

Self-Learning to Lead: A Grounded Theory on the Transition in Leading from Elementary to Integrated School

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ABSTRACT

The increasing trend of school conversion into an integrated school posed new responsibilities and challenges to the elementary school heads. Following the rigorous method of Qualitative Grounded Theory, through in-depth interviews of the four school head participants, this aimed to generate a theory that is grounded on the narratives and experiences of the elementary school heads, as they transitioned to lead an integrated school. The recorded interviews were transcribed and followed the three phases of thematic analysis; open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In open coding, the researcher looked for substantial categories and saturation of the data, using the constant-comparative analysis to identify the central or core phenomenon. As a result, Self-learning to Lead emerged as the core phenomenon which characterizes the transition in leading of the school heads. This paper presents a new andragogy that supports how school heads learn in a self-directed conduct. It highlights how they learn in a manner that could be distinct or a continuation of their previous post. The researcher then engaged in the axial coding process, now that the core phenomenon was generated. This coding process explored and examined the core phenomenon that was generated. In which the researcher reviewed and collected other data to explicate the core phenomenon. These data were further elaborated through selective coding, which formed and systematically linked the narratives of the participants to complete the generated theory. This paper presents a significant impact both in theory and in practice in the field of leadership in education, especially in this distinct field of interest.

Keywords: Transition Experiences, Integrated School, Grounded Theory, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Transitions occur swiftly in a globalized 21st-century world. Various paradigms in educational settings, such as school conversion, evolving curriculum, student diversity, social unrest, and even health hazards have left school heads scrambling to reconstruct their existing school leadership schema to adapt to changes in the educational landscapes (Townsend, 2011; Cahapay, 2020).

In the Philippines, the Department of Education K to 12 Basic Education Program Midterm Report from the school year 2015-2016 show an alarming rise in elementary school graduates who cannot continue their education because there are not enough high schools in their areas. As a result, there were moves from the lower and upper houses of Congress to strengthen the conversion of elementary schools, particularly in rural areas to integrated schools to address the said problem.

An integrated educational system has long been used in the Philippines. DepEd Order No. 40 s. 2014 defines integrated schools as expanding current elementary and secondary schools to offer complete basic education. It was first introduced in 1999 through Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) Order No. 91 s. 1999 otherwise known as the Guidelines on the Establishment and Operation of Integrated Schools, encourages and supports establishing at least one integrated school (IS) in the region. Any of the following conditions may lead

to the establishment of an integrated school: no basic education institutions. The area's sole elementary school provides multi-grade programs. The number of elementary graduates does not warrant the establishment of a separate secondary school. There are not enough items for teachers and school heads that would justify the establishment of a separate elementary and a secondary school. A secondary school's acquisition is challenging, and the operation of distinct elementary and secondary schools is hampered by a lack of supplies and equipment.

In South Cotabato, several nearby and far-flung barangay elementary schools have been converted into integrated schools to cater to elementary pupils who find it difficult to move to the next level of education because there are no accessible high schools within their area. There are sixty-seven (67) established integrated schools in the Schools Division of South Cotabato, scattered throughout the province, with a total enrolment of forty-four thousand nine hundred eleven (44,911) learners. With the conversion of elementary schools to integrated schools, elementary school heads are now tasked to oversee and manage both elementary and high school teachers and learners (DepEd Order No. 91 s. 1999).

Transition in leadership has been happening for years. It is an inevitable process of development in the life of a school head. It may refer to the act of balancing change and continuity. The continuity of the school heads' current work and a major shift in their functions and responsibilities. Much literature has been published exploring elementary and secondary school heads' experiences in various facets of school leadership, management, and operations, from the pre-pandemic to the new normal setting (Kmetz & Willower, 1982; Francisco & Nuqui, 2020; Dizon, et.al, 2021; Cahapay, 2021; Gurr, 2022), but not much is all about the transition experiences of the school heads. To add, the phenomenon of elementary school heads transitioning to leading integrated schools remains unknown and is currently unexplained and understudied. Moreover, the field of leadership in times of transition is underinvested. Despite the perceived importance of leadership, too many transitions are not well thought through or carefully managed (Gilmore, 2003).

Exploring the experiences of the elementary school heads who transitioned into leading integrated schools is a significantly scholarly task to understand their experiences in handling both elementary and secondary learners and teachers. The prevalence of transitions and the need to recognize and construct a theoretically grounded assessment of this phenomenon and create a meaningful plan to understand them are vital in addressing this gap in school conversions. This context challenged the researcher to conduct and investigate the experiences of elementary school heads in leading integrated schools.

This study aimed to generate a theory to comprehend the phenomenon of transition in leading from the perspective and point of view of the school heads. Through in-depth interviews, the researcher had a grasp of the phenomenon being studied, coupled with various literature reviews that aided the researcher in constructing a valid, reliable, and plausible theory. Furthermore, this study provided insights to school heads that can be used to build interventions to assist them in their transition. Lastly, this study opened the doors for all integrated schoolteachers and learners to see and understand what is happening around them through the lens of the school heads.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

School Leadership

There is no universally accepted definition of leadership (Leithwood, et al., 1999; as cited by Bush & Glover, 2002). In addition, Yukl (2002) also added that the definition of leadership is arbitrary and exceedingly subjective. Some definitions are more useful than others, but no definition is right. Leadership is critical to the success of an institution (Marzano, et al., 2005). Leadership is based on the notion that it is a social influence process in which one individual or group exerts intentional influence over other people or groups to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization (Yukl, 2002).

Beliefs about leadership in an organization or other institutions compared to a school setting do not differ. School leadership is an important prerequisite for school effectiveness. Several international publications have emphasized school leadership as critical in ensuring educational quality in recent years (UNESCO, 2012).

Furthermore, it has been stressed in studies that school leadership can be the solution to many problems arising in schools (Bolívar, et al., 2013, as cited by Valliant, 2015).

For years, a considerable number of studies have been published highlighting the significance of school leadership in delivering quality education, teachers, and school performance. Mobley (2009) argued that there is a significant relationship between student performance and how school heads spend their time and effort on school leadership. The study further revealed that certain leadership practices can be associated with student performance and student achievement. Azar, et al. (2020) also supported this idea. They indicated that effective leadership style and quality teachers are two major aspects that influence student achievement.

School leadership also attracts proficient teachers. Highly competent school head leadership improves teacher performance in the classroom and influences the school's capacity to attract high-quality teachers (Dite, 2020). Furthermore, De Castro et al. (2022) argued that significant relationships exist between the school heads' attributes, 21st-century leadership skills, and teachers' job performance.

The sustainable development goal (SDG 4) talks about ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. With this, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) presented its report, *Leading Better Learning: School Leadership and Quality in the Education 2030 agenda*, which urges to emphasize institutional leadership, particularly among school heads. This move cited the need to professionalize school leadership and develop coherent policies about it. Changes and transitions occur swiftly in a globalized 21st-century world. Various paradigms in educational settings, such as school conversion, evolving curriculum, student diversity, social unrest, and even health hazards, have left school leaders scrambling to reconstruct their existing school leadership schema to adapt to changes in educational landscapes in the Philippines. As a result, it established new criteria for the tasks and responsibilities of school heads. According to Townsend (2011), the 21st century brought significant changes in educational settings; school heads now have increased accountability and responsibility for school leadership, the move towards various strategies for distributing leadership beyond the school head, and the increasing importance placed on the task of school leaders when it comes to promoting teaching and learning. During the virulent COVID-19 crisis, Cahapay (2020) documented that school heads encountered problems, following the shift in their educational leadership practices and these are as follows: (1) navigating the crisis with adaptive leadership; (2) cultivating practices in crisis management; (3) managing through the machine; (4) freezing the standards and patterns; (5) promoting inclusivity in the new normal, and (6) caring first for what is essential.

In line with this, Hoer (2005), presented and discussed four (4) lessons about school leadership in the book *The Art of School Leadership*. The four (4) lessons are discussed as follows: (1). Be inclusive. Involving others will increase the likelihood of the goal being achieved. (2) Be clear. Always make instructions simple, this allows teachers to process the task easily, which could, later on, make more desirable outcomes. (3). Be fair to yourself and others. Always put professionalism and credibility in the workplace. (4) Be someone who makes a difference. Being a school head is no easy task, but it is always important to look for the things that could make a significant difference in the teacher's and children's lives.

In summary, school leadership is a pivotal aspect of both classroom instruction and school operations. They rely heavily on good and competent school leaders. With this, school leadership should be given much significance because quality education and efficient use of both financial and human resources stem from a foundation built by quality and competitive school leaders.

Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH)

Quality teachers are also a product of quality school heads. Before the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH), there were the National Competency-Based Standards for School Heads (NCBSSH), but due to the changes brought about by the various national and global frameworks such as the K-12 Implementation, ASEAN Integration, Globalization and the changing character of the 21st-century learners calls for its revision (DepEd Order No. 024, s 2020).

The Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSH) is a policy stipulated in DepEd Order No. 024, s 2020, also known as the National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads. This policy serves as a public statement of professional accountability for school heads to reflect and assess their practice as they aspire for and pursue professional development.

The PPSH has five (5) collective domains and thirty-four (34) strands that refer to specific dimensions of school leadership practices. These domains are discussed as follows:

Domain 1. Leading strategically emphasizes the importance of school heads in establishing their institutions' direction, aims, and objectives and ensuring that all stakeholders are aware of and supportive of these. This domain includes the school heads' dedication to a tactical course of action aligned with institutional objectives to enhance organizational performance.

Domain 2. Managing school operations and resources focuses on school heads in sight of educational institutions' systems and procedures. This domain demonstrates the dedication of the school leaders to ensuring fairness, effectiveness, and efficiency in performing duties to maximize organizational health.

Domain 3. Focusing on teaching and learning focuses on the efforts made by school heads to ensure standards of excellence in teaching. This domain highlights the dedication of the school heads to providing instructional leadership to enhance teacher competency and student results.

Domain 4. Developing self and others appreciates school leaders' function in nurturing themselves and others. This Domain is focused on the dedication of the school heads to achieving individual and group effectiveness.

Domain 5. Building connections. The school heads' proficiency in involving stakeholders in projects to build school communities are highlighted. This domain demonstrates the dedication of the school administrators to their cause of making education everyone's responsibility.

School Heads as School Leaders

The school heads play a critical role in transforming schools to meet the needs of the current and future society (Gold, 2021). UNESCO (2005) highlighted the complexity of principalship and the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values required for school heads. Section 6.1, Rule VI of the implementing rules and regulations of the Republic Act 9155 (Governance of the Basic Education Act of 2001), requires that there should be a school head in all public elementary and secondary schools.

The course of school heads starts as they pass the National Qualifying Exam for the School Heads (NQESH), which served as the primary requirement for the appointment and reclassification of all aspiring applicants for the school heads and assistant school head positions in public elementary and secondary schools. (DepEd Memorandum No. 033 s. 2022).

Moreover, it was stipulated in the DepEd Order No. 17, s. 1997 entitled, "Adopting a Policy of Empowering School Principals," that all public elementary and secondary school heads are vested with instructional administrative and fiscal autonomy for more effective and efficient delivery of quality basic education.

In addition, the DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2007 mandated that a school head should have the following leadership dimensions: educational leadership – the ability to craft and pursue a shared school vision and mission, as well as develop and implement curriculum policies, and programs, and; people leadership – the ability to work and develop effective relationships with stakeholders and exert a positive influence upon people; and strategic leadership – the ability to explore complex issues from a global perspective, manage an educational enterprise and maximize the use of resources.

However, due to the dynamic environment in the educational climate, school leaders now face a lot of challenges and problems as they would normally have in the past. Tintoré, et al. (2020) reviewed the existing literature concerning school heads' problems and challenges, beginning in 2003 and ending in 2019. The results point to eight main categories related to the complex nature of the job including the following: the management

challenge, the complexity challenge, and the learning challenges, interactions with different stakeholders, problems with educational authorities and educational policy; the staff and teaching process; the students; the families and the school community; and the society. The importance ascribed to each category varies depending on the context, but issues with the job's complexity and issues with educational authority and educational policy are the most frequent. There has been a noticeable rise in the quantity and complexity of issues and challenges throughout time, which would seem to raise the need for reforms in educational practices and the thoughtful creation and implementation of leadership development initiatives.

With this, new study initiatives such as this should be given high significance in answering and addressing problems and challenges encountered by school heads in leading and administering the complex nature of operations and management of schools.

School Heads as Instructional Leaders

Instructional leadership goes beyond the work of a school head and serves to unify teacher leaders, grade-level chairs, principals, and central office staff (US Department of Education, 2005 as cited by Zepada, 2013).

School heads always have been instructional leaders, but never before has their role been more prominent (Finkel, 2012). The notion that school heads should function as instructional leaders rather than generic managers in their schools is commonly held among educators. (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Instructional leadership is one of the vested and mandated functions of a school head; it is stipulated in domain four (4) of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSH).

The school head's instructional leadership is a significant aspect of the success of a school's improvement programs and overall performance. The school head's primary role is to support the learning and achievement of all pupils. This goal can be achieved by focusing on learning, fostering cooperation, using data to improve learning, and assisting, and harmonizing curriculum, assessment, and instruction (Lunenberg, 2010). Instructional Leadership is vital in upskilling teachers to improve the teaching and learning process. However, despite the perceived significance of instructional leadership is still left at the bottom of priorities. A lot of training for school heads focuses on a plethora of administrative competencies while giving little time or attention to issues of learning, curriculum, and professional development (Fink and Resnick, 2001). With that, school heads and teachers alike are having a hard time in classroom instruction compromising the quality of education that the students deserve. The following studies are conducted by various researchers highlighting the challenges of school heads in their roles as instructional leaders.

Bafadal, et al. (2019) evaluated the competence of beginner school heads as instructional leaders in primary schools in Indonesia, the results showed that prospective principals who have been appointed as school heads must be empowered in their abilities and competencies. A set of effective induction programs for new school head's is needed, in the form of self-reflection mentoring modules that new school heads can use to enhance their competence independently so that they can quickly and effectively display their good personality as new principals, enter the new school social environment, and begin their performance as an effective learning leader.

Fink and Silverman (2014) identified three challenges that school heads face as instructional leaders. These are as follows, First, many works in systems, have not developed a consensus understanding of the day-to-day work that principals should be engaged in to affect teaching practice at a scale. Second, principals do not receive the intensive, coordinated, and embedded professional development they need to improve their skills. Third, districts do not provide school heads the time they need daily to engage with teachers and students, focusing on improving teaching and learning.

The five problems identified in the study published by Hayes and Irby (2019), underlined the importance of ongoing program review and collaboration among faculty to solve curriculum in both the classroom and the internship. The study examined the challenges professors of educational leadership encounter as they prepare aspiring school heads to be instructional leaders. These difficulties are as follows: (a) teaching instructional leadership through online courses, (b) time in the internship to focus on instructional leadership, (c) instructional leadership mindsets, (d) pedagogical knowledge for use in instructional leadership, and (e) the professor's

knowledge or experience in instructional leadership. Furthermore, the challenges highlight the need for additional research into how to prepare aspiring principals to be culturally responsive and to adopt a growth mindset when it comes to teacher development, as well as how to create powerful learning experiences for aspiring school heads in a variety of program contexts.

Searby, et al. (2016) investigated the capacity of assistant school heads to be instructional leaders. Analyses of survey responses revealed four enticing findings: (a) years of teaching experience and age did not affect assistant school heads perceived readiness as instructional leaders; (b) those completing redesigned programs focused on instructional leadership reported feeling less prepared than those completing programs before the mandated redesign; and (c) even though instructional leadership was a work responsibility, a lot still did not know what portion of their time was spent on it.

Instructional supervision is an important role played by a school head. Kalman and Arslan (2016) examined primary and middle school heads' evaluations of their instructional leadership behaviors, thereby paying closer attention to the ideal instructional leadership behaviors suggested in the related literature and the realities of school head's instructional leadership behaviors. It was discovered that certain school heads worked tirelessly to improve school-related elements that could potentially increase favorable student outcomes. However, due to various factors, they could not demonstrate some instructional leadership behaviors such as change management, boosting teachers' professional growth, working with teachers, and fostering a pleasant learning environment. Finally, the study discusses the implications for the growth of school heads as instructional leaders in Turkey.

Based on the above studies, it can be inferred that a lot of school heads grapple with fulfilling their roles as instructional leaders. The majority of the results cited the lack of preparation such as proper training for the school heads and the basic pedagogical knowledge of what is instructional leadership. For that reason, this current study is revered as significant as it adds other knowledge to the roles and experiences of school heads as instructional leaders.

Conversion of Elementary Schools to Integrated Schools

The alarming rate of elementary students who cannot continue high school, especially those in far-flung areas or in some of the areas that do not have a secondary or high school, is left with the dilemma of traveling a few kilometers just to enjoy the free, and quality education that they deserve, spending more on transportation including the food and allowances of the student. With that, some parents are left to decide to put their child's education on hold.

Due to that compelling reason, the conversion of elementary schools to integrated schools was realized. The conversion was first introduced in the DECS Order number 91 s, 1999, and was further strengthened by DepEd Order No. 40 s. 2014. The conversion of an existing elementary school into an integrated school shall be authorized if at least three (3) of the following conditions are met: (a) no schools are offering complete basic education within the catchment area; (b) the number of elementary graduates does not warrant the establishment of a separate secondary school; (c) there are not enough items for teachers and school heads that would justify the establishment of separate elementary and secondary school, or (e) there is inadequate equipment and resources to support the operation of separate elementary and secondary school.

According to DECS Order No. 91 s. 1999, to be qualified as a school head in an Integrated School, the following criteria must be met: (a) A bachelor's degree in elementary or secondary education with 18 master's degree units in education with appropriate field of specialization, and (b) Must have passed the teacher eligibility. In addition, the school heads of the integrated schools are also expected to perform the following duties: (a) the issuance of a DepEd school ID number under the name of the integrated school; (b) the issuance of agency code; (c) transfer of the corresponding appropriations and direct release of the fund to the integrated school; (d) merging of the plantilla items of the concerned elementary and secondary schools into one (1) "PSIPOP" or the Personal Services Itemization (PSI) Plantilla of Personnel (POP). Excess teaching and non-teaching plantilla items based on the existing DepEd-DBM staffing standards shall be transferred to other schools in need of such positions; and, (e) recording and booking up of school properties under the name of the integrated school (DepEd Order No. 40 s. 2014).

