



ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPERVISORY PRACTICES OF SCHOOL HEADS IN INTEGRATED SCHOOLS: BASES FOR POLICY RECOMMENDATION

LEA ROSE G. GALUNO

Teacher IV

Domingo G. Granada Elementary School

learose.galuno@deped.gov.ph

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study sought to explore the administrative and supervisory practices of school heads in integrated schools, with the goal of using the findings as a basis for policy recommendations. The research was carried out in five (5) selected integrated schools within the Schools Division of Iloilo City. A researcher-developed interview guide was used to collect data from five school heads, and thematic analysis was employed to interpret and describe the data. The findings indicated that school heads' practices in integrated schools were managing school operations and resources, planning, engaging stakeholders, conducting classroom observations, and providing support to teachers. The challenges met were resource shortages, multiple responsibilities, limited time, and diverse teaching and learning needs. In addressing the challenges, the following themes emerged: strategic delegation and team empowerment, building strong partnerships, structured decision-making, ethical leadership, and professional development initiatives. The findings of this study served as the foundation for suggesting policy recommendations.

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Keywords: *Administrative and Supervisory Practices, School Heads, Integrated Schools,*

Policy Recommendation

INTRODUCTION

In the country, the government, through RA No. 9155, or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, seeks to develop schools and learning centers as institutions where children can acquire the essential competencies outlined in elementary and high school curricula. Additionally, these centers provide equivalent learning programs for out-of-school youth and mature students, allowing them to earn accreditation equivalent to at least a high school education. To fulfill this goal, the Department of Education (DepEd) has institutionalized integrated schools to provide inclusive education to Filipino learners, especially those in far-flung areas. Integrated schools are educational institutions that provide the full basic education program from Kindergarten through Grade 10, or up to Grade 12 under the complete rollout of the K to 12 Law within a single campus and follow a unified instructional program. (DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2014).

Establishment of integrated schools has brought positive and negative impacts to the community, especially to the school heads. Nitta et al. (2010), as cited by Soliva & Escote (2024), emphasized the good effects of integrated schools in enhancing administrative efficiency and improving learning experiences and outcomes. They also noted the positive impact of integrated schools on society by ensuring access to education, especially for learners in remote locations who might otherwise struggle to remain in school. Also, the conversion

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alleviates the pressure on guardians facing difficulties enrolling their kinds in far-off secondary learning centers. On the other hand, Pangandoyon et al. (2024) found that the negative effects of establishing integrated schools were diverse needs of teachers and learners, which lead to conflict. Similarly, the limited budget, the lack of resources, and little external support from the stakeholders were also mentioned. These administrative and supervisory challenges tested the leadership and coping skills of school heads.

To address these challenges mentioned earlier, school heads must develop effective and impactful leadership skills to deal with the challenges they experienced. Webster & Litchka (2020) on their research on Planning for Effective School Leadership: Teachers' Perceptions of the Leadership Skills and Ethical Behaviors of School Principals concluded that over the past century, effective school leadership has evolved from embodying many abilities and good behaviors to leading and managing the school in a manner that is inspiring and empowering. They also assert that the cultivation of proper conduct among school principals does not occur automatically. Both aspiring and current school leaders need to study, comprehend, and implement not only the principles of effective school leadership but also the philosophy of ethics and ethical decision-making, ensuring that their actions clearly support the success of teachers and students in an undeniable way.

In light of these challenges, this study is intended to identify the specific administrative procedures of school heads in integrated schools, with the ultimate goal of creating a policy recommendation. By examining the specific administrative and supervisory practices, as well as the struggles and coping strategies of school heads, the researcher aimed to offer policy

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recommendations that could enhance school leadership and improve educational systems and outcomes in the integrated schools of the Schools Division of Iloilo City, and ultimately, across the Philippines.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This section highlights the methodology utilized in the study, involving the research design, participants, data gathering procedures, research instruments, and methods of data analysis employed.

Research Method

The study employed a qualitative research approach employing in-depth interviews. Throughout the process, the interviewer and interviewees met face-to-face and engaged in a guided discussion based on a set of questions related to the topic. Through their answers to the questions, participants are intended to provide the essential or primary viewpoints of those involved in a particular issue within a social context Wallace Foundation (2022).

Research Design

The study adopted a qualitative research design, specifically a phenomenological approach. According to Creswell and Creswell (2022), phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the commonality of the lived experiences within the group. The primary objective of this technique is to develop a detailed narrative of the composition of the phenomenon being studied.

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In qualitative research, interviews provide participants with the opportunity to share their viewpoints, perceptions, and explanations freely, without being limited or predetermined by the researcher.

