficient financial resources. Additionally, schools look to adopt a more needs-based and efficient approach to budget allocation and utilization. To summarize, it is vital to foster a culture of commitment and responsibility among teachers and school staff and provide them with the necessary support and tools to do their tasks effectively. This would also entail implementing strategic budgeting systems that prioritize essential needs and allocate budget to maximize the impact on student learning and overall school functioning.

For unique experiences of Case 2, the importance of prioritizing tasks based on urgency and value, focusing on critical issues, and allocating resources accordingly will be the highlight of consideration of school principals. Despite the shortage of personnel, they may then delegate responsibilities to capable staff members and involve parents and community members to support the school. Collaborating with local businesses, community organizations, and other schools can provide school principals with access to additional resources and facilities, thereby helping them overcome limitations in the school environment. By optimizing existing resources and facilities, school principals can make the most out of what is available, using efficient scheduling and creative solutions to maximize their impact. Investing in professional development and training programs for school personnel will not only be address challenging attitudes but also enhance their skills and performance. Based on the identified experiences, coping mechanisms are necessary to overcome those obstacles.

Moreover, coping mechanisms are required to overcome difficulties based on the reported unique experiences and problems. welcoming the support of the community and stakeholders can be immensely beneficial. School principals should actively engage with parents, local businesses, community organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to build a strong support network. This can lead to various forms of assistance, including volunteering, fundraising efforts, mentorship programs, and resource sharing. Also, they may then assess the underutilized areas of the school and explore innovative ways to repurpose them for various activities or services. For example, vacant classrooms could be used for after-school programs or community workshops, while the school grounds could be utilized for gardening projects or outdoor learning experiences. They may conduct a thorough review of the budget, identifying areas that can be reallocated or streamlined without compromising the quality of education. This may involve prioritizing essential resources, cutting unnecessary expenses, and seeking cost-effective alternatives.

Finally, school principals may also advocate for adequate funding from relevant authorities and communicate transparently with staff and stakeholders about budget decisions. To summarize, school principals should prioritize effective communication, active listening, and collaborative decision-making. They may conduct comprehensive assessments to identify areas that require attention and resources. And lastly, they may then advocate for the establishment of contingency funds as part of the school budget allowing schools to navigate unforeseen challenges and emergencies more effectively.

Lastly, the cross-case analysis of the similarities between the two cases unraveled significant implications. Maximizing the educational experience and options accessible to students requires effective resource management. The research results mentioned in this post provide insight into the difficulties school principals and teachers-in-charge confront when managing school resources. Additionally, a more egalitarian, adaptive, and prosperous learning environment can be created by educators by multitasking, adjusting to resource restrictions, and leveraging community support. Education stakeholders must be aware of the significance of these results and work together to assist schools in making the best use of resources for students and the larger educational environment.

Conclusion

Based on the objectives and results of the present study, the researcher would like to offer the teachers-in-charge and principals tasked with the utilization of the school resources the following future directions:

The result of the study will bring a strong background and factual evidence to the officials of the Department of Education of which will place more emphasis on the formulation of policies and the routing of memorandums, aiming to strengthen the effective and efficient utilization of school resources by teachers-in-charge and school principals in basic education of the Division in the Island Garden City of Samal. With these policies and guidelines, there will be an opportunity to provide contextualized training and workshops, enhancing the effective utilization of school-available resources.

The results of this study will be helpful to teachers-in-charge and school principals as they become informed about the context of

prioritization and foster a culture of flexibility and adaptability to handle the school's real-time and evolving needs. This suggests that they regularly review and reassess the needs of students, teachers, and the school. Responsiveness to changing demands will enable them to make necessary changes to resource allocation and administration to ensure efficient and effective use. Proper implementation of policies and memorandums from higher management will suffice the need for effective and efficient utilization of school resources. Additionally, they will be recommended to attend conferences highlighting the utilization of school resources, providing an opportunity to enhance the knowledge of teachers-in-charge regarding resource utilization within the school's context.

This study's results will benefit the teachers, providing them with knowledge and background to become future school leaders. They will have the opportunity to observe their respective school heads' functions, duties, and responsibilities, facilitating the effective utilization of available resources. Hence, they may adopt more creative and innovative strategies for utilizing instructional materials and exploring approaches to optimize the use of school facilities, enhancing the meaningful learning experience of learners.

The results of this study will also assist students. As the subjects and ultimate recipients of this study, they will receive valuable information regarding the practical implementation of school resources by teachers and school administrators. This knowledge may enable them to make adjustments and effectively adapt to the utilization of available school resources, promoting meaningful learning experiences despite any challenges or difficulties they may encounter.

The active participation and engagement of other stakeholders as community partners, including parents and the local community, will be encouraged in the decision-making and activities of the school. Based on the study's results, it is suggested that, as valued partners in achieving the school's objectives, they may actively participate in school-led activities and initiatives. Additionally, in times of need, they may offer support by contributing to fund-raising events or programs, thereby helping to provide funds for the school.

Finally, future researchers are urged to conduct a mixed-methods study on the perceptions and lived experiences of those mandated to oversee the utilization of the school's resources. This area of research, particularly in the Philippines, still needs to be studied more. Hence, they can shed light on this particular niche and contribute to the gaps in the body of literature.

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Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Jeltwiene C. Ondong, PhD

Holy Cross of Davao College Inc.– Philippines