The conversion of the elementary to an integrated school led to a new opportunity for children to pursue secondary education without their parents worrying about financial constraints. However, this conversion also posed challenges to existing school heads' leadership regarding structure, instructions, and operations systems, among others. Furthermore, the conversion of these elementary schools into integrated schools presents interesting challenges to current school administrators, as they must now oversee the operation of an elementary, a junior high school, and a two-year Senior High School on one campus, in addition to managing an elementary school (Lino & Lolinco, 2018).

Research Objective

This study aimed to generate a theory that explains the phenomenon of transition in leading from elementary school to integrated school from the experiences of school heads in South Cotabato.

METHOD

This section presents the research methodology and methods used in this study, including the researcher's assumptions about how the findings have arrived. The researcher intends to establish the credibility and dependability of this qualitative research by providing the method entirely and in detail, along with explanations.

Research Design

This study utilized the Qualitative Grounded Theory approach to achieve the goal of this study. This research design was utilized to explore and have an in-depth understanding of the experiences of the school heads who transitioned to lead integrated schools. Grounded theory is a methodical and iterative research methodology. The purpose is to construct theories from facts to explain and present a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of transition in leading. This design was deemed suitable because it enabled the researcher to explore and establish a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of "transition in leading" by building a theory that is grounded on the experiences and narratives of school heads of their transition in leading from elementary school to integrated school. To add, it shows that the process is linear, however on the actual conduct, it becomes cyclical and iterative in nature. The data gathering and analysis techniques often overlaps each other. This study utilized the thematic analysis which is divided into three phases; Open Coding, Axial Coding, and Selective Coding. To understand the phenomenon of transition in leading, this study utilized the Strauss & Corbin (1990), method for the open coding analysis.

Research Site

This study was conducted within the Schools Division of South Cotabato. The mentioned division is located in the Province of South Cotabato, Region XII. An integrated school is any school that is converted to cater to elementary, junior high school, or senior high school curricula on one campus. There are sixty-seven (67) established integrated schools in the Schools Division of South Cotabato, scattered throughout the province. For the school year 2022-2023, it has a total enrollment of 21,544 for elementary, junior high school it has 21,338, and 2019 for senior high school. The total enrollment for all the integrated schools in the province of South Cotabato is 44,911.

Participants

The participants of this study are elementary school principals who transitioned to lead integrated schools. These participants were identified through the inclusion criteria set by the researcher. To be included in the study the following criteria must be followed: (1) must have been an elementary school head (2) the school head must have handled integrated school for at least (3) three years. Theoretical sampling was used to select the participants in this study so that they could purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study.

The **first school head** had been a classroom teacher for fourteen (14) years and has been a public elementary school head for sixteen (16) years. **School head two** has been an elementary school head for fourteen (14) years

now, and has vast knowledge and experience as a school head in the remote areas of South Cotabato. **School head three** has been a public elementary school head for fifteen (15) years and a classroom teacher for almost ten (10) years, with an enormous school leadership background. **School Head Four** is a public elementary school head who is one of the youngest school heads to have passed the National Qualification Standards for School Heads (NQESH).

Instrumentation

A key informant interview (KII) was utilized to gather the data needed for the study, and an interview guide was the guiding instrument. The statement of the problem was the “foreshadowing guide” of the researcher to get and capture interesting concepts and follow-up questions were also used to explore the phenomenon. The guide questions were developed and expressed in English, but they were translated into Filipino and Hiligaynon, to ensure comfort and ease of communication throughout the actual conduct of the in-depth interview. The interview guide was subjected to a dry run by the school head who previously handled integrated schools but did not qualify as a participant. Furthermore, the interview guide was also passed to a panel of experts to ensure its suitability and validity. After the validation, the guide questions were finalized.

Data Gathering and Analysis Techniques

Key Informant Interview was conducted in a face-to-face setting, in this way relevant information can be captured. The participants were also ensured that confidentiality would be followed as a research protocol. They were also informed that their answers were recorded through the use of audio recorders. The gathered data through the use of a Key Informant Interview (KII) followed certain steps and procedures for data processing and analysis. There are no fixed rules for analyzing qualitative data, but this grounded theory research adopted thematic analysis, it used the coding paradigm proposed by Strauss & Corbin (1990), which involves **Open coding, Axial Coding, and Selective Coding** to process the interview transcripts.

The **Open Coding Phase**, in this stage, the researcher breaks down data to disclose the thoughts, ideas, and meanings included in the participant's words that may characterize the phenomenon of the school head's transition in leading from elementary to integrated school.

This phase commenced by conducting a key informant interview of the first participant. The researcher promptly transcribed and examined the data gathered. The researcher collaborated with technical experts in the transcription and encoding of the participant responses to verify the accuracy and credibility of the transcription. The first case interview took place in the participant's school and lasted for more than twenty minutes. Next, the researcher goes back to the field again to collect other data. Categories and elaboration based on the initial hypothesis of the first case were pursued during the analysis of the second case. The analysis of the second case was compared to the analysis of the first case, through the process of “*cross-case analysis*”. This analysis further strengthened the credibility and validity of the initial hypothesis. After the analysis of the first two transcripts of the two school head participants, a saturation was attained and the core phenomenon was generated. This core phenomenon characterized school heads' transition in leading from elementary to an integrated school. The interview with the second participant took place in his own home. Also, the interview lasted for more than twenty minutes.

In the results and discussion, a table was presented with the whole text of the interview written in a column. Key points and concepts or properties were listed alongside the columns. All of these concepts were considered initial, and several were updated as data gathering and analysis developed. The open coding is illustrated in the figure below.

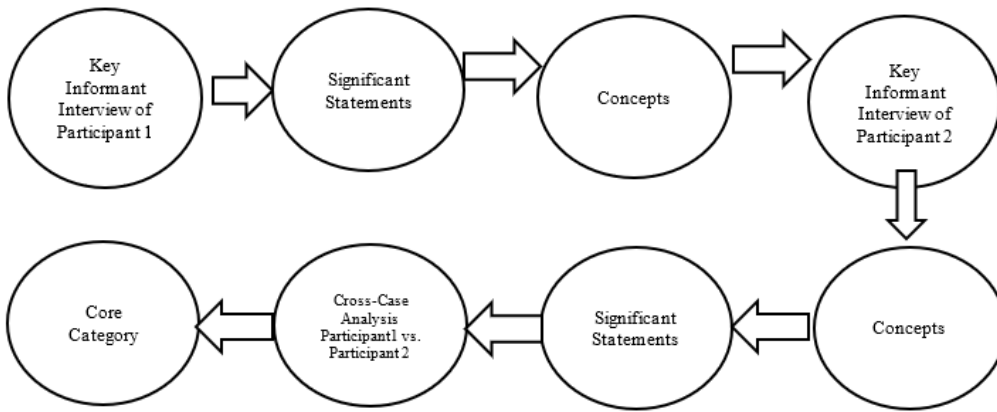


Figure 1. Open Coding Process

Now that the core phenomenon was generated, the researcher then engaged in the **Axial Coding Phase**. This coding phase explored and examined the core phenomenon that was generated. Through systematic analysis of the process called the “*constant-comparative analysis*”, this process is characterized by the simultaneous collection, examination, and writing up of data, this process was repeated across all the cases.

In this phase, the researcher went back to the first two participants, with the new interview guide to pursue the core category. The first and second participant interviews during this phase took place in their own homes and lasted longer than five minutes each.

The conduct of the in-depth-interview of the third participant also took place in his private residence and took more than 30 minutes to finish. Lastly, the in-depth-interview of the fourth participant was conducted in a public restaurant, and the interview lasted for more than 40 minutes. The axial coding process is illustrated in the figure below.

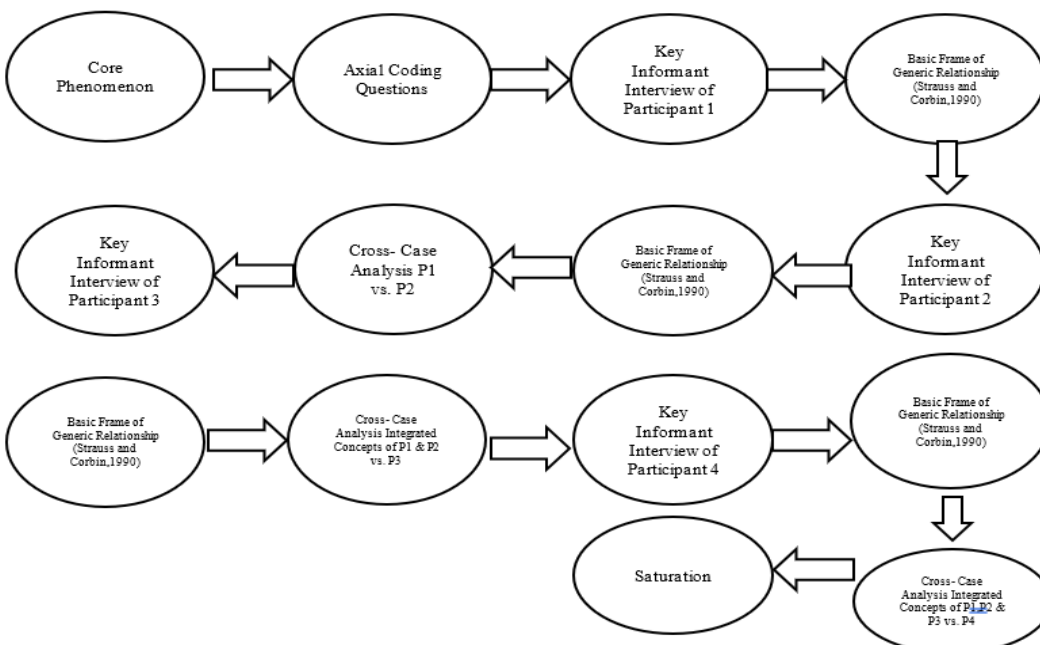


Figure 2. The Axial coding Process

This coding phase, used the coding paradigm proposed by Strauss & Corbin (1990), methods for the axial coding process. This allowed the researcher to be creative and flexible in applying the core paradigm and extracting logical concepts from the data. The Basic Frame of Generic Relationship proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1990) is discussed in the table below on how it was utilized in this study.

Table 3. The final phase of data analysis is **selective coding**. In this phase, the researcher systematically linked the categories through the narrative statement of the participants, and by grouping or categorizing the axial codes, selective coding explained and synthesized them. In this phase, the researcher looked at the concepts that bind other concepts together that serve as substantial qualities, characteristics, and attributes that elaborate the core phenomenon. Through this, a theoretical model was formed through a synthesized diagram showing a coherent pattern of the dynamic relationship between the core phenomenon and the categories. The key premise of this phase is that the researcher compares the theory and data all the time, iterating toward a theory that closely matches the evidence. This is accomplished through the rigorous procedure used in grounded theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results drawn from this study. Using the grounded theory methodology, the analysis was divided into three phases: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Each phase of the analysis is accompanied by an explanation to provide a comprehensible explanation to the readers.

Phase I: Open Coding

Open coding is the process of breaking down the data to disclose the thoughts, ideas, and meanings included in the participant's words. The table shows the significant statements drawn out from the transcripts and was interpreted and considered as a concept. These concepts are the researcher's interpretation to describe the phenomenon of transition in leading. In this phase, the researcher only described the participant's words and did not attempt any interpretation. Table 1 shows the excerpt of the sample open coding process of case one. (See Appendix A)

Table 1. Excerpt of the Open Coding of Case One

Significant Statements	Concepts
So far. Additional is yung high school. But then learners man na sila tanan, ah ibig sabihin niyan add ons lang yung ano, ad on lang yong high school na ano na mga learners compare sa doon sa elementary, sa transition I might say parang normal na lang man sa akin. Parang ganun	Considering high school department as an addition to his job description Normalizing the transition
Akun abi trabaho lang, so experiences nga ano ko sa ila, so far, the same routines, wala akong masabi na ano na siya the only thing is ang ano, ang mga bata, syempre nagkakaano, iba yong mga edad ng mga bata, kaysa sa ano siya. Adopt sa kanila kung ano man siya. Parang ganun lang naman.	Does not see any differences, rather he continues his previous job as an elementary school head. Adapting on the children's level of perception
It happens by ano siya, hindi man siya it happens by mistake, kay we were told or we were assigned, on this particular school that means to say take it or leave it. So parang ganun.	Demonstrating acceptance of the new position
Ay oo wala siya problema, the same routine, the trabaho administrative function sa school. Amo na siya, at least, pero daw bulk lang ang trabaho, kasi may high school ka nga may elementary pa.	Does not see any problem in his transition, but continues his routines and sees the new position as an addition to his current work, with the introduction of the new level of education.
Ang term na transition is shifting to another ano na. oh. Pero sa akon lang the same routine learners lang siya gihapon the only is giving more ano na siya sa mga high school at elementary amo	Defines transition as a shift to another work, but applies the same

<p>man lang na emphasize niya, after all ang teacher iya, the same ang mga learners how do you look at them. How do you look at the teacher, iya naman iya ka mga teacher. Ang sa part sang mga teacher te syempre adjust ka, may-ara na teacher sa high school may teacher sa elementary, so far. Wala sa akin.</p>	<p>routines, and gives more emphasis to the high school learners.</p> <p>Adjustments are made to cater teachers and students.</p>
<p>Ah mga sitwasyon pa. well. Sa estudyante amo na siya, iba ang treatment sa elementary iba man ang sa high school, pero not usual nga more ang contact ko sa mga bata. Syempre sa mga teacher. When it comes sa teacher the same lang ano lang man sila kung isipun mo. The only is ang gina handle nila nga mga bata amo ni. Ang gina handle ni amo ni. Amo ni siya. Pero instruction given to them are just the same. Daw amo na siya ba. Kung ano man.</p>	<p>Seeing the two levels of education as a separate entity in terms of the level of the learners, but he sees no difference in the part of the teachers.</p>
<p>Na post gid ang transition. Kung lantawun mo gid man sya. Kung lantawan gid ang trabaho, the same routines, may mga mo na siya. Ah. Syempre you have to manage ning sa high school, sa teachers side lain man ila to ya nga mga. Ano tawag na siya. Lain man ang mga needs lain man ang sa elementary higher on the part sang high school, kaysa sa elementary, pero ang mga needs nila, te syempre accept mo eh ano mo na sila kay bangud nga kay ara sa imo under ining mga teachers halimbawa. So at least yun lang. parang ganun.</p>	<p>Recognizing and accepting the two distinct levels of education by responding to their different needs.</p> <p>Understanding the teachers and student needs</p>
<p>For instance, dealing with them.so normal nga function mo as ga supervise ka sa ila. Ah. Managerial, is another maayo mo man ning mga high school nga iba ang sa elementary kay iba ang learners nila. Daw amo na siya. So kung strategy so far. Naga gawas naman lang kung kis.a ang strategy.</p>	<p>Letting the strategy naturally come out, while carrying out the managerial and supervisory function as a school head.</p>

School head participant 1 is in his retirement age, with a vast amount of experience as a teacher and a school head of various elementary schools, this aspect is evident in his new post as an integrated school head. His understanding of transition in leading does not differ from all his previous posts as an elementary school head. He acknowledges that he is transitioning by encountering challenges in handling high school students with diverse backgrounds, and the difference in running the school in terms of its financial aspect, but, he does not see any changes in his approaches and routines, instead he made self-adjustments toward them and takes this new job as an opportunity to serve. He reported that he sees transition when dealing with the two levels of education.

He also demonstrated acceptance of the new position by adapting to the children’s level of perception. This concept exemplifies the school head’s whole acceptance and enthusiasm to take on a new role and responsibility. Furthermore, School head participant 1, understanding of his transition takes its roots from his professionalism and great sense of responsibility at work. As a leader in transition, he immediately learns to cope with his new responsibilities to cater to and serve both elementary and high school learners. By adjusting himself to fit his added job description, this construct enables him to immediately act and provide what the school needs.

School head participant 1 firmly believes that to smoothly run an integrated school it is a collaborative effort of the teacher, students, and stakeholders. This action was evident in one of the concepts that emerged, where he fostered camaraderie through consultation and asked for the consensus of his teachers on what was best for the school. In addition, school head 1, also emphasized the value of teamwork and constantly builds a good rapport, and gave understanding to the needs and concerns of his teachers. The table 2 shows the excerpt of the sample open coding process of case two. (See Appendix A).