Phenomenologist generally assumed that there is some commonality to how human beings perceive and interpret similar experiences; they seek to identify, understand and describe these commonalities (Williams, 2021).

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were five (5) school heads assigned to integrated schools within the Schools Division of Iloilo City for the School Year 2025–2026.

Five participants were chosen to enable a deeper and more comprehensive grasp of the administrative and supervisory activities of school heads in integrated schools. These school heads were purposively chosen because of their knowledge and experiences in managing integrated schools.

Sampling Design

Purposive sampling was adopted to select the participants of the study. This technique, also termed judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is carried out by the researcher using personal judgment to identify and choose individuals from the target group who are most appropriate to participate in the study.

According to Palinkas et al. (2016) as cited by Pangandoyon et al. (2024), purposive sampling will uncover and generate rich-case-related data based on the phenomenon of

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interest. The researcher will identify the participants who are significantly involved in managing integrated schools.

Research Instrument

The researcher utilized a researcher-made interview guide for the in-depth interview to collect information on the problems dealt with by school heads in integrated schools.

The guide consisted of six (6) questions aligned with the objectives of the study. In addition, data collection and documentation were conducted using recorders, with the authorization of the participants.

Validity of the Research Instrument

The researcher-made interview guide was validated by a panel of experts using the Eight-Point Scale Criteria for Content Validation by Good and Scates.

The instrument underwent content validation by specialists in research, tests, and evaluations. An extensive review of the interview questions was performed to guarantee their appropriateness, clarity, and proper formulation, as well as compliance with ethical considerations.

Validation criteria, including consistency with the research objectives and clearness of the questions, were evaluated by three experts in the field. According to Carmines and Zeller (2021), content validity was established by evaluating the degree to which the measurement accurately reflected the particular content domain.

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Data Gathering Procedures

After identifying the participants for the study, the researcher obtained their non-compulsory involvement, as indicated by their signed consent forms.

With the assistance of her adviser, the researcher purposively selected school heads who met the criteria for inclusion in the interview. Subsequently, the selected participants were provided with a letter, their profile, and an agreement form for approval, which allowed the researcher to carry out audio-recorded interviews upon their agreement.

After obtaining the participants' written consent, the interviews were administered to each participant. The sessions were scheduled based on the participants' availability and carried out through face-to-face meetings. The interview process followed a combination of structured, semi-structured, and open-ended formats, all centered on the research inquiries.

An in-depth interview was initially administered to explore the respondents' perspectives on the study. Capturing the viewpoints of each participant was essential to the research method. To ensure accuracy and completeness of responses, the entire conversation was audio-recorded. The researcher then organized all the obtained data using a thematic analysis approach. After the interviews were completed, the recorded audio files were used for transcription and further analysis. The original and translated transcripts were categorized into meaning units and were thematically analysed Ratner, 2002, as cited by Lichtman, 2023.

After the interviews were completed, the audio recordings were transcribed. The raw and converted transcripts were then organized into significant statements and analyzed thematically. Ratner (2002), as cited by Lichtman (2023), underscores that the meaning unit

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must preserve the psychological integrity of the idea being expressed. The idea should not be broken into disconnected or meaningless segments, nor should it be confused with other ideas representing different themes. Hence, coherent and related statements were grouped together as a single meaning unit. Each meaning unit consistently included the participants' actual responses, and where necessary, clarifying questions were also incorporated.

Data Analyses

The data collected in this study were systematically studied using a thematic analysis approach.

This approach involves examining qualitative data to identify, analyze, and report repeated patterns within the data set Braun and Clarke, 2021. This method is also used to describe data; however, it additionally involves interpretation during the steps of generating codes and developing themes.

This method was applied to identify themes associated with the study of the administrative and supervisory challenges encountered by school heads in integrated schools within the Schools Division of Iloilo City for the School Year 2025–2026.

The findings were summarized using thematic analysis. According to Lochmiller (2021) in his study on Conducting Thematic Analysis with Qualitative Data, thematic analysis can potentially reduce voluminous data into clearly articulated thematic statements. The researcher will also establish clear connections between the overarching theme and the sub-themes that support, reinforce, and further clarify it. Relevant statements will be extracted from the individual narratives of each participant regarding the phenomenon and integrated

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into a narrative account, which will then be organized and grouped into emerging themes. He or she will then integrate these themes into a narrative description of the phenomenon (Lochmiller, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The qualitative research was conducted to examine the administrative and supervisory practices of school heads in integrated schools as a basis for policy recommendations.

The participants of the study were five (5) school heads from integrated schools in the Schools Division of Iloilo City for the School Year 2025–2026.

The participants were selected through purposive sampling. The study employed a phenomenological research design under a qualitative research methodology, utilizing in