Table 2. Excerpt of the Open Coding of Case Two

Significant Statements	Concepts
<p>Ah.. siguro it's a matter of kuan parang... ah hindi ko kasi iniexpect na yung school na pupuntahan ko is nag apply for validation ng integrated school and timely during that time sa reshuffling namin yung school na nilagay sa akin is parang they're waiting for the final validation sa region parang two weeks after so I was shocked ha? Na mag aaply pala ito ng kuan ah. Integrated school so wala tayung choice kailangan talaga nating tanggapin and as a school head ah. Wala dapat tayung inuurungan so ah ito talaga yung unang challenge sa akin then a week after ah fortunately yung school was validated nung region at naging integrated school yung ah Tboli Integrated School which is Tboli elementary school dati</p>	<p>Circumstances leading to become an integrated school head</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated School Head due to the Circumstances ○ Transformation of the school to an integrated school ○ Becomes the school head of an integrated school after its approval <p>Acceptance of the new role as an integrated school head with the notion that as a school head, they should not back down to any new roles.</p>
<p>Sakin. Ah. it's a matter of acceptance siguro unang una. Kasi andoon kana eh. Plus yung makita ko kasi yung support ng community especially sa amin sa barangay na sir kinahanglan nagid, plus ah. siguro sa amun sa Tboli ah.</p>	<p>Acting out the role of an integrated school head, because he was already assigned to it.</p> <p>Personal Acceptance of the role, because of the support of the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accepting transition
<p>Ah.. with our guidance kasi very active din naman talaga si guidance plus siguro yong yong approach lang na learn ko doon sa mga friend ko na pag junior high school instead na pagalitan mo sila kausapin mo so may friend kasi ako na galing din siya sa integrated school for almost five years so nag lelearn din ako sa kanya ng mga strategies kasi sabi nya sa akin alam mo kasi sir, dati daw kasi may kuan sya may junior at tsaka may senior high school everyday may nag aaway may naga nalampusanay sang bangko kasi naka grupo ang mga kuan kung sa imo kay naga open ka pa man lang newly established ka so sa grade seven to grade eight dapat established mo na ganun na, para pag dating ng mga bata sa grade eleven and grade twelve yong respect andoon na siya.</p>	<p>Updating of knowledge on how to run an integrated school by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working hand-in- hand with a colleague ○ Working with the guidance in-charge • Mentorship from others by learning new strategies from a former school head
<p>Nang nagkaroon kasi ako nang another strategy na may ge established ako na kuan na syempre may elementary department na meron kang high school department so kuanon mo ged na siya kailangan may isa ka didto na eh designate especially sa junior high school, para automatically pag may problema sila katu sya na person amo nalang to sya ang may relay sa imo plus at the same time. May meeting for elementary ahh junior high school pwede ka didto maka sit in plus another kuan for elementary. Kasi kung pungku.an mo nalang gid sya tanan ikaw nalang ged mag isa isa basi maabutan ka lang hapon hindi ka pa matapos</p>	<p>Establishment of Department heads, and designating high school coordinators ease transition dilemma</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relying on colleagues in running the school ○ Good rapport

So karun ga na realized ang ge hambal nya ngayon naiintindihan mo na ako. From integrated school sya to elementary school so iba ang sa kanya integrated school sya to elementary. Ako from elementary to integrated school so Nakita ko abi ang set up nya na Saturday, Sunday andon sya sa school. Nga.a ara ka pa da sa eskwelahan sabado domminggo? Maam ga prepare ako liquidation ni junior high school. Ga prepare ako liquidation ni elementary. Ga prepare ako sang liquidation ni senior high school. Ga prepare ako sang liquidation ni SBFP and then prepare ang mga reports. Allocation palang na ah? Samantala sa elementary, ang eh prepare mo is only elementary and SBFP so karun ah na intindihan ko na sya.. Oo nga.a wala ka naga uli kung sabado dominggo? Nga.a ara ka pa sa eskwelahan nimo? So sa akun subong Unti- unti na fefeel ko ang ang na experience nya kay naga liquidate ako sang SBFP

Updating of knowledge on how to run an integrated school

Updating knowledge through experiencing various integrated school roles.

Through the mentorship of others, he learns how to liquidate two separate funds received by the school

Proper allocation of the two different funds

Properly liquidating three levels of education

Learning strategies from a friend on how to liquidate SBFP (School-Based Feeding Program)

School head participant 2 shared the same scenario as school head participant 1. He was assigned to an elementary school that was later converted to an integrated school weeks after he assumed office. As a result, he was left unprepared, but still accepted the position, with the strong belief that as a school head, he should not back down to any new positions. School head participant 2 updated his current knowledge on how to run an integrated school by learning new strategies from a friend, experiencing the various integrated school roles himself, and through the mentorship of his colleague in the profession. He also innovated and learned to devise new ideas in handling an integrated school like the establishment of department heads, and employed various transition strategies, coping mechanisms, and adjustment strategies to suit the context brought by the new position.

Furthermore, school head participant 2 showcased the accountability in his work by ensuring the curriculum alignment of the high school curriculum and contextualizing learning materials suited for the learner’s background. To add, he also fostered community cooperation, partnership, and collaboration to ease the burden of his sudden transition.

The researcher examined the transcript from the participants to look for the important categories that emerged based on the participants' concepts. Using cross-case analysis, the researcher attempted to saturate the categories to identify the core category or the central phenomenon. As a result, the following were the core categories that emerged: **Leading Circumstantially, Embracing and Becoming an Integrated School Head, and Self-Learning to Lead.** These three core categories characterized the experiences of the school heads as they transitioned from an elementary to an integrated school head.

The table below shows the open coding process of the case one vs. case two.

Table 3. Open Coding of Case One vs. Case Two

Concepts Participant 1	Concepts Participant 2	Categories	Core Categories
Recognizing and accepting the two distinct levels of education by responding to their different needs. Taking the high school learners hard to manage in	Circumstances leading to become an integrated school head	Leading due to Circumstances Circumstances leading to become an integrated school head Integrated School Head due to the Circumstances	Leading Circumstantially • Leading due to

<p>comparison to the elementary learners.</p> <p>Encountered two different work or the two educational levels</p> <p>Seeing the two levels of education as a separate entity in terms of the level of the learners, but he sees no difference in the part of the teachers.</p> <p>Does not see any differences, rather he continues his previous job as an elementary school head.</p> <p>Does not see any problem in his transition but continues his routines and seeing the new position as an addition to his current work, with the introduction of the new level of education.</p>	<p>Integrated School Head due to the Circumstances</p> <p>Transformation of the school to an integrated school</p> <p>Becomes the school head of an integrated school after its approval</p>	<p>Transformation of the school to an integrated school</p> <p>Becomes the school head of an integrated school after its approval</p> <p>Recognizing and accepting the two distinct levels of education by responding to their different needs.</p> <p>Taking the high school learners hard to manage in comparison to the elementary learners.</p> <p>Encountered two different work or the two educational levels</p> <p>Seeing the two levels of education as a separate entity in terms of the level of the learners, but he sees no difference in the part of the teachers.</p> <p>Does not see any differences, rather he continues his previous job as an elementary school head.</p> <p>Does not see any problem in his transition, but continues his routines and seeing the new position as an addition to his current work, with the introduction of the new level of education.</p>	<p>circumstances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circumstantial Demands
<p>Seeing transition when dealing with the two levels of education.</p> <p>Considers high school department as an addition to his job description</p> <p>Normalizing the transition</p>	<p>Circumstantial Demands</p> <p>Demands of the situation to established an integrated school.</p> <p>Catchment area</p> <p>It caters three (3) elementary schools</p> <p>Demand to established an integrated school, as it is a catchment area of the three elementary school</p>	<p>Circumstantial Demands</p> <p>Circumstantial Demands</p> <p>Demands of the situation to establish an integrated school</p> <p>Catchment area</p> <p>It caters three (3) elementary schools</p> <p>Demand to establish an integrated school, as it is a catchment area of the three elementary school</p> <p>Seeing transition when dealing with the two levels of education.</p> <p>Considers high school department as an addition to his job description</p> <p>Normalizing the transition</p>	
<p>Demonstrated acceptance of the new position</p>	<p>Acting out the role of an integrated school</p>	<p>Acceptance of the role</p>	<p>Embracing and Becoming</p>

	<p>head, because he was already assigned to it.</p> <p>Personal Acceptance of the role, because of the support of the community.</p> <p>Accepting transition</p> <p>Through the support of the community the role is made easy</p> <p>Acceptance is made easy through the aid of government entities like BLGU and LGU</p>	<p>Acting out the role of an integrated school head, because he was already assigned to it.</p> <p>Personal Acceptance of the role, because of the support of the community.</p> <p>Accepting transition</p> <p>Through the support of the community the role is made easy</p> <p>Acceptance is made easy through the aid of government entities like BLGU and LGU</p> <p>Demonstrated acceptance of the new position</p>	<p>an Integrated School Head</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance of the Role • Adapting and Embracing the situation
<p>Quickly adapting to the new line of work</p> <p>Adapting on the children's level of perception</p>	<p>Embracing new situation and reality, through having a mentor friend.</p> <p>Accepting the reality and the difference between elementary and integrated school</p>	<p>Adapting and embracing the situation</p> <p>Embracing new situation and reality, through having a mentor friend.</p> <p>Accepting the reality and the difference between elementary and integrated school</p> <p>Quickly adapting to the new line of work</p> <p>Adapting on the children's level of perception</p>	
<p>Foreseeing what he wanted the school to become, and is equipped to instantly change strategy when one does not work.</p> <p>Challenges in seeing, what he wanted the school to be.</p>	<p>First year of adjustment in leading and assessing the difference between elementary to integrated school</p> <p>First year of adjustment</p> <p>Updating of knowledge on how to run an integrated school</p> <p>Updates knowledge through experiencing various integrated school roles.</p> <p>Through the mentorship of others,</p>	<p>Self-effort on Updating the Knowledge</p> <p>First year of adjustment in leading and assessing the difference between elementary to integrated school</p> <p>Updating of knowledge on how to run an integrated school</p> <p>Updating knowledge through experiencing various integrated school roles.</p> <p>Through the mentorship of others, he learns how to liquidate two separate funds received by the school</p> <p>Proper allocation of the two different funds</p>	<p>Self- Learning To Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-effort on Updating the Knowledge • Learning to see Opportunities <p>Learning to cope</p> <p>Being Able to Foster Professionalism</p>

	<p>he learns how to liquidate two separate funds received by the school</p> <p>Proper allocation of the two different funds</p> <p>Properly liquidating three levels of education</p> <p>Learned strategies from a friend on how to liquidate SBFP(School-Bases Feeding Program)</p>	<p>Properly liquidating three levels of education</p> <p>Learned strategies from a friend on how to liquidate SBFP(School-Based Feeding Program)</p> <p>Foreseeing what he wanted the school to become, and is equipped to instantly change strategy when one does not work.</p> <p>Challenges in seeing, what he wanted the school to be</p>	<p>Learning how to share the burden of transition</p> <p>Self-Devised Plans to overcome Transition</p> <p>Self-Made Adjustments</p>
<p>Opportunity to learn and handle a high school department</p> <p>Fostering dedication on work, to encourage more learners to enroll and trust the school as a steward of learning.</p>	<p>Opportunities for the transition</p> <p>Increase in enrollment</p> <p>Increase manpower when representing the school in municipal activities</p> <p>Taking the challenge of integrated school as new opportunity to learn</p>	<p>Learning to See Opportunities</p> <p>Opportunities for the transition</p> <p>Increase in enrollment</p> <p>Increase manpower when representing the school in municipal activities</p> <p>Taking the challenge of integrated school as new opportunity to learn</p> <p>Opportunity to learn and handle a high school department</p> <p>Fostering dedication on work, to encourage more learners to enroll and trust the school as a steward of learning.</p>	
<p>Letting the strategy naturally come out, while carrying out the managerial and supervisory function as a school head.</p> <p>Came up with a strategy, by tapping teachers when he encounters a conflict of schedule in attending meetings of the two educational levels.</p>	<p>Time management</p> <p>Leading by Example</p> <p>Going to school ahead of his teachers</p> <p>Setting a good example to both teachers and students.</p> <p>Wider scope of responsibility</p> <p>from k-6 extended to grades 7 -8</p> <p>Increase number of enrollees</p>	<p>Learning to cope</p> <p>Time management</p> <p>Leading by Example</p> <p>Going to school ahead of his teachers</p> <p>Setting a good example to both teachers and students.</p> <p>Wider scope of responsibility</p> <p>from k-6 extended to grades 7 - 8</p> <p>Increase number of enrollees</p> <p>Letting the strategy naturally come out, while carrying out the</p>	

		<p>managerial and supervisory function as a school head.</p> <p>Came up with a strategy, by tapping teachers when he encounters a conflict of schedule in attending meetings of the two educational levels.</p>	
<p>Fostering camaraderie with the teachers, and taking indignant emotion as part of his strategy..</p> <p>With the notion to positively change the school, he is challenged to encourage and inspire his teachers to come up something that could radically change the school.</p>	<p>Fostering partnership with a colleague</p> <p>Liquidation of MOOE</p> <p>Allocating finances</p> <p>Establishment of Department heads, and designating high school coordinators ease transition dilemma.</p> <p>Relies on colleagues in running the school</p> <p>Fosters good rapport</p>	<p>Being Able to Foster Professionalism</p> <p>Fostering partnership with a colleague</p> <p>Liquidation of MOOE</p> <p>Allocating finances</p> <p>Establishment of Department heads, and designating high school coordinators ease transition dilemma.</p> <p>Relies on colleagues in running the school</p> <p>Fosters good rapport</p> <p>Fostering camaraderie with the teachers, and taking indignant emotion as part of his strategy..</p> <p>With the notion to positively change the school, he is challenged to encourage and inspire his teachers to come up something that could radically change the school.</p>	
<p>Asking for assistance from his teachers on how to address specific problems concerning the students.</p> <p>Asking help from a teacher, to accomplish what he envisions for the school.</p> <p>Camaraderie with the teachers is given importance</p> <p>Makes sure that he is working for the good of everybody in the school.</p>	<p>The burden of transition is shared by encouraging community support and cooperation</p> <p>Stakeholders Support communicating possible plans with the stakeholders</p> <p>Community Partnership</p> <p>Partnership with the Government entities</p>	<p>Learning how to share the burden of Transition</p> <p>The burden of transition is shared by encouraging community support and cooperation</p> <p>Stakeholders Support communicating possible plans with the stakeholders</p> <p>Community Partnership</p> <p>Partnership with the Government entities</p> <p>LGU and BLGU, through pledges and commitment</p>	

	<p>LGU and BLGU, through pledges and commitment</p> <p>Community Linkages</p> <p>Desires and needs of the community to established an integrated school</p> <p>Community pledges</p>	<p>Community Linkages</p> <p>Desires and needs of the community to established an integrated school</p> <p>Community pledges</p> <p>Asking for assistance from his teachers on how to address specific problems concerning the students.</p> <p>Asking help from a teacher, to accomplish what he envisions for the school.</p> <p>Camaraderie with the teachers is given importance</p> <p>Makes sure that he is working for the good of everybody in the school.</p>	
<p>Adjustments are made to cater teachers and students.</p> <p>Defines transition as a shift to another work, but applies the same routines, and gives more emphasis to the high school learners.</p> <p>Understanding the teachers and student needs</p>	<p>Employed transition strategies</p> <p>Administrative</p> <p>Employed time management</p> <p>Supervisory</p> <p>Employed time management</p> <p>Financial</p> <p>Financial obligations is coped through the financial aid from the LGU through DST- Tulong Dunong Susi sa Tagumpay program.</p> <p>Human Resource problems are addressed through the aid of the Department of Education</p> <p>Sufficing financial constraints, through improvising and redirecting funds of the elementary department, to aid</p>	<p>Self-Devised Plans to overcome Transition</p> <p>Overcoming the transition trough employing strategies</p> <p>Employed transition strategies</p> <p>Administrative</p> <p>Employed time management</p> <p>Supervisory</p> <p>Employed time management</p> <p>Financial</p> <p>Financial obligations is coped through the financial aid from the LGU through DST- Tulong Dunong Susi sa Tagumpay program.</p> <p>Human Resource problems are addressed through the aid of the Department of Education</p> <p>Sufficing financial constraints, through improvising and redirecting funds of the elementary department, to aid high school establishment.</p> <p>Employed strategies</p> <p>Employed time management to cope all elementary and high school teachers.</p>	

	<p>high school establishment.</p> <p>Employed strategies</p> <p>Employed time management to cope all elementary and high school teachers.</p> <p>visiting 35 to 40 teachers</p> <p>Time allotment in classroom supervision is laid down to cater the 35 to 40 teachers classroom supervision in a quarter</p> <p>time demand to cater the needs of the 35 to 40 teachers in comparison to an elementary school which only had 14 to 21 teachers</p> <p>Adjustments made by the school head</p> <p>Implementation of time management in adjusting in a bigger scope brought about by the addition of the junior high school</p> <p>Supervisory function from 14 to 21 teachers now I a bigger scope due to the addition of the junior high school</p> <p>Supervises a bigger scope of teachers, due to the addition of the junior high school.</p> <p>Adjusting in the curriculum implementation of</p>	<p>visiting 35 to 40 teachers</p> <p>Time allotment in classroom supervision is laid down to cater the 35 to 40 teachers classroom supervision in a quarter</p> <p>time demand to cater the needs of the 35 to 40 teachers in comparison to an elementary school which only had 14 to 21 teachers</p> <p>Self-Made Adjustments</p> <p>Adjustments made by the school head</p> <p>Implementation of time management in adjusting in a bigger scope brought about by the addition of the junior high school</p> <p>Supervisory function from 14 to 21 teachers now I a bigger scope due to the addition of the junior high school</p> <p>Supervises a bigger scope of teachers, due to the addition of the junior high school.</p> <p>Adjusting in the curriculum implementation of elementary and junior high school</p> <p>Adjustments in the administrative function in allocating MOOE funds of both elementary and junior high school</p> <p>Management of teachers, in terms of catering their trainings and seminars for both elementary and high school must be catered</p> <p>Adjustments are made in the financial function as a school head in the liquidation of both elementary and junior high school MOOE</p> <p>Expansion of his new roles brought by the added educational level</p> <p>Adjustments are made to cater teachers and students</p>	
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	<p>elementary and junior high school</p> <p>Adjustments in the administrative function in allocating MOOE funds of both elementary and junior high school</p> <p>Management of teachers, in terms of catering their trainings and seminars for both elementary and high school must be catered</p> <p>Adjustments are made in the financial function as a school head in the liquidation of both elementary and junior high school MOOE</p> <p>Expansion of his new roles brought by the added educational level</p>	<p>Defines transition as a shift to another work, but applies the same routines, and gives more emphasis to the high school learners</p> <p>Understanding the teachers and student needs</p>	
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Out of the three (3) core categories, the researcher chose **Self-Learning to Lead** as the central or core phenomenon of this study, as it explicated and characterized the specific undertakings done by the school heads in their transition. This was chosen, as it was the core category, which was extensively discussed by the participants. To add, this core category captured the real scenarios that were happening as school heads underwent transition, hence positioning it as the central or core phenomenon of the study. Seven (7) categories characterized **Self-Learning to Lead** as the core phenomenon. Based on the interviews of the first two participants, concepts were clustered into categories. Concepts such as *updating knowledge through consultation with colleagues, asking of mentorship, learning new paradigms in running the school, and learning from experience*, were clustered in a category. This category showed how school heads put in self-effort to update their knowledge on how to effectively run an integrated school. Another category that also emerged was how elementary school heads learn to see the opportunities in handling integrated schools. This was supported by the concepts such as an *increase in enrollment and seeing the adjustments to cater to high school learners as an opportunity*. Concepts of how school heads cope with the new position by *immediately moving on to cater to high school learners using time management to cater to the wider scope of responsibility and leading by setting example to the teachers and students* were clustered to form the category of learning to cope.

Phase II: Axial Coding

Now that the core category or central phenomenon has been identified, the researcher then engaged in the axial coding process. The researcher then reviewed the first two manuscripts and then went back to the field to collect other data. This was to provide further data that could support the Self-Learning to Lead process as a core phenomenon. This study used the coding paradigm proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1990), methods for the axial coding process. In this phase, the researcher attempted to establish the categories to explain the causal condition

that caused the phenomenon, the contextual and intervening (these elements are the broad or specific factors that either helped or hampered the core phenomenon or the strategy, and phenomenon) and the strategies that the school heads undertake to address the phenomenon and the consequences that it brought. The table below shows the excerpt (*see appendix a*) of the first stage of the axial coding process, in which the researcher identified the categories and labeled each concept.

Core Category: Self-Learning to Lead

The Table 4 shows the excerpt of the sample axial coding process of case one. (*See Appendix A*).

Table 4. Excerpt of the Axial Coding of Case One

Significant Statements	Concepts	Axial Categories
<p>So far. Additional is yung high school. But then learners man na sila tanan, ah ibig sabihin niyan add ons lang yung ano, ad on lang yong high school na ano na mga learners compare sa doon sa elementary, sa transition I might say parang normal na lng man sa akin. Parang ganun</p>	<p>Considers high school department as an addition to his job description</p> <p>Normalizing the transition</p>	<p>Causal Conditions</p>
<p>For instance, dealing with them.so normal nga function mo as ga supervise ka sa ila. Ah. Managerial, is another maayo mo man ning mga high school nga iba ang sa elementary kay iba ang learners nila. Daw amo na siya. So kung strategy so far. Naga gawas naman lang kung kis.a ang strategy.</p>	<p>Letting the strategy naturally come out, while carrying out the managerial and supervisory function as a school head.</p>	<p>Strategies</p>
<p>Say for instance mag manage ka abi sa sa high school o kun sa elementary. Kung sa elementary daw wala gid ko may makita gid nga kung ano gid man siya. The same routine lang gid ang akun gihapon nga anon a siya. Kung sa high school naman siya. Te syempre on the part of the learners. Te syempre lain ang deal mo sa ila. Dira mo makita ang transition nga gina tawag eh. Pero not the usual nga most of the time naga estorya ka sa high school o sa mga bata, kay more on the teacher man na sila. Kay ang mga teacher sa ila naman nang mga bata kung ano man na. so strategy wise waay lang ah ang normal camaraderie sang mga teachers. Amo man lang na. kung kis,a mangakig ka. Kung kis.a batinggilan man pero part of the strategy gid man na.</p>	<p>Seeing transition when dealing with the two levels of education.</p> <p>Fostering camaraderie with the teachers, and taking indignant emotion as part of his strategy.</p>	<p>Consequences or Causal Conditions</p>
<p>Ah consequences daw hindi ko ma matigayon ang gina foresee ko so buot hambalun sina. Syempre you have to suffer the consequences nga failure on that part sang gina move mo nga ano na siya. So syempre I have to ask naman sa help sang mga teacher paano natun na siya himuson. Somehow nga biskan ma amat amatan lang ma gamay gamayan lang ma change na ang ano, ang outlook sang school daw dira siya abi.</p>	<p>Asking help from a teacher, to accomplish what he envisions for the school.</p>	<p>Intervening Conditions</p>

The researcher reviewed the transcript of case one, and gathered new data based on the core phenomenon that was generated. After that, the researcher labeled the concepts based on the coding paradigm proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1990).

The axial coding phase is a process of assigning codes or elements to the concepts. For example, concepts such as *considering the high school department as an addition to his job description* was labeled as a causal condition because it showed that the school head already knew the situation he was in, as it showed that it was intrinsic motivation and volition that caused the core phenomenon. On the other hand, concepts such as *letting the strategy naturally come out, while carrying out the managerial and supervisory function as a school head*, were labeled as action strategies for they showed specific actions done by the school head to address the core phenomenon. While the concept of asking help from a teacher to accomplish what he envisions for the school is considered an intervening condition, for it may either hamper or aid him in his transition, and the concept of seeing the opportunity to learn and handle a high school department, was labeled as a consequence as it was the result of the core phenomenon.

Core Category: Self-Learning to Lead

The Table 5 shows the excerpt of the sample axial coding process of case two. (See Appendix A).

Table 5. Excerpt of the Axial Coding of Case Two

Significant Statements	Concepts	Axial Categories
Ah.. siguro it's a matter of kuan parang... ah hindi ko kasi iniexpect na yung school na pupuntahan ko is nag apply for validation ng integrated school and timely during that time sa reshuffling namin yung school na nilagay sa akin is parang they're waiting for the final validation sa region parang two weeks after so I was shocked ha? Na mag aapply pala ito ng kuan ah. Integrated school so wala tayung choice kailangan talaga nating tanggapin and as a school head ah. Wala dapat tayung inuurungan so ah ito talaga yung unang challenge sa akin then a week after ah fortunately yung school was validated nung region at naging integrated school yung ah Tboli Integrated School which is Tboli elementary school dati	<p>Circumstances leading to become an integrated school head</p> <p>Integrated School Head due to the Circumstances</p> <p>Transformation of the school to an integrated school</p> <p>Becomes the school head of an integrated school after its approval</p> <p>Acceptance of the new role as an integrated school head with the notion that as a school head, they should not back down to any new roles.</p>	Causal Conditions
Sakin. Ah.. it's a matter of acceptance siguro unang una. Kasi andoon kana eh. Plus yung makita ko kasi yung support ng community especially sa amin sa barangay na sir kinahanglan nagid, plus ah.. siguro sa amun sa Tboli ah.	<p>Acting out the role of an integrated school head, because he was already assigned to it.</p> <p>Personal Acceptance of the role, because of the support of the community.</p> <p>Accepting transition</p>	Causal Conditions
Ah.. with our guidance kasi very active din naman talaga si guidance plus siguro yong yong approach lang na learn ko doon sa mga friend ko na pag junior high school instead na pagalitan mo sila kausapin mo so may friend	Updating of knowledge on how to run an integrated school by	Strategies

<p>kasi ako na galing din siya sa integrated school for almost five years so nag lelearn din ako sa kanya ng mga strategies kasi sabi nya sa akin alam mo kasi sir, dati daw kasi may kuan sya may junior at tsaka may senior high school everyday may nag aaway may naga nalampusanay sang bangko kasi naka grupo ang mga kuan kung sa imo kay naga open ka pa man lang newly established ka so sa grade seven to grade eight dapat established mo na ganun na, para pag dating ng mga bata sa grade eleven and grade twelve yong respect andoon na siya.</p>	<p>Working hand-in- hand with a colleague Working with the guidance-in-charge Mentorship from others by learning of new strategies from a former school head</p>	
<p>Nang nagkaroon kasi ako nang another strategy na may ge established ako na kuan na syempre may elementary department na meron kang high school department so kuanon mo ged na siya kailangan may isa ka didto na eh designate especially sa junior high school, para automatically pag may problema sila katu sya na person amo nalang to sya ang may relay sa imo plus at the same time. May meeting for elementary ahh junior high school pwede ka didto maka sit in plus another kuan for elementary. Kasi kung pungku.an mo nalang gid sya tanan ikaw nalang ged mag isa isa basi maabutan ka lang hapon hindi ka pa matapos</p>	<p>Establishment of Department heads, and designating high school coordinators ease transition dilemma Relies on colleagues in running the school Fosters good rapport</p>	<p>Strategies</p>

Similar to the process of case one, the manuscript of the case two was also reviewed, and the researcher went back to the field to collect new data which were gathered following the self-learning to lead as the core phenomenon. The significant statements were analyzed and interpreted, and each concept was labeled following the codes proposed by Strauss & Corbin (1990).

Concepts such as *acting out the role of an integrated school head, because he was already assigned to it, and the personal acceptance of the role, because of the support of the community* were labeled as causal conditions. While, the concept of *establishing of department head, and designating high school coordinators ease transition dilemma*, were labeled as action strategies. Furthermore, concepts such as *relying on colleagues and employing teachers' aid and support* were coded as intervening conditions. Lastly, concepts of *fostering camaraderie and seeing the positive side of transitions* were labeled as the consequences of the core phenomenon.

After labeling the concepts, the researcher then proceeded in constant-comparative analysis. This process was characterized by the simultaneous collection, examination, and writing up of data. This process was repeated across all the cases. In addition, this process aimed to look for substantial findings that could support the self-learning to lead, as a core phenomenon

Core Category: Self-Learning to Lead

The Table 6 shows the excerpt of the sample axial coding process of case three. (See Appendix A)

Table 6. Excerpt of the Axial Coding of Case Three

Significant Statements	Concepts	Axial Categories
<p><i>Kasi ang concern talaga ng school head. Makatapos sila ng pag-aaral saka magiging successful in life yun sa ngayon ang inaano naming ng mga teachers we conducted meetings how to make interventions and at least</i></p>	<p>Aspires a successful life for the learners Conducted meetings to make possible interventions to address</p>	<p>Strategies or Intervening Conditions</p>

<p><i>makatulong narin sa mga high school students regarding that problem</i></p>	<p>the encountered high school problems</p>	
<p><i>Hmm. Meron parin sa elementary ah. About sa MOOE sa elementary only one liquidation lang sa MOOE pero pag dating sa IS tatlo elementary, junior high school, and senior high school dapat eh liquidate mo. So ang budget may budget si elementary may budget si junior may budget si senior so unang kwan ko pa lang doon. Unang receive ko ng MOOE di ko iniisip na tatlo pala ang eh liquidate ko gin purchase ko lahat. Sir diba IS kayo? Oh bakit kung IS? dapat tatlo yan sir So didto na. may advice man ang mga supplier sila mismo naka balo na kung IS ka. “sir di pwede sir kung IS ka sir” ay ganun pala so didto lang ko sa budget sang junior kung pila ang budget ni junior amo lang ged tung gina gamit ko para sa junior tapos iba man tung sa senior.</i></p>	<p>Properly liquidating the financial reports of the three levels of education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Elementary, junior high school, and senior high school <p>Gained advice from a supplier (private sector) on how to allocate and budget the financial funds of an integrated school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specified allocation of the three levels of education from elementary, junior high school, and senior high school 	<p>Strategies</p>
<p><i>Wala. Kay ang practice abi dati. Kami ang naga ano ang naga select or naga pili kung diin kami gusto na ma assign within the district kang sadto eh. Karun ano na abi nang hm... municipality wide na so pag assign sa akun. Pag ano nga may movements kami. Wala man kami gin inform. Mansig pamangkot lang kami diin ina nga school. Diin ka nga school aw? Wala kami kabalo. Until and during the nag oathtaking na kami online. Tapos nag oathtaking na kami din ba kita nga school? Nga.a mag oathtaking na kita? Wala man kami kabalo didto na lang after sang oathtaking nag send ang supervisor sang list nga kung diin kami nga school na butang. So na kibot kami. Oh IS? It so happened paged nga ang supervisor friend ko dati from Tboli wala man lang ko gin inform. So medyo masama ang ano ko ba masama ang loob ko sa kanya.</i></p>	<p>Do not have any idea in the proceedings of how he became an integrated school head</p> <p>Do not have any prior information of where he will be assigned</p> <p>Felt a disappointment from his supervisor due to lack of information dissemination.</p> <p>A little bit shock</p> <p>Able to know the school assignment order after the oathtaking ceremony</p>	<p>Causal Conditions</p>
<p><i>Okay man. daw na accept ko naman nga ara nako dire sa integrated school subong daw na enjoy ko naman. Okay man gyapun ang relationship ko sa mga students daw halos mga estudyante mga friend ko mo mga bata mga amigo mo. Okay man ang relation namun sa mga teachers ko. Na learn ko pagid. Nga na dugangan ang knowledge mo kay ted aw nag kumbaga daw taas na medyo ang standards mo kay te ang school bala nimo nang ang high school didto. Ang knowledge mo nadugangan. Te amo na sa elementary lang gid ang imo na mind ba. Mga elementary na issues. Kung sa high school ay amo gale ni sya. Madugangan ang knowledge mo biskan sa mga subjects nila. Mga higher namn ang ila subjects</i></p>	<p>Enjoying the new post as an integrated school head</p> <p>Maintaining a positive relationship to the teachers</p> <p>Maintaining a positive relationship to the students</p> <p>Considers handling an integrated school as an addition to his repertoire of knowledge</p> <p>Learning from the new post as an integrated school head</p>	<p>Consequences</p>

<p><i>iba ged sya sa elementary te kung kis.a mag observe ka ay amo gale ni? Te ikaw pa ang naga learn ba. No? daw ikaw pa ang naga learn. Tapos kung sa classroom observation naman. Te kung amo na behave naman ng mga bata kung classroom observation. So makita mo man eh. May ara man nga daw gyapun nga daw elementary man gyapun eh nga wala ga pamati ba. Tapos pasaway gyapun man.</i></p>	<p>Enrichment of knowledge on how to run a school</p>	
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School Head Participant 3 reported that he was also shocked and left unprepared to lead an integrated school. He even disclosed that he was informed of the new assignment on the day of their oath-taking ceremony, and considered his position as a position by chance. Nevertheless, he reported that a leader should fully accept the new position to function well. School Head Participant 3 also had the initiative to address his transition by updating himself on the proceedings of the integrated school by orienting himself through reading a significant number of DepEd Memoranda and other relevant documents, coupled with consultation and inquiry into the current state of the school and the proceedings of an integrated school with his supervisor, fellow school heads and the teachers.

Additionally, School Head Participant 3 also proposed innovative ideas to address various issues and concerns faced by the school. Challenges in handling high school learners were one of the insights shared by School Head Participant 3, and according to him, in his entire career, it was his first time encountering such a problem. To counter it, he conducted meetings to make possible interventions to address the encountered high school problems. Another notable idea shared by him was that he always emphasized collaboration and consensus in arriving at a sound decision.

Furthermore, he also received mentorship from a supplier (private sector) on how to allocate and budget the financial funds of an integrated school, specifying the allocation of the three levels of education elementary, junior high school, and senior high school. School head participant 3 greatly considered his transition as self-learning due to his lack of experience in handling an integrated school and had no prior knowledge about it.

Lastly, he also nurtured a sense of accountability by properly liquidating and properly allocating the three separate funds received by an integrated school, as well as the lenient imposition of the school policies to inculcate discipline and self-control among the students, while maintaining a positive rapport with both teachers and students.

The frame that follows shows the schematic frame of the cross-case analysis of the integrated concepts of participants 1 and 2 vs. participant 3.

Core Category: Self-Learning to Lead

The table below shows an excerpt of the sample axial coding process of case four. (See Appendix A)

Table 7. Excerpt of the Axial Coding of Case Four

Significant Statements	Concepts	Axial Categories
<p>My first step kasi sa kwan ako, na promote ako from T1 (teacher 1) to P1 (principal 1) and for being a school head in the elementary, tapos nakapasa ko, gamay lang man to nga school so hindi siya pwede so gin butang ko sa IS, te lipong. Lipong. My first ano baa no bang reaction, ano hindi ko alam ang context ng high school eh, tapos I don't know how to run more</p>	<p>Assigned as integrated school head, because he is the only one who is qualified for the job</p>	<p>Causal Conditions or Strategies</p>

<p>than 3 teachers kasi Malaki sila eh, 14 agad fom dalawa lang kami, oo so ang ginagawa more on managerial nalang ako wala na akong instructional management, daw ga skip ka lang didto sa school ba wala ka nalang pirme didto more on administration nalang , yon yun pero and so far okay na sa high school na ko ga focus more on, nag spend ko more on junior high school department kag sa senior. Although nga may training sa instructional supervision on junior high school and senior high school. Kasi nag start ako junior high school tapos na yong training pag dating ko, iba yong nag attend tapos ang nag attend non, kasi ah, yong teacher na in-charge sa senior high school coordinator so much of time sa decision making sa ano, sa iyong mas updated kaysa sa akin, kasi nahuli ako nung training, so ang ginawa mas naga observe ako more sa senior high school at tsaka sa junior high school.</p>	<p>Clueless of the new position, because of the context and higher number of teachers</p> <p>Focuses on managerial or administrative positions and devotes greater time to junior and senior high school departments</p> <p>Was not able to attend the instructional supervision seminar of junior high school</p> <p>Observed the senior high school coordinator on the decision-making because she is more updated about it</p>	
<p>When I realized the pros and cons kung paano eh handle and mag padalagan sang IS, Iba yung strength nang senior sa junior iba din yung strength nang elementary ma handle mo ang kwan. Ay dire si, sa elementary na teacher dire ni sya dapat, si junior mo eh eye mo. Ang pros kasi. Sa elementary most of the time, si Principal ang, more on Principal na sa decision-making ang sa integrated school para hindi ka kapuyun you delegate. Mag check ka lang oh. Musta na ang report hindi ikaw yung gumagawa. Kasi ano sila eh, yung junior high school kasi subject, more on subject, yung sa elementary is more on advisory diba? Lahat ng subject wala kang magawa, auxillary ka pa, sa junior high school pag bakante sya pwede mo sya gamitin na auxiliary hindi sya parehas sa elementary na bilog gid na adlaw. Ang mga cons naman, hindi mo sya pwede sagulon ang secondary sa elementary, both students teachers, kay ang advice gani although isa lang kamu ka campus, dapat hindi sila pag sagulon, yung canteen nang elementary and high school dapat iba rin eh. Especially junior high school kay sila sila gani ga inaway. Ang elementary abi isa mo lang ka sitsit ya, kita niya lang si adviser niya waay na</p>	<p>Realizes the pros and cons of handling an integrated school</p> <p>Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of elementary and secondary school instructors</p> <p>Task delegation to reduce effort in managing integrated schools</p> <p>Tapping high school teachers in doing auxiliary works during vacant periods</p> <p>Elementary and high school teachers and learners must be separated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Designation of area ○ Canteen separation 	<p>Consequences</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Strategies</p>
<p>Tung MOOE may fixed amount so didto kana, eh divide mo to, pero tung halin sa kwan sa provincial fixed na. May SPT team man kita, or School Planning Team. PTA at staka SGC. Karun kung anon a decide ni school head. Daw ga oo naman lang na sila. Kaysa sila sang spend sina, sila mag pinalibog. Amo nang na train man ko na didto sa amun. Although nga wala ko gina pahambog ah? Ang amun nga GA bago mag pa General Assembly, patawag ko ng PTA, pati ang SGC. wala nko yah kauyat sang microphone subong kung General assembly nalipong ko daan nang PTA</p>	<p>School Planning Team (SPT), Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) and School- Governing Council (SGC) are tapped for the proper planning of the school financial spending</p> <p>Properly orienting and lobbying of plans to the Parents-Teachers Association</p>	<p>Strategies</p>

<p>namun nga amo ni himu.on mo ah? Uu gina ano ko lang, tapos kamu na ang bahala. Usually gani pag mag GA wala ako sa school, kay matuonan siya nga anon ga may activity sa piyak.</p>	<p>(PTA) and School-Governing Council (SGC)</p>	
<p>Pressure sang ara sa palibot,kay te principal 1 na siya tapos ma pirde pa siya satung TIC, tama?Teacher 1 TIC tapos, ako. Kung gab.e ga puli ang TIC,dapat mas gab.e ka pa saila. Pero sa ulihi na realize ko nga mango ka gale imo ya kung gab.e ka ga uli. Kay hindi ka efficient. Kay syempre pag ka aga, pagod kana.Kung kaya mo tapuson sa alas singko nga.a gin abtan gid sang alas 7. Hindi kana gale efficient. Work smart gale hind inga work hard.</p>	<p>Due to the only one qualified to do the job, he felt pressures to do the job well and be at his best</p> <p>Learns that the quality of work is not characterized by how late a school head goes home at night; rather, it is all about being efficient and working smart at your job.</p>	<p>Causal Conditions or Consequences</p>

School Head Participant 4 had the hardest time with his transition among all the participants involved in this study. He even labeled himself as “lipong” or ignorant in handling an integrated school. This was because an integrated school was just his second school assignment and a complete novice in managing a school let alone an integrated school. According to him, he forced himself to learn due to pressures from both himself and the outside environment, coupled with the external pressures imposed by the stakeholders of the barangay, as he was the only full-fledged school head in the area that could handle an integrated school. As a result, he reported that a person cannot give what he does not have. Hence to properly function as a school head, he forced himself to learn all the proceedings of an integrated school. He was initially inept in the management and decision-making of an integrated school but counters it by sticking to the idea that he should do what is right.

School Head Participant 4 also devised plans to address his ignorance in running and managing an integrated school. First, he always consulted and asked for mentorship from his immediate supervisor, and fellow school heads. He conducted multiple talks with the previous school head and his supervisors and observes his secondary teachers on how to handle and manage the high school students. School Head Participant 4 disclosed that he devised plans to smoothly implement programs in the setting of an integrated school. These plans can recognize the distinction between elementary and junior high school contexts and apply the following strategies: Explicit teaching -elementary, independent approach- high school, elementary and high school teachers and learners must be separated; designation of the area; canteen separation, the teachers are also oriented that as an integrated school, they should work as one regardless of their departments, etc.

Lastly, aside from devising a systematic plan to address his various roles as an integrated school head, he also made techniques for handling integrated school teachers and students and made sure that everyone was consulted with his plans from the stakeholders down to anyone involved in running the school. To add, school head participant 4 also gained the following consequences: learned that the quality of work is not characterized by how late a school head goes home at night; rather, it is all about being efficient and working smart at your job, and acknowledges that despite being a school head it does not mean he knows everything that is why he reads a lot.

The results of the cross-case analysis of the integrated concepts of Participants 1, 2, and 3 vs. Participant 4 were discussed below.

In terms of the causal condition that influenced the core phenomenon, there were four (4) categories and subcategories: *Lack of transition mechanisms, Acceptance of the role, Pressures and Demands* that are further categorized into *Self-Pressures and Situational Demands*, and the last category that influenced school heads to take the self-paced learning to lead is the *schools’ and teachers’ conditions* of the school.

As for the strategies six (6) categories were further broken down into sub-categories which school heads take to self-paced learning to lead. These are the following: *Updating of knowledge* comes first, and this was subcategorized into two, school heads update their knowledge either through *consultation or self-orientation*.

The second one is *asking for mentorship* which has two sub-categories which are *Mentorship and Assistance from a Supervisor and Fellow School Heads* and *Assistance and Advice Gained from Public and Private Organizations*. The third strategy is how school heads *cope with the transition*. This was further explained through its two sub-categories which are *Devising Plans and Improvising interventions*. *Making Adjustment* comes fourth, which also has two sub-categories that explain the specific adjustment the school head takes, which are “*adapting to Cater Integrated Teachers and Students*” and “*Adjustment in Various Functions*”. This is followed by the category *Establishing Rapport and Collaboration*, which has two sub-categories *Establishing Rapport and Emphasizing Collaboration*. *Being Accountable* comes last which wraps up all the strategies that a school head can take to self-paced learning to lead.

There are three intervening conditions or contexts that either shape or hamper the strategies. These categories relate to the *Personal Notions (Beliefs, Styles, and Approaches in Leadership)* of the school heads. *The colleagues’ support and the Stakeholders’ Support* that the school heads received. Lastly, there are four (4) consequences that the school heads gained as a result of undertaking the strategy which are: *Impacts of transitions, Positive Opportunities, Gained Partnerships, Knowledge Enrichment*. The table that follows shows the cross-case analysis of the integrated concepts of the three participants vs. Participant 4.

After culminating the rigorous process and iterative nature of building a theory that is grounded on the narratives and experiences of the school heads in transition. The schematic frame was finalized. Self-Learning to Lead is the core phenomenon and the central feature of the theory which is represented in the frame below. It provides an entire overview of the self-learning to lead as a core phenomenon. It shows all the elements that caused the phenomenon, the action strategies they have undertaken, along with the intervening conditions and consequences that it brought.

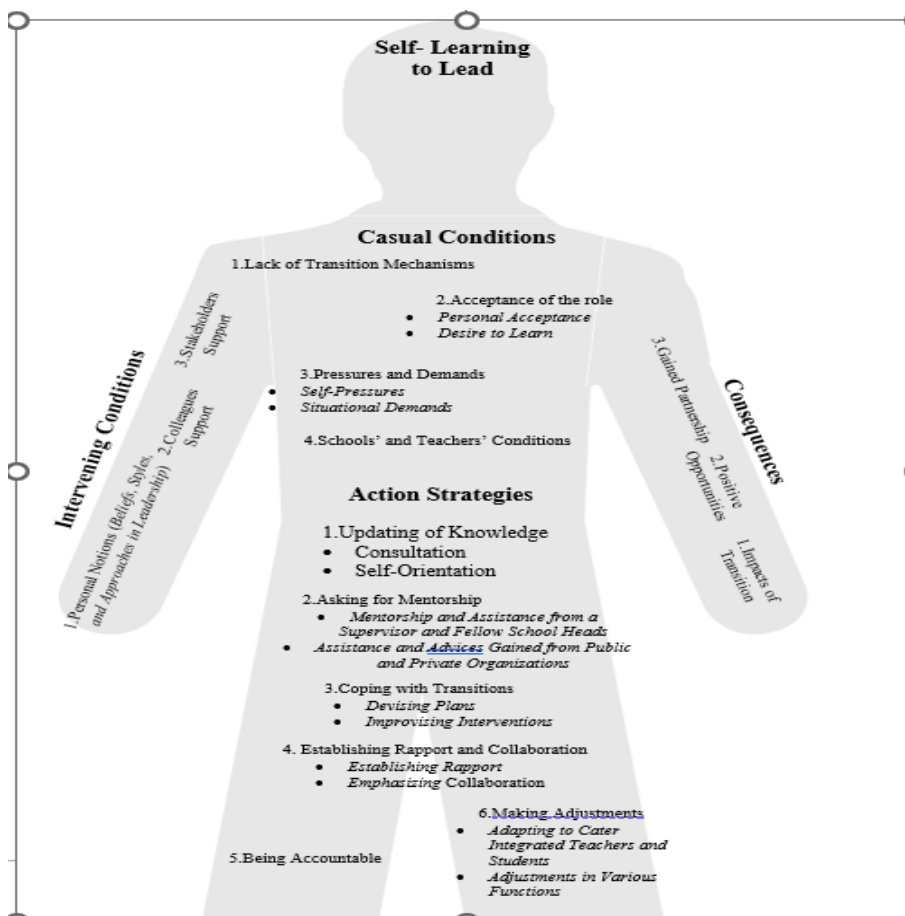


Figure 3. Schematic Frame of the theory “self-learning to lead”

The theoretical model below provides in detail the categories and concepts that explicated the self-learning-to-lead process as a core phenomenon.

Table 8. Theoretical Model of the Self-Learning-to-Lead that characterized the school heads' transition in leading from elementary to integrated school

Causal Conditions	Action Strategies
<p><u>Lack of transition mechanisms</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no seminars attended to aid his transition, which is why he considered it as self-paced • Unpreparedness for the new responsibilities as head of an integrated school. • limited knowledge and background of the new role • Circumstances leading to becoming an integrated school head • Integrated School Head due to the Circumstances • Transformation of the school to an integrated school • Becomes the school head of an integrated school after its approval • Became an integrated school head after its approval to convert into an integrated school • Caught by surprise • Did not undergo seminars and training on how to run an integrated school Provided by a checklist by the division office • Do not have any idea in the proceedings of how he became an integrated school head • Do not have any prior information of where he will be assigned • Felt a disappointment in his supervisor due to the lack of information dissemination. ○ A little bit shock ○ Able to know the school assignment order after the oath-taking ceremony • Did not anticipate being given the position of integrated school head. 	<p><u>Updating of Knowledge</u></p> <p>Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating of knowledge on how to run an integrated school by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Working hand-in-hand with a colleague ○ Working with the guidance-in-charge • Consultative interpretations with the teachers with regards to the high school curriculum • Consultation with the teachers • Consultation with the government agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DSWD ○ BLGU • Proposed intervention activities • Consulted and collaborated with government organizations to provide interventions, reforms, and effective approaches to resolve student difficulties Support from the DSWD and BLGU • Observing secondary teachers and secondary school heads • Observed the senior high school coordinator on the decision-making because she is more updated about it <p>Self-Orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreseeing what he wanted the school to become, and is equipped to instantly change strategy when one does not work. • Challenges in seeing, what he wanted the school to be. • Proper allocation of the two different funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Properly liquidating three levels of education

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information • Lack of seminars • No formal training • No formal training, or seminars in handling an integrated school • Considers his transition as self-paced due to a lack of experience and has no prior knowledge • Does not see any differences, rather he continues his previous job as an elementary school head. • Does not see any problem in his transition, but continues his routines and sees the new position as an addition to his current work, with the introduction of the new level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making oneself informed of the latest news in the department through reading memos and the latest DepEd Order issuances • Updating of knowledge on how to run an integrated school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updates knowledge through experiencing various integrated school roles. • Updating of knowledge through own readings • Orient himself by reading and studying the topics beforehand during a classroom observation • Learning to be the best comes naturally if you love your job • Spending time and effort to be the best and to bring the best in every school that you are assigned to
	<p><u>Asking Mentorship</u></p> <p>Mentorship and Assistance from a Supervisor and Fellow School Heads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks to his supervisor, and consulting all the school situations through it he expounds his knowledge on how to decide on his own. • Conducted multiple talks with the previous school head, on current situation of the school
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the mentorship of others, he learns how to liquidate two separate funds received by the school • Learning of new strategies from a former school head • Learned strategies from a friend on how to liquidate SBFP (School-Bases Feeding Program) • Asking advices to a friend on the how's of integrated school • Requesting assistance from other teachers on the school administration • Enquiring about the issues and state of the school with the former school head

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Call for the advices and tips of a fellow school head ○ Imploring the aid of a previous school head ○ Assessing the new responsibilities ○ Establishing trust among coworkers by appointing multiple school coordinators ● Looking at the current state of the school ● Sought professional advice on how to run an integrated school ● Solicited ideas from a colleague on how to handle high school students ● Asked for advices from a colleague on how to handle high school students ● Establishing an open communication with his immediate supervisors ● Asking for a technical assistance to his supervisors ● Asking help from a colleague ● Asking help to a colleague and fellow school head in running the school ● To remedy his ignorance, he must swallow his pride and speak to a school head whose specialty is operating secondary schools <p>Assistance and Advices Gained from Public and Private Organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seeking assistance from the Stakeholders ● Gained advice from a supplier (private sector) on how to allocate and budget the financial funds of an integrated school <p>Specified allocation of the three levels of education from elementary, junior high school, and senior high school</p>
<p><u>Acceptance of the role</u></p> <p>Personal Acceptance</p> <p>Demonstrated acceptance of the new position</p>	<p><u>Coping with the Transition</u></p> <p>Devising Plans</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting of the new role by setting new standards as an integrated school head • Acting out the role of an integrated school head, because he was already assigned to it. • Accepting transition • Acceptance of the new role as an integrated school head with the notion that as a school head, they should not back down to any new roles. • Personal urge to help convert the school, with the aid of the stakeholders ○ Accepting the reality and the difference between elementary and integrated • Full acceptance of the profession and all the possible works and new roles attached to it • Gradually accepting his new role • Accepting the new responsibility and challenge as an integrated school head • A leader should make adjustment and fully accept the new position • Fully accepting the new role in order to function well • Knows how to handle the situation <p>Desire to Learn (self, community)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickly adapting to the new line of work • Adapting on the children's level of perception • Focus on his work as an Integrated school head • Avoid dwelling on things that are unnecessary • Embracing new situation and reality, through having a mentor friend. • Embracing the new post as integrated school head • Own journey and addition to his journey as a school head 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letting the strategy naturally come out, while carrying out the managerial and supervisory function as a school head. • Came up with a strategy, by tapping teachers when he encounters a conflict of schedule in attending meetings of the two educational levels. • Employed Strategies • Employed time management to cope with all elementary and high school teachers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ visiting 35 to 40 teachers • Time allotment in classroom supervision is laid down to cater to the 35 to 40 teachers' classroom supervision in a quarter • Time demand to cater to the needs of the 35 to 40 teachers in comparison to an elementary school which only had 14 to 21 teachers • Financial obligations are coped through financial aid from the LGU (Local Government Unit) through DST- Tulong Dunong Susi sa Tagumpay program. • Human resource problems are addressed through the aid of the Department of Education • Acknowledges the difference in the two distinct levels of education and copes with it through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A collaborative effort of the guidance-in-charge ○ Differences in the psychological approach of the two levels ○ Extrinsic motivation applied in elementary learners ○ Establish Rapport with students through a buddy system ○ Personal Commitment by employing the daily monitoring routine of identified misbehaving students
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- Acknowledges and learns how to perform the duties of the new position
- Responds to the call of the position

- Conducted meetings to make possible interventions to address the encountered high school problems
- Devise a plan to smoothly implement the program without any disturbance
 - Separation of elementary, junior high school, and senior high school
- Devising a systematic plan to address his supervisory role
 - An instructional Supervisory plan is made to organize teachers' supervisory approach.
 - Targeting a certain percentage of teachers to supervise in a month to avoid exhaustion
 - Provided necessary technical assistance to a teacher who needs it
- Recognizes the distinction between elementary and junior high school contexts and applies the following strategies:
 - Explicit teaching -elementary
 - Independent approach- high school

Improvising interventions

- Sufficing financial constraints, through improvising and redirecting funds of the elementary department, to aid high school establishment
- Proposed innovative ideas to address encountered problems
 - Making the makeshift building accommodate students
 - Requesting assistance from stakeholders
 - Requesting assistance from the local government unit
- Addressing problems encountered
 - Applying proper protocol in addressing student misbehavior
- Tapping government agencies like DSWD(Department of Social Welfare and Development) and BLGU (Barangay Local

	<p>Government Unit) to conduct intervention activities for students and parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses facilitative approach in both elementary and high school • Made certain techniques to address the teacher shortage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify elementary teachers whose bachelor’s degree in secondary education, and let them temporarily teach in the high school ○ Lobbying the shortage of teachers in the division office
<p><u>Pressures and Demands (Self and Community)</u></p> <p>Self-Pressures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal urge to help convert the school, with the aid of the stakeholders • Personal urge to help convert the school, with the aid of the stakeholders • Learning how to compete, as the first integrated school in the area he inculcates and pressures his teachers that they should lead and be the one on top • Due to the only one qualified to do the job, he felt pressures to do the job well and be at his best • Emphasizes that you cannot give what you do not have, that is why he forces himself to learn <p>Situational Demands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing transition when dealing with the two levels of education. • Considers high school department as an addition to his job description • Normalizing the transition • Situational Demands • Demands of the situation to established an integrated school. • Catchment area 	<p><u>Making Adjustments</u></p> <p>Adapting to Cater Integrated Teachers and Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing and accepting the two distinct levels of education by responding to their different needs. • Adjustments are made to cater teachers and students. • Defines transition as a shift to another work, but applies the same routines, and gives more emphasis to the high school learners. • Understanding what the teachers are doing, because he did it in the past. • Adjustments made by the school head <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The collaborative spirit is nurtured ○ Applying consensus to arrive at a sound decision ○ Having an understanding of nature as a leader ○ Adjustments made about high school students' attitudes and behavior • Adapting to the changes brought by an integrated school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adapting to the attitude of high school students

- It caters three (3) elementary schools
- Demand to established an integrated school, as it is a catchment area of the three elementary school
- Considers his position as a position by chance
- Considers challenges as part of his journey as an integrated school head
- Due to circumstances such as being the only qualified school head to do so, he forces himself to learn how to operate an integrated school.
- Assigned as integrated school head, because he is the only one who is qualified for the job
- Becomes an integrated school due to the fact the he is only one fit to hold the position

Schools' and Teachers' Conditions

- Recognizing and accepting the two distinct levels of education by responding to their different needs.
- Taking the high school learners hard to manage in comparison to the elementary learners.
- Encountered two different work or the two educational levels
- Seeing the two levels of education as a separate entity in terms of the level of the learners, but he sees no difference in the part of the teachers.
- Challenges due to a wider scope of responsibility
 - from k-6 extended to grades 7 -8
 - Increase number of enrollees
- Had difficulty managing due to the higher number of enrollees
- Shortage in teacher staffing
 - lack of teachers due to the transformation to an integrated school

- Acknowledges the differences between high school and elementary learners in terms of their level of education and attitude
- Focuses on managerial or administrative positions and devotes greater time to junior and senior high school departments
- Implementation of time management in adjusting to a bigger scope brought about by the addition of the junior high school

Adjustment in Various Functions

- Supervising a bigger scope of teachers, due to the addition of the junior high school
- Supervisory function
 - from 14 to 21 teachers now a bigger scope due to the addition of the junior high school
- Adjusting the curriculum implementation of elementary and junior high school
- Adjustments in the administrative function in allocating MOOE funds to both elementary and junior high school
- Management of teachers, in terms of catering their training and seminars for both elementary and high school, must be catered
- Adjustments are made in the financial function as a school head in the liquidation of both elementary and junior high school MOOE
- Management of teachers, in terms of catering their training and seminars for both elementary and high school, must be catered
- Adjustments are made in the financial function as a school head in the liquidation of both elementary and junior high school MOOE
- Expansion of his new roles brought by the added educational level
- Adjustments made by the school head to his teachers:
 - Understanding his teacher's needs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of classroom building with the conversion of the school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ opening of makeshift buildings to address the classroom shortage. ● Curriculum implementation must be met, to cater both elementary and the specialized subject for high school ● Lack of teacher staffing in junior high school ○ Addresses the problem through identifying teachers that are paid by the municipal LGU ● Hard time handling an integrated school ● Encountered various issues and problems in handling integrated school ● Encountered a problem for the first time ● Issues in high school learners ● Early pregnancy <p>Encountered difference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Had a hard time imposing proper discipline to high school students in comparison to elementary learners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quarrel of students under the influence of alcohol ● Getting involved in the imposition of discipline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Imposing suspension <p>Encountered misguided high school students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encountered things that he did not experienced when he is still an elementary school head ● Experienced various problems during his transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bringing of deadly weapons at school ○ Attempted to inflict harm to teachers <p>Staffing problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of training for the new clerk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Open Communication ○ Understanding teachers situation ○ Understanding the teachers who are “batinggilan” ● Focuses on managerial or administrative positions and devotes greater time to junior and senior high school department. <p><u>Establishing Rapport and collaboration</u></p> <p>Establishing Rapport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher Encouragement ● Boosting of morale ● Established Good relationship ● Being considerate while having a friendly nature as a school head to gain students sympathy and trust. ○ Takes high school age into account while enforcing punishments ○ Engaging with students ● Emphasizes that a sound decision is met when everybody is given a voice ● Motivating Presence in doing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lots of paperwork’s ○ Submission deadlines ● A guiding leader and openness to all their quires. ● Being aware of the situation of the teachers ● Settles all matters through meetings and consensus ● Inculcating to the teachers that as a educators it is their primary role to inspire and motivate the students to go to school, because they are the one who has the primary contact with the students <p>Emphasizing Collaboration</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of experience for the new clerk <p>Hiring extra manpower to help in liquidation report of the school</p> <p>Addressing issues in teacher staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tapping the government agencies in addressing human resource shortage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provincial Government through the ESF <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House to school distance • Health hazards due to weather conditions <p>In awe of the responsibility and problems brought by an integrated school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task delegation to reduce effort in managing integrated schools • Tapping high school teachers in doing auxiliary works during vacant periods • Employs the aid of his prefect of discipline to cope a large number of students • Elementary and junior high school teachers are all utilized in all programs whether it is intended for the elementary and junior high school • The teachers are oriented that as an integrated school they should work as one regardless of their departments • Reciprocation and transfer of ideas from a one teacher's strength to another teacher's weakness • The assistant school head made his work easy, but continuously meddles if the situation calls for it, especially when it comes to using the right approach to high school learners • School Planning Team (SPT), Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) and School-Governing Council (SGC) are tapped for the proper planning of the school financial spending • Listening to the senior high school teachers, to address ignorance in high school administration • Emphasizes more on the unity and accountability of his teachers • Allowing senior high school teachers to participate in decision making • The collaborative effort is given importance • Consensus is met through consultative meetings <p><u>Being</u> <u>Accountable</u></p> <p>Proper planning and execution of the propose plan is given importance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and evaluation of the plan
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- Supervisory Challenges
- Unscheduled training and seminars that hamper the attainment of the monthly supervisory plan.
 - Comes up with a catch-up plan to address those goals that were not attained.
- Time management
- Leading by Example
- Going to school ahead of his teachers
- Setting a good example to both teachers and students.
- Change in curriculum
- Indigenous people community
- Contextualized learning materials, for the indigenous people community while ensuring it is in lined with the MELC (Most Essential Learning Competencies)
- Curriculum alignment
 - Alignment of junior high school curriculum with other established national high school in the area.
- Proper planning and execution of the propose plan is given importance
- Assessment and evaluation of the plan
- Supervisory Challenges
- Unscheduled training and seminars that hamper the attainment of the monthly supervisory plan.
 - Comes up with a catch-up plan to address those goals that were not attained.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in curriculum • Indigenous people community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contextualized learning materials, for the indigenous people community while ensuring it is in lined with the MELC (Most Essential Learning Competencies) • Curriculum alignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alignment of junior high school curriculum with other established national high school in the area.
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Intervening Conditions	Consequences
<p><u>Personal Notions (Beliefs, Styles, and Approaches in Leadership)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination to finish what he had started • Has a forward-looking behavior and a firm stand to finish what he has started • Humbleness remains despite all his achievements • No changes, but focuses on his responsibility as an integrated school administrator. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focuses on running the school • No difference in school administration, but sees it as an addition to his current responsibility. • Considers high school teachers the same as elementary teachers • The same approaches in the administration of high school and elementary teachers. • The same approaches and management styles are applied to high school teachers • Considers handling an integrated school as the same as handling a central school • Personal monitoring of each classroom. • Applying the same routines that he had been doing when he was still an elementary school head • Same line of work as a school head, because he is still supervising teachers. 	<p><u>Impacts of transitions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointed when his teachers did not follow the announcement he had made • Pride as perennial winner in the conduct of municipal fiesta • Sense of accomplishment whenever the children achieved something. • Realizing that there is no perfect thing in this world. • Understanding that there will be hindrances and challenges in every action that we take. • Sense of Fulfillment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Being able to see the good side of handling an integrated school • Being grateful for new learnings shared by the teachers and student • Realizes the pros and cons of handling an integrated school <p><u>Positive Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking the challenge of integrated school as new opportunity to learn • Sees the positive side of self-paced transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase enrollment ○ Recognizes benefits of having high school students • Opportunities for the transition

- Does not see any changes, but acknowledges the two distinct levels of education and considers the added level as an addition to his current job.
- No difference in instructional leadership
- Uses the classroom program as the guiding tool
- Aspires a successful life for the learners
- Understanding that high school students are in the rebellion phase, he employs a variety of methods, strategies, and interventions that are appropriate for them.
- Sees contradicting ideas in the implementation and decision-making as a test of leadership
- Initially inept in the management and decision-making of an integrated school at first
- Counters it by sticking to the idea that they cannot do what is wrong
- Provides feedback with the teaching styles
- Deeply knowing teachers requires an assessment of their strengths and limitations.
- Self-sacrifice solely to address school issues
- Self-doubt in his transition, due to his position as an elementary school head

Colleagues support

- Relies on his colleague to update and accommodate elementary and high school learners.
- Creation of high school coordinator to update and give more focus on the high school department
- Challenged in handling the learners, but relies on his colleagues in handling the high school students.
- Teachers' aid and support
- Showing transparency and goodness in work to gain colleagues support
- The burden of transition is shared by encouraging community support and cooperation

- Increase in enrollment
- Increase manpower when representing the school in municipal activities
- Sees opportunities in handling integrated school
- handling both elementary and high school
- Sees adjustment as an opportunity
- Adjustments made to cater high school learners
- Opportunity to serve integrated school
- Thankful for the opportunity to manage an integrated school
- Enjoying the new post as an integrated school head
- An integrated school receives more fund from the barangay due to the separate amounts received by the three levels of educations

Gained Partnerships

- Able to foster partnership with a colleague in liquidation of MOOE (Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses)
- Applying professionalism in adapting to the situation at work.
- Professionalism and command is given importance
- Professionalism at work
- Good rapport with his teachers
- Work etiquette/ professionalism
- Established a positive relationship between teachers and students
- Maintaining a positive relationship to the teachers
- Maintaining a positive relationship to the student
- Had a good relationship with the students

Knowledge Enrichment

- Learned how to handle high school students
- Learned new strategies on how to run an integrated school

- Establishment of Department heads, and designating high school coordinators ease transition dilemma
- Relies on colleagues in running the school
- Teacher monitoring is given emphasis to address
- Considers high school teachers as frontliners in conducting school activities and programs
- Active participation of teachers during meetings
- Relies on classroom advisers in the implementation of school policies.
- The new position is made easy through the help of the teachers and the stakeholders
- Considers integrated school teachers as knowledgeable, so he asks for their aid

Acknowledges that his performance is not his alone, but is also the performance of his teachers

Stakeholders Support

- Consultation with the stakeholders and support from them is recognized to run the school.
- Working as a team through consultation with the community and parents.
- Demonstrates excellence in his work, enabling stakeholders cooperation
- Through the help of Barangay Local Government Unit
- PTA president
 - Having a direct assistance to the stakeholders
 - Communicating possible plans in the future
- Foreseeing the possible needs of the schools
- Acceptance is made easy through the aid of government entities like BLGU and LGU
- Through the support of the community the role is made easy
- Partnership with the Government entities
 - LGU and BLGU, through pledges and commitment
- Community Linkages

- Financial strategies in handling big school such as integrated school
- Administrative strategies of handling both elementary and high school teachers and students
- Able to learn a lot of things by handling an integrated school
- Learning of new skills how to handle high school learners
- Learned how to run an Integrated school
- Gain new experience
- Enrichment of managerial knowledge
- Learning how to handle an integrated school
- Considers handling an integrated school as an addition to his repertoire of knowledge
- Learning from the new post as an integrated school head
- Enrichment of knowledge on how to run a school
- Learned that an integrated school receives two separate amounts of MOOE(Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses) for elementary and Junior High school
- Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of elementary and secondary school instructors
- Elementary and high school teachers and learners must be separated
 - Designation of area
 - Canteen separation
- Learns that the quality of work is not characterized by how late a school head goes home at night; rather, it is all about being efficient and working smart at your job.
- He acknowledges that despite being a school head it does not mean he knows everything that he is why he reads a lot.
- Gained wisdom trough decision making and standing firm.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Desires and needs of the community to established an integrated school ○ Community pledges ● Intervention and aid of the stakeholders ● Lobbying solutions to the stakeholders address the problem in lack of teacher staffing ● Stakeholders support ○ communicating possible plans with the stakeholders ● Received funds from the provincial and municipal government for school administration ○ Provincial -KABUGWASUN ○ Municipal -EFA (Education for All) ● Tapping various stakeholders in attaining a SBM (School Based Management) level 3 of the school ○ Dole Philippines ▪ Kasilak Foundation ● Grateful for the provincial government aid for its broad scope and flexibility in sufficing unanticipated spendings and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learned that to be able to know your learners and teachers, you have to also know their underlying situations and reasons
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The theoretical model above shows the axial coding process that explicates the self-learning-to-lead process as a core phenomenon. In terms of causal conditions, concepts that made the school heads transition including being clueless and lack of anticipation of the new position are clustered together to form the category of *lacking of transition mechanisms*. *Acceptance of the role* also emerged as a category that consisted of the following concepts: *accepting the new role by setting new standards as an integrated school head and quickly adapting and embracing the new nature of the work*. It is further broken down into two subcategories, *Personal acceptance and Desires to Learn*. The core phenomenon may also be caused by the category and sub-category of *self-pressures and situational demands*. This stemmed from the concept of forcing oneself to learn the proceedings of an integrated school as the only qualified one to do it and the situational demands to establish an integrated school, as it is a catchment area of various elementary schools. The concepts of challenges in handling high school learners, curriculum implementation, shortage in teacher staffing, and wider scope of responsibility are the few concepts that form the category of “*schools’ and teachers’ conditions*”. These conditions also contribute to the realization of the core phenomenon.

There are six (6) categories and sub-categories that school heads undertake to form or address the phenomenon. Concepts such as consultation with the teachers and stakeholders, and self-orientation through reading and experiencing various roles were clustered together to form the category of “*updating of knowledge*”. The category of asking for mentorship was formed by the concepts of learning new strategies from fellow school heads and immediate supervisors, as well as advice and mentorship from public and private organizations. *Coping with the transition* also emerged as a category. This was characterized by the concepts of how school heads devised plans to address the transition and improvised interventions that are only suitable in the context of an integrated school. The concepts of how school heads adapt to cater to the integrated school teachers and students as well as the adjustment of various functions were clustered together to form the category of “*making*”

an adjustment". The concepts of establishing rapport with the teachers, students, and stakeholders, and emphasizing collaboration are clustered to form the category of "Establishing *rapport and collaboration*". The last category under the strategies that school heads undertake is "*being accountable*". This was characterized by concepts: *lenient imposition of school policies, taking things from your pocket to suffice the school's needs, properly planning and implementing the separate AIP (Annual Implementation Plan) for elementary, junior high school, and senior high school, proper planning and execution of the proposed plan, and properly allocating and liquidation of the three funds received by an integrated school.*

Three (3) categories emerged which represent the intervening conditions or context that shaped the strategies. The first category is *personal notions (Beliefs, Styles, and Approaches in Leadership)*. This was supported by the concepts of self-doubt in his transition, determination to finish what one had started, same approaches and management styles were applied to high school teachers, humbleness remains despite all his achievements and sees contradicting ideas in the implementation and decision-making as a test of leadership. The second category is the colleagues' *support*, supported by the concepts: *active participation of teachers during meetings, the new position is made easy through the help of the teachers and the stakeholders, and teachers' aid and support.* Lastly, concepts such as the partnership with government entities, tapping various *stakeholders, intervention, and aid of the stakeholders, and lobbying solutions to the stakeholders to address the problem which is lack of teacher staffing* were leaning towards a single concept which is the *Stakeholder's support*. All of these categories either help shape or hamper school heads' strategies to address the core phenomenon.

Lastly, there are four (4) categories that emerged representing the consequences as a result of undertaking the strategies and phenomenon. *Impacts of transition* was the first category as the outcome of the following concepts, disappointment, sense of fulfillment as a school head, sense of accomplishment, and pride. The concepts of seeing the positive side of the self-paced transition, an opportunity to serve the integrated school, and seeing adjustment as an opportunity are clustered together to form the category of "*Positive Opportunities*". One of the consequences of their transition was that the school head "*gained partnership*". This is supported by the concepts of, being able to foster partnership with a colleague, having good rapport with his teachers, having a good relationship with the students, and work etiquette or professionalism. As a result of undertaking the strategies for self-paced learning to lead, school heads gained a "knowledge enrichment" as a category. This category was supported by the following concepts, learning how to handle high school students, learning new strategies on how to run an integrated school, being able to learn a lot of things by handling an integrated school, learning new skills on how to handle high school learners, and the enrichment of managerial knowledge among others.

Phase III: *Selective Coding*

Action Strategies

This study identified six (6) themes or categories that were further broken down into subcategories that school heads take which characterized the self-learning to lead, the process of their transition in leading from elementary to an integrated school. These six (6) themes are discussed as follows:

Updating of knowledge refers to the school heads specific undertakings to update their current understanding of how to run a school. This corresponds to how they respond to their transition allowing them to function well, and as a response, this action strategy was materialized. This action strategy allowed school heads to know and learn, how to run an integrated school that is distinct from an elementary school. Under this are two subcategories of how school heads update their knowledge. **Consultation** refers to how school heads consult various entities like teachers, friends, and government agencies on the possible solutions to an encountered problem. School head participant 2 shared that he relied on his teachers or guidance-in-charge in disciplining high school students, and he disclosed that he had a friend whom he constantly asked for innovative ideas and approaches on how to deal with high school students. Furthermore, School Head Participant 1 recognized that he cannot govern the school alone. He emphasized that the school is administered in consultation with teachers, students, and other stakeholders.

“Syempre I ask there assistance, mangayo ako sang bulig sa ila. Paano na siya karun eh meet sila. Kay kung ako lang man ayawan kita ka pulot ka basura. Simple lang man na siya kung ano no, but the most is ang akun nga gina kwan kay I am looking after nga may changes nga matabo sa school. When it comes sa dira how do you like o ano ang gusto mo matabo sa school, after a year or two? Daw amo na siya. Physical aspect sang school isa na. te maka encourage man na sang more learners nga mag ano sa atun nga at least Nakita nila ang eskwelahan nga amo ini” (SHP1)

School Head Participant 3 also stated that he relied significantly on his teachers because they were already well-informed about how an integrated school operates. He also consulted some government agencies on the proceedings on how to impose discipline and protocols for misbehaving students. He also mentioned that to be versed in the high school curriculum, he conducted multiple consultations and interpretations with the high school teachers.

“Nag ano nalang ko nag pamangkot sa school head didto sang IS kung ano bam ga problema dira pano na ipa dalagan paano ang mga ano. So ang advice sakun sang mga school head, no problem sir kay ang mga teachers oriented naman na sila. Kanya-kanyang coordinator. So kabalo na sila kung ano ang himu. on nila pag eh assign mo lang sa ila ang mga trabaho sa high school” (SHP3)

Self-orientation is one way that school leaders update their knowledge; this is defined by how school leaders distinctively update their information. School Head Participant 3 described it by reading the Department of Education Memorandum together with his teachers to help him understand the high school curriculum. To add, he also updated his knowledge through his readings on the hows of an integrated school and orients himself beforehand about the lessons and topics discussed during a classroom observation of a high school teacher.

“Ga basa basa man ako kung kis,a. Readings ah. And through ano man ahj. Amo na tung siling ko gina nga through ano man mga ideas sang iban nga mga co school heads ko. Tung dati man nga principal nga ara man sa Surallah ara man dire. Nga dati man nga principal sa IS. te siling ko ano ni” (SHP3)

Kwan lang man. Kay te ara dun na daana bi . abi sa ila nga sa deped curriculum te gina sunod lang man na. Ga ano lang kami gina basa namun tung MEMO kay may Deped Order man na. te kung mag meeting kami gina pa interpret ko man sa ila eh kay ang iban di ko ma ano kay te sa high school mo gina pa interpret ko sa ila ano ning mga curriculum nyo man mga amo ni sila mismo kabalo man kabalo man mag interpret ang mga teachers” (SHP3)

School Head Participant 4 described this subcategory as the outcome of your love for your job. He added that as a school head, he should devote time and effort to whatever job he is offered. He also observed high school teachers and secondary school heads to help him in his transition and observed high school coordinators in their decision-making as they were more updated and knowledgeable about the operations of an integrated school.

“Any school any department, if your really love your job, you will learn how to be best or be good at what you are doing, ano lang spend lang effort mo nga, maging best man ang school nga gin kadtuan mo, Trabaho ang imo, atv the end of the day, its just a job. may pamilya kagid nga puli. an amo nga subong, kay dati every Saturday and Sunday ara ako didto. Subong pag out, out nagid na, tapos wala nko ya ga, naka off man nang cellphone ko. ga mal. am na abi ta tapos ga edad nman. “ (SHP4)

Self-learning to lead was also expressed by action strategies called **asking for mentorship**, to grapple with the new job description that the school heads were facing; they relied a lot on their mentors. These mentors could be their direct supervisors, fellow school heads, and the public and private partners of the school. This theme shows that a school is indeed run by various entities and the school heads are just one of them. Asking for mentorship is divided into two subcategories. **Mentorship and Assistance from a Supervisor and Fellow School Heads.** As a novice in managing both elementary and high school teachers and students on one campus, the school heads always see to it that the actions that they are taking are in the right way. To address their ignorance of the proceedings of an integrated school they always ask for the mentorship of their supervisors and fellow school head who have once handled an integrated school. School head participant 2 reported that through the mentorship of his colleague, he was able to properly liquidate two separate funds received by an integrated

school. On the other hand, School head participant 4 remedied his inexperienced of running an integrated school by continuously asking for the guidance and mentorship of his supervisors and the previous school head of the integrated school.

“So karun ga na realized ang ge hambal nya ngayon naiintindihan mo na ako. From integrated school sya to elementary school so iba ang sa kanya integrated school sya to elementary. Ako from elementary to integrated school so Nakita ko abi ang set up nya na Saturday, Sunday andon sya sa school. Nga.a ara ka pa da sa eskwelahan sabado domminggo? Maam ga prepare ako liquidation ni junior high school. Ga prepare ako liquidation ni elementary. Ga prepare ako sang liquidation ni senior high school... (SHP2)

School head participant 3 expressed that he inquired and assessed the current state of the school with the former school head through gaining their pieces of advice and tips on how to run an integrated school. He also articulated that he sought and solicited advice from his fellow school heads on how to properly handle high school students.

“Nag ano nalang ko nag pamangkot sa school head didto sang IS kung ano bam ga problema dira pano na ipa dalagan paano ang mga ano. So ang advice sakun sang mga school head, no problem sir kay ang mga teachers oriented naman na sila. Kanya-kanyang coordinator. So kabalo na sila kung ano ang himu.on nila pag eh assign mo lang sa ila ang mga trabaho sa high school.” (SHP3)

Another subcategory that describes the theme of asking for mentorship is **Assistance and Advice Gained from Public and Private Organizations**. School heads also gained assistance and advice from public and private organizations on how to run an integrated school. School head participant 3 articulated that he received a piece of advice from a private supplier on how to properly liquidate and budget the three separate funds or the Maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE) received by an integrated school.

Coping with the Transition also explicated the “self-learning to lead process” of the school heads. To respond to the new responsibilities posed by the new position, school heads should also learn to cope with and assess the new situation that they have, to perform effectively as integrated school administrators.

This theme was broken down into two subcategories. **Devising Plans** was school heads' first strategy to cope with the transition. For example, School Head Participant 2 articulated that to cope with the new and wider scope of responsibility brought by an integrated school, he employed strategies such as time management in fulfilling his role as an instructional supervisor. He also realized the distinction in the two levels of education and uses varied approaches of each level like applying extrinsic motivation to the elementary learners and a buddy system to establish discipline in the high school learners.

School head participant 4 also revealed that there is a difference in the context of the elementary and high school students, which is why he devised strategies specifically targeting each level. For example, in elementary learners, he used the explicit teaching approach while employing the independent approach for junior high school. Furthermore, school head participant 4 also devised the following plans to aid him in his transition. (1) Separation of the three levels of education in conducting any activities or programs to ensure that every program is implemented without any disturbance, (2) Elementary and junior high school teachers are all utilized in all programs whether it is intended for the elementary and junior high school, (3) Devising a systematic plan to address his supervisory role like making the Instructional Supervisory plan to organize teachers supervisory approach and targeting a certain percentage of teachers to supervise in a month to avoid exhaustion.

“Ahh.. parang kwan nalang sya.. doon narin papasok si time management so you have to handle. Yung time mo na ah this day kailangan ko matapos si elementary then the following day kailangan mapuntahan ko rin si junior high school kasi dati.. sabi ko nga kanina yung scope ko is only 14 to 21 teachers ngayon ah mag run sya sa 35 to 40 teachers so pagdating sa supervision ah in a week especially in a quarter kailangan mo ma obserbaran lahat ng mga teachers mo so 21 o pag 14 to 21 teachers madali lang sya kasi madaling tapusin 21 teachers or 14 teachers. Sa 40 teachers kasi dapat talaga budgeted mo yung time mo so very kwan talaga sya nang demanding sya sa time. Kay kailangan maubos mo yan sila lahat” (SHP2)

Another way to cope with the transition is that integrated school heads also need *improvising interventions*. These improvised interventions were tailored to the environment and were only applicable in an integrated school. To elucidate this subcategory, School head participant 4 reported that the financial constraints of the school were sufficed by redirecting elementary funds, to aid the establishment of the high school department. Another notable improvised intervention made by school heads was that they were free to tap elementary teachers who have secondary education backgrounds to address the teacher shortage in the high school department. To add, School head Participant 3 proposed innovative ideas like making makeshift buildings to address classroom shortages with the addition of a high school department and tapping government agencies to conduct intervention activities to help curb misbehaving high school students.

Naga lobby sa division office, mas nami kung bet ka sang ano sang appointing authority. Kulang lang ko sa junior high school. Kulang kami sa senior high school, kay ang senior high school namun dalawa lang, Dati wala gid kami item sa senior high school subong may dalawa ko. Te tung wala pako item. Ang ga tudlo sa junior high school gin senior high school nalang anay. Kasali sila hindi eh baki baki anay nila, tapos kulang gid ako. Tapos kung kulang pa atong sa elementary nga ang iya nga background is secondary gina pa teach ko sa junior high school. Pero kung loaded ang teacher, wala kana mahimo. So ang ginawa is nangayo ko sang PSB kay wala man sang item....(SHP4)

Making Adjustments. School heads already had a schema of leadership and management of a school. In light of their new assignment. These schema needed to be adjusted to suit the new context of an integrated school. This theme have two subcategories that illustrated what adjustments were made by the school head. *Adapting to Cater Integrated Teachers and Students*, all school head participants comprehend the difference in the elementary and high school students, whether it might be in educational level, psychological approach, strategies given, level of lessons, and attitude. With this, the first thing that they did was to adjust their existing knowledge on how to handle students in an integrated school. School Head Participant 2 shared that in his first year in handling integrated school, he first assessed and adjusted to leading an integrated school by setting a standard that is different from an elementary school context. School Head Participant 3 also reported that he encountered high school students who were misguided, which was why he adjusted to the new context that he had, by embracing the new reality to cater to students of an integrated school.

“Iba kasi ang kuan eh kumbaga, syempre nanggaling din ako sa medyo far- flung na school oo so pag andito ka dapat eh set mo na talaga ang standards mo so difference kasi sa elementary to an integrated school. Daw wala man ako gawa na kuan. Haha. Yun na yung first year siguro ko yung mga adjustment in leading elementary sa integrated school:” (SHP2)

Elementary and high school teachers also differ from each other, although they are considered as one in the teaching profession, their orientation and teaching approach may slightly differ. School heads in integrated schools do not only cater to separate elementary or high school teachers but a combination of both levels. As a way to fully adjust as an integrated school head, they must also adapt to catering to elementary and high school teachers on one campus. According to the School head participant 1, he adapted according to his teacher’s needs and established open communication between them. School Head Participant 2 ensured that he must cater to both elementary and high school teachers by fairly sending them to seminars and training.

“Akun abi trabaho lang, so experiences nga ano ko sa ila, so far, the same routines, wala akong masabi na ano na siya the only thing is ang ano, ang mga bata, syempre nagkakaano, iba yong mga edad ng mga bata, kaysa sa ano siya. Adopt sa kanila kung ano man siya. Parang ganun lang naman..” (SHP1)

Adjusting also entails making an *“adjustment in various functions”* as an integrated school head. With the inclusion of junior high school and senior high school departments in one campus, the school head's duties and responsibilities have now expanded if not doubled. To properly run an integrated school, some outdated techniques used in handling elementary school must be adjusted and modified. These adjustments could affect the supervisory, instructional, curriculum implementation, administrative and financial functions. The integrated school heads must navigate and find their way to cater to and adjust to their transition.

School Head Participant 2 shared that he made adjustments in the allocation, budgeting, and liquidation of an integrated school. Integrated schools mostly receive three separate funds for their three educational levels, and this required separate planning, budgeting, and liquidating. Adjustments in the supervisory function of managing larger and more diverse elementary and high school teachers. As well as the curriculum implementation of the elementary and high school departments, as each of them requires separate needs and expertise.

“Ahh.. marami. Yung sa time management, tapos siguro yung sa supervisory at tsaka sa administrative function kasi medyo Malaki na ring yung school, unlike doon sa elementary dati yung number of teachers ko is yung maximun is 21 where in fact yong 14 to 21 teachers ko doon ako naka focus unlike pag dating sa integrated school meron ka pang junior high school pagdating sa curriculum propoblemahin mo si elementary propoblemahin mo si high school... ah.. pagdating sa mga seminars and trainings hindi ka lang mag focus sa elementary another one meron din sa high school pag dating sa allocation ng MOOE.. ah.. you need to liquidate hindi lang sa elementary na allocation meron din sa junior high school allocation, so pagdating sa work talaga ah doble sya.” (SHP2)

Another theme that explains the core phenomenon is **Establishing rapport and collaboration**. This theme shows how school heads value individuals who may help them in their transition. This theme was categorized into two. The first is **Establishing rapport**, which shows how the school head builds a positive relationship with the teachers, and how they constantly motivate teachers to do their best in their job. The school head shared that they are being considerate while having a friendly nature as a school head to gain students' sympathy and trust. School head also inculcated to the teachers their primary role is to inspire and motivate the students to go to school because they are the one who has the primary contact with the students. They are also aware of the teachers' situation and acts as a guiding leader that is open to all their queries.

“Ang pinaka, hapos lang man abi kung ano gid, ang gina pa intindi ko lang abi sa mga teachers ko is ang, kung ano usually ang mga problema? Ang ga sulod abi pirme diba ang kabalo nagid? Ang mga active nimo nga mga bata amo pagid na tung mga matatalino. Atung mga wala ga sulod sulod amo pagid medyo mahina. Amo gani na nga hina nag ani wala pagid ga sulod sulod, so ibalik mo ang question. Anong ara sa imo nga.a hindi tana siya mag sulod? Para mag effort si teacher. Kay ang bottomline at the end of the day ang may sala ikaw kay ikaw ang may contact sa bata,so you exhaust everything nga makaya mo para mabalik mo ang bata sa school. Tapos Para maganahan na siya, te dapat nami classroom mo, ikaw gani wala ka man ka pang lipstick eh te may gana bala ang bata mo mag tubang sa imo? And at least ang imo na lesson enjoyable man, hindi lang tung bright ang ma ano mo. Kung ang mas may kinahanglan sila ang tagaan mo sang” (SHP4)

Emphasizing collaboration is the second subcategory of the theme of rapport and collaboration. This signifies that school heads still value the importance of collaboration and it is still vital in running any school. School heads emphasized collaboration to address the burden of their transition. As shared by the school head participant 3, he valued collaboration with his teachers while relying on the consensus that is met through consultative meetings, and emphasizes that a sound decision is met when everybody is given a voice. As for school head participant 4, he emphasized to his teachers the significance of unity and accountability. School head participant 4 also uses task delegation to reduce the effort of managing an integrated school, and he also taps the high school teachers to do some auxiliary work during their vacant periods.

Another noteworthy point raised by school participant 4 was the utilization of the school planning team (SPT), Parents-Teachers Association(PTA), and the School Governing Council (SGC) in deciding on all the school matters.

“Naga collaborate gid ako sa mga teachers ko. Ako wala ko ga ano ga desisyon sang sarili ko tanan na mag disiyon ko through meetings gid na Ara gid na sila. Concensus gid na kay te mas damo abi utok. Damo man idea damo ka ano ba damo kamu nga maka solve sang problem” (SHP3)

Being accountable is also the manifestation of the self-paced learning to lead. This theme constitutes the accountability of the school heads in running the school and doing everything they can to make the school one of the stewards of learning in their area. Based on the sharing of the school heads, being accountable means a lot of things, it may be being accountable in ensuring proper allocation of funds, and lenient imposition of the

school policies to inculcate the student's discipline and self-control. School heads also shared that being accountable is taking things from their pocket. Some schools may experience delays in funds; to counter that, school heads must shoulder everything sacrificing their own to keep the school running. Being accountable may also mean one should lead by example, simply going to school early and ahead of one's teachers inculcating to them the spirit of accountability and pressure to perform well in their jobs. In terms of curriculum implementation, school heads in integrated schools are also accountable for the alignment and the proper implementation of the curriculum of all the educational levels that they oversee. Proper planning and implementation of the school plans must also be ensured by the school heads. School head participant 4 testified:

“Kuat ka gid, If you want something to happen, nga ma implement gid siya, you have to extend financial from yourself, financially, ano ah. Tawag sani resources from your own, tapos ano lang pag dumating na yung ano medyo, kay kung hulaton mo ang ano, mag abot pa, kung san.o lang, Pag dumating yung MOOE eh pag, may bisita ka, diin ka magkuha sang kwarta? Okay lang siguro kung may mga IGP school mo, pero usually tanan na ga amot, didto abi sa amon sa district usually, pag may ga abot na bisita ang isa ka school, amot amot na tanan na school heads, amo na siya, te sa isa ka semana, maskin waay ka bisita, kay may bisita, sa piyak school te ma amot ka gid. Para sunod ikaw naman ang buligan. Uu. Abi ko sadto pag gasto sang MOOO tingub lang siya, sang na strictly implemented natung AIP, hindi kana pwede mag disburse sang kwarta nga wala ka sang AIP. Iba abi dati eh, pagusto ka kung ano imo ipa himu mo. Subong ya hindi ka maka ano kay te itambi mo, amo na balancing, kay kung magbakal ka ari para sa junior ari para sa senior, ari para sa elementary. Pero kung gina plano mo AIP mo wala ka naman sang islan. Ang problema lang dira kung may mga wala na anticipate na mga gasto bala aw. Te hindi man to pwede na gastohan mo. Halin sa MOOE. Sarili mong bulsa, maayo gani subong may mga financial aid na from the, provincial government, nga daw medyo broad na ang, scope sang pwede mo eh, gastuhan.” (SHP4)

Causal Conditions

Four (4) factors emerged from the analysis that led or caused self-learning to lead as the core phenomenon to exist ; (1) *lack of transition mechanisms*, (2) *acceptance of the role*, (3) *Pressures, and Demand*, (4) *Schools' and Teachers' Conditions*.

First is the ***lack of transition mechanisms***. According to all the participants, there were no sort of training, seminars, or other transition mechanisms offered to them. School head participant 3 remarked that he was shocked on the day of their oath-taking ceremony that he would be assigned to an integrated school. As for school head participant 2, he was not made aware that his new school assignment was applying for an integrated school, and after two weeks he was instantly appointed as the head of an integrated school after its approval. School head participant 4 reported that he was assigned to an integrated due to his position as the only qualified one to do it, thus he had no choice but to perform. School head participant 1 also supported this by saying that he does not have any idea of where he would be assigned after reshuffling in their current post. Based on their sharing, it was further deduced that due to a lack of transition mechanisms, school head from integrated school needs to grapple with and navigate the new position on their own, from making strategies to learning how to lead an integrated school thereby, making the *self-paced learning to lead* to exist and emerged.

“Self-paced? Ti wala man ko sang mga seminars nga gin attendan, the most is sa akun nalng gid to nga ihambal nga amo na. That's the most ” (SHP1)

“Its because of the demand and at the same time because of the situation of the community na meron syang tatlong school so nagiging catchment kasi kami. Kami yung mother school so yung demand talaga na kailangan may junior high school na mag open sa barangay which is yon yung mother school na Tboli Elementary School” (SHP2)

“Wala. Kay ang practice abi dati. Kami ang naga ano ang naga select or naga pili kung diin kami gusto na ma assign within the district kang sadto eh. Karun ano na abi nang hm... municipality wide na so pag assign sa akun. Pag ano nga may movements kami. Wala man kami gin inform. Mansig pamangkot lang kami diin ina nga school. Diin ka nga school aw? Wala kami kabalo. Until and during the nag oath-taking na kami online. Tapos nag oath-taking na kami din ba kita nga school? Nga.a mag oath-taking na kita? Wala man kami kabalo didto

na lang after sang oathtaking nag send ang supervisor sang list nga kung diin kami nga school na butang. So na kibot kami. Oh IS? It so happened paged nga ang supervisor friend ko dati from Tboli wala man lang ko gin inform. So medyo masama ang ano ko ba masama ang loob ko sa kanya” (SHP3)

Second is **acceptance of the role**. The core phenomenon would not exist, if not because of the personal conviction and volition of the school heads to act and to personally accept the new reality that they have. It has two subcategories, *Personal acceptance and Desire to Learn*. This theme is characterized by the school head's actions to embrace, adapt, and respond to the call of the position. Although a novice in the new position School Head Participant 1 shared that he accepted the work and immediately acted on it. School head participant 2 reported that he accepted the new position due to the support of the community; he also employed new standards that are suitable for an integrated school. School head participant 3 disclosed that since he is already assigned in that position the best that he can do is to perform well and learn how to handle the situation. Due to the personal acceptance of the school heads in their new positions, the core phenomenon emerged to help them in their way of managing and administering an integrated school.

“It happens by ano siya, hindi man siya it happens by mistake, kay we were told or we were assigned, on this particular school that means to say take it or leave it. So parang ganun.” SHP1

Pressure and Demands is the third theme that contributes to the core phenomenon. *Pressures to do well and the situational demands to establish and be assigned to be an integrated school head*. These are the two internal and external variables that the school heads faced. According to School Head Participant 4, the pressure comes from the feeling that he needs to perform well as he is the only qualified school head to handle an integrated school, in return he must do his best to learn how to operate an integrated school. On the other hand, school head participant 2 shared that it is his urge to help the school be converted to an integrated school to help accommodate learners from the far-flung barangays. Situational demands stem from the need to function well because they are already assigned to it. Even though they were assigned to an integrated school by chance or coincidence, within them there is still a sense of pride and the urge to do everything they can as they are entrusted to run it, considering the new position as an addition to their journey as integrated school heads.

The last theme, which still causes the core phenomenon to emerge is the **schools' and teachers' conditions**. These contextual conditions refer to various contexts of the school and the school head's experience. These may refer to the various challenges, conditions, and differences in handling integrated schools. Based on the sharing of the participants, they have encountered the following: challenges in the increased number of learners, challenges in handling high school learners, shortage in teacher staffing, lack of classroom buildings, differences in the curriculum implementation, differences in high school and elementary needs, encountered changes in the financial aspects of an integrated school, had a hard time handling an integrated school due to the issues and unique problems that it brought, had a hard time imposing proper discipline on high school students in comparison to elementary learners, encountered things that he did not experience when he is still an elementary school head, encounters different programs for the senior high school, had difficulty balancing instructional supervision than administration.

Due to the above scenarios and conditions of integrated schools, the school heads were tasked to address all of those issues and concerns, which was why the self-paced learning to lead was generated to address those as the school's primary driver.

“Sa management wise syempre iba kay hapos eh handle ang elementary, kung sa mga bata, pero sa mga high school naman more on kwan siya burobugat na bitbitun ang ila nga ano na? kay syempre. Oh lantawa bala nang sa basura. Kabudlay gid siya isa dun na siya ka challenge sa akun kay more than two years na waay lang gyapun nga kwan ang basura. Basura lang ged nang akun mo. Particular ako sa mga basura kung ano man kay te , ang gusto ko lang eh change ang image sang eskwelahan. So isa man na siya ka challenge sa akun nga dealing sa mga teacher nga paano mo. Makuha o eh encourage sila nga to come up with kung ano ba yong mga ano sa school. So far daw amo. Lang man na sir.” (SHP1)

Intervening Conditions

Intervening Conditions were sets of conditions that influenced the action strategies of the school heads' transition from elementary to an integrated school. Based on the analysis three (3) themes emerged. These are the *Personal Notions (Beliefs, Styles, and Approaches in Leadership)*, *Colleagues' Support*, and *Stakeholders' Support*.

One is the *Personal Notions (Beliefs, Styles, and Approaches in Leadership)*, which are a set of personal beliefs, styles, and approaches in leadership that school heads have as a result of their experiences, training, and personal education. These notions are considered intervening factors because they affect what possible course of action the school heads might take that is adjacent to his or her personal beliefs, styles, and approaches in leadership. For example, a school head participant believes that managing an integrated school is the same as his previous post and that handling a high school department is just an addition to his current responsibility. That is why school head participant 1 used the same techniques and strategies that are being used in the elementary levels while acknowledging the difference between elementary and high school learners.

For School head participant 4, what hindered for him was his self-doubt. Doubt that he might not be able to function well due to his current knowledge and experience as an elementary school head. On the contrary, School head participant 3 had a strong belief that he should aspire for the successful life of the learners and used his style in handling elementary and high school learners.

“Ay oo wala siya problema, the same routine, the trabaho administrative function sa school. Amo na siya, at least, pero daw bulk lang ang trabaho, kasi may high school ka nga may elementary pa.” (SHP1)

“Yung doubt, doubt mo diba? Daw hindi ko man gyapun kaya ni. Kay te mga elementary kita. Pero ang anoa bi. Kag isa pa, that time budlay budlay sudlon ang school, ang dalan. Kumbaga lipong kana gani sa implementation, lipong sa curriculum sang secondary. Ma lipong ka pagid sang kalsada, kaagi gani ko hibi nga nang wala naba na dire. From sa balay ko, balay sang asawa ko mga 16 kms ang byahe.on” (SHP2)

The second theme that intervenes with the school heads' strategy in their self-paced transition is the **Colleague's support**. A school may be governed by the school head, but it is not his alone; it is shared by various entities that may shape the culture and the general atmosphere of one school. Throughout this study, all the school head participants disclosed that they received aid from all their colleagues this may include teachers, friends from the department, immediate supervisor, and even from the top management. These supports were extended in various ways. School head participant 1 described this as a result of his transparency and diligence in work. He remarked that as long as the teachers see that what one does is good for the school, he will reciprocate and show his support. Additionally, both school head participants 1 and 2 employed the aid of their teachers by creating a department head that is responsible for handling high school affairs and events.

School head participant 3 elucidated this category by acknowledging that integrated school teachers are more knowledgeable and oriented on the operations of the school which is why he relies heavily on their aid and support. School head participant 4 was grateful for the support of his supervisor throughout his transition.

“Ay ara ang mga teachers ko. Amo lang na siya nang. Syempre ga ano man sila inang Nakita man nila nga mayad ang gina obra. Then go with the music. Kung isipun pa amo na sila. Dance with the music amo na siya, oh” (SHP1)

“Nang nagkaroon kasi ako nang another strategy na may ge established ako na kuan na syempre may elementary department na meron kang high school department so kuanon mo ged na siya kailangan may isa ka didto na eh designate especially sa junior high school, para automatically pag may problema sila katu sya na person amo nalang to sya ang may relay sa imo plus at the same time. May meeting for elementary ahh junior high school pwede ka didto maka sit in plus another kuan for elementary. Kasi kung pungku.an mo nalang gid sya tanan ikaw nalang ged mag isa isa basi maabutan ka lang hapon hindi ka pa matapos” (SHP2)

“Siguro, dahil nadin sa experience ko, and gaya nga ng sinabi ko wala akong choice but to accept amo ning gusto ko te wala ako may ma himo, and with the help of my teachers and mga stakeholders I was able man to do

the job. dawadawad nang gid and parehas sang gin hambal ko na kay tungod na aware naman ang mga teachers sang ilaro role. kay hambal sa akon sang dati na school head, the teachers are already knows their work. So amo to” (SHP3)

As stated above a school is not a one-man company. This last theme explicates how stakeholders' support intervenes in the school head's self-paced learning to lead the transition. **Stakeholders' support** is one of the important factors in running a school. Stakeholders play a pivotal role in school management and operations. They could be any group or association, company, public and private government organizations, parents-teachers association, barangay, municipal to the provincial local government unit.

Examples of this support are when School head participants receive funds from the municipal and provincial local government unit that could help suffice classroom shortages, teacher staffing, and school operations in general. Schools also received funds and aid from private companies such as books, chairs, school supplies, etc. All of this aid from the stakeholders lessened the burden of transition of the school heads, through cooperation, assistance, pledges, and even simple commitment. This helped a lot in the smooth transition of each school head, and in keeping the school the right avenue for learning.

“So far daw, syempre sa mga stakeholders, Nakita man nila nga ang kaayuhan, particularly sa eskwelahan, abi Nakita man nila. So nag ugyon naman lang na sila.” (SHP1)

“Ah. Sa validation kasi dapat andon yung ating stakeholders the internal and the external stakeholders na mag ah.. shall we say mag vavalidate lahat bakit kailangan ng ganito. Bakit kailangan talaga sya mag open plus And at the same time yung support ng community so we cannot open the school talaga if walang school ah walang support ni Local Government Unit especially by the BLGU and the LGU so andon lahat papasok yung support nila with their pledge their commitment na kailangan talaga sya ma open because of the desire ng community at tsaka the need of the community na kailangan talaga magkaroon ng junior high school sa kanila” (SHP2)

Consequences

School head participants described various consequences as a result of their transition from leading elementary to integrated schools and as an outcome of their strategies. **Impacts of transition** refer to the various feelings and emotions that school heads felt during their transition. As one school head participant described, he felt a sense of fulfillment through being thankful for the new learnings shared by the teachers and students. Another school head participant testified that he felt a sense of accomplishment whenever the children achieved something. However, another school head participant felt disappointed when his teachers did not follow the announcement he had made. School Head participant also sees the **positive opportunities** that an integrated school brings. Taking the new position of handling an integrated school as an opportunity to learn and see the benefits of having the high school department on one campus as a way to increase enrollment and have manpower during activities and programs. An integrated school also receives three separate funds that could help boost the general welfare of the school.

Another outcome of their strategies in managing an integrated school was that they **gained partnership** with the students, teachers, fellow school heads, supervisors, and stakeholders. It was a result of their consultation, mentorship, and positive rapport and collaboration that is manifested in their transition. Through self-paced learning to lead school heads felt that they can apply professionalism and good work etiquette as they adapt to their situation at work. Furthermore, school heads were also able to foster partnerships with colleagues and maintain positive relationships with students and teachers.

Lastly, another significant outcome that the school heads gained is **knowledge enrichment** which constitutes the learnings that they have gained as a result of the strategies made in their transition. As shared by the school heads, they have learned how to handle high school students including the new strategies and techniques on how to implement programs that merit both elementary and high school learners and teachers, as well as understanding the strengths and weaknesses of elementary and high school teachers. They are also able to enhance their knowledge and skills in managing people including financial and administrative strategies, and most importantly school heads learned and gained wisdom from handling an integrated school.

This grounded theory paper aimed to explore the experiences of school heads in their transition in leading from elementary to integrated school, and to generate a theory that is grounded in their narratives and experiences. This paper positioned the Self Learning to Lead as the core phenomenon, that characterized the transition in leading of the school heads. This core phenomenon was caused by four (4) themes. First was the lack of transition mechanisms; second was the acceptance of the new role; third was the pressure and demands from themselves and of the community and last were the schools' and teachers' conditions. All of these themes either forced them externally or internally to act and run an integrated school.

One reason that has always been given for poor school results is that school heads are not sufficiently skilled and trained for school management and leadership, and as a result, other individuals advocate for the professional development of school leaders (Mathibe, 2007). That is why some school leaders are forced to learn and grow on their own. Self-directed learning as andragogy is not new to society, Tough (1967,1971); Houle (1961) as cited by Merriam (2001) provided a comprehensive discussion of self-directed learning as a form of study, though this learning theory focuses on how adult learning occurs. This theory shows that adults learn in a self-directed process, as compared to children. Self-Learning to Lead as new andragogy supports how adults learn in a self-directed manner for the context of this study, how school heads learn in their manner.

Six (6) themes characterize the self-learning to lead among the school heads. The first theme is "*updating of knowledge*", which expresses how school heads update their knowledge on the proceedings and ways of an integrated school. This involves consultation with friends, teachers, and stakeholders. School Heads also update their knowledge through self-orientation, this is done by reading relevant information with regards to the hows of an integrated school, and by observing high school teachers on how they handle high school students. Over the last two decades, the impact of principal leadership on student achievement has been thoroughly documented (Herrera,2010). Bruggencate, et al. (2012) highlighted the critical role that school leaders play in school effectiveness and provide valuable insight into how school leaders can make a difference. School leaders were found to have a strong influence on development orientation in schools. With that, to effectively run an integrated school, leave a desirable impact, and put the school on the pedestal, school heads must always update their current knowledge to promote an outstanding school climate and an effective teaching-learning process.

Furthermore, theme 2 "*asking for mentorship*", corresponds to how the school head employs the aid of his immediate supervisor and fellow school heads in running an integrated school. This mentorship is coming from the direct supervisor, fellow school heads, and from public and private organizations. The aid of mentors in educational administration training programs has become increasingly popular in recent years. These mentors are responsible for giving bits of advice, tips, and strategies to the school heads. Through this, school head participants can assess and learn the ways of their new position. Mentorship is needed to navigate the complexity of the position. In addition, Cooke, et al. (2023) affirmed that mentorship can be the foundation of professional development and career fulfillment. Mentorship is a growing connection that alters as the relationship develops. There is evidence that mentorship enhances professional satisfaction, productivity, and personal growth, and can renew our passion while reducing the likelihood of compassion fatigue.

Theme 3, "*Coping with the transition*" provided ways for how school head participants cope with the complexity of the new position, school head participants either devised plans or improvised interventions to suit the unique context of an integrated school. According to Estinor and Digu (2021), coping mechanisms are ways and strategies employed by individuals to counter burnout which may result from stress-provoking circumstances. This also holds true in the case of school heads being transferred to an integrated school to effectively function as a leader. These participants have innovated ways and improvised interventions to counter any problems that arise.

Furthermore, theme 4 "*Making adjustment*", shows how school head participants adjusted their schema of running a school to fit the current needs of the new position.

These adjustments are made to cater to integrated teachers and students, and they have also made adjustments in the various functions such as supervisory, curriculum implementation, administrative, and financial. To properly function and cater to students learning, school heads are expected to be knowledgeable in all aspects of education, from the academic standards of all levels to curriculum implementation, along with the management

and operations of an integrated school. In a study conducted by Brody, et al. (2010) and Louis and Wahlstrom (2011), as cited by Medford & Brown (2022), they argued that experiences gained while learning and adjusting to the culture are seen as an essential component of the process of becoming a new secondary school head. The school head should emerge from these experiences as more confident and competent in managing the culture and determining the types of adjustments that need to be made to boost teaching and learning at their school. These assumptions also hold true in an integrated school head, after the challenges they have encountered. They are grateful for the opportunity to adjust and handle an integrated school.

On the other hand, theme 5, “Establishing Rapport and collaboration” highlights school heads' emphasis on building collaboration and establishing good rapport among their teachers and the community. This theme shows that a school cannot be run alone but through collaborative efforts and helping hands. Collaborative school cultures are perceived more and more as being essential for better schools. Therefore, one of the important roles of a school head should be that of a culture builder (Campo, 2006). Furthermore, Mitchell (2006) argued that school heads are responsible for building a culture of learning for the teachers and students. In successful schools, school heads serve four broad functions: center, holder of the vision, builder, and role model. These roles yield cultures and structures that sustain, energize, and vitalize teaching and learning. To add, a study by Halawah (2006) stated that a better climate school was expected in schools where effective communication between the school heads and his or her teachers exists.

Lastly, theme 6, ‘*Being Accountable*’, shows the accountability and resolves each school head to make the school the right avenue for learning. In a study conducted by Wang, et.al. (2022), they uncovered that the increased job tasks and responsibilities connected with the changing position of school heads have resulted in greater accountability. As a result, school heads face competing demands and expectations from numerous stakeholders in various forms of accountability, the results show that the competing, if not contradictory, expectations from (federal and state or provincial) educational authorities, teachers, parents, students, and various interest groups frequently present considerable obstacles to school heads' work adding to the complexity of the school head's role.

Insights

A grounded theory methodology is cyclical and iterative in nature. To guarantee that the phenomenon is adequately captured, several interactions with the participants are necessary. Consequently, in the course of writing this research, the researcher had a profound realization of doing the actual data gathering and analysis techniques of the study.

Foremost, grounded theory methodology as the name suggests delved deeper into the narratives and experiences of the school heads by providing a theory that was grounded on the phenomenon of their transition in leading. It went beyond just interviewing and analyzing, but it required a cyclical process wherein the data gathering and the data analysis overlapped each other. This was to make sure that the phenomenon under study was represented by the captured core phenomenon.

Second, Self-Learning to Lead as the core phenomenon that was generated in this study presents a new literature to explicate the transition in leading of the school heads. As reviewed, there is a plethora of literature explaining the importance of school heads, not just in the operations of the school but in the actual delivery of the teaching and learning process. However, there is no literature that can be found to explain the experiences and narratives of the phenomenon being studied. As such, this paper presents a new andragogy that supports how adults learn in self-directed conduct or the context of this study. It highlighted how school heads learn in a manner that could be distinct or a continuation of their previous post.

Third, this study presents a thorough explanation of what happens in the field when an elementary school head is assigned to an integrated school which causes the core phenomenon. This research points to the action strategies that an integrated school head may take to aid him or her in their transition to handle an integrated school. The following themes indicate the specific actions (action strategies) that they undergo concerning the phenomenon that was generated: *Updating of knowledge, Asking for Mentorship, coping with transition, Making Adjustments, Establishing Rapport and Collaboration, and Being Accountable*. Along with a profound

explanation of the factors or themes that intervened and the outcomes that it brought to the school heads. Thus, this study presents a significant impact both in theory and in practice in the field of leadership in education, especially in this distinct field of interest.

Lastly, based on the results, this paper provides various insights about how is the leadership of the school heads during transition. This study points out the importance of proper planning for the transition of the school heads. To prepare and orient them to the new role that they will be handling, this study offers various things, from the problems that a school head encountered, new learning that they have gained, approaches and management styles which were used to counter various issues that they faced, along with the unique styles and techniques that were only applicable to an integrated school, and to the things that they have learned as a result of their transitions whether positive or negative.

Implications

The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) four (4) with the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) talks about ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. To realize this goal, there is a need to properly address the various educational needs of the people who are involved in delivering education. As such, this theory explains the transition experiences of the school head as a valuable contribution to this distinct field of interest.

School heads are an essential part of school operations; they play a pivotal role in school administration, management, and most especially in ensuring the delivery of quality education. The increasing trend of school conversion into an integrated school posed new responsibilities and challenges to the elementary school heads. They are tasked to lead this converted integrated school. Nevertheless, in spite the apparent importance of the role that school heads play, there is little to no literature explaining the transition experiences of these school heads.

The rigorous methodology of a grounded theory approach generated the Self-Learning to Lead as the core phenomenon. This paper presents a robust theory that captures the experiences of school heads in their transition from elementary to an integrated school, set in the context of the province of South Cotabato, Region XII, specifically in the Schools Division of South Cotabato, that is considered a medium-sized division of the country.

Several implications were drawn from this study that might help future integrated school heads. This new theory explains what happens when an elementary school head transitions to lead an integrated school, which could provide feedback and new insights that would, later on, be a valuable reference and would shed light on the policy-making and possible interventions that the government might give. These include crafting an effective transition program for school heads, to address their needs in their transition and provide them with all the necessary skills, management practices, instructional approaches to the teachers, and all the necessary knowledge to run an integrated school. Furthermore, this study also provides some possible techniques, approaches, and innovative ideas that a school head might take to function as an integrated school head. Also, this gives the top management ideas on the selection process of possible candidates that could handle an integrated school.

Some limitations of this study include: first, although, the allowed participants in this study were reached, the researcher believed that the research should be further administered outside of the province where this study was conducted. This is to fully represent the experiences and narratives of the school heads in transition. Second, further study should be conducted about transition experiences through the lens of the other entities that run a school. Lastly, a quantitative study should be conducted to know the impact of self-learning to lead of the school heads in the school's performance.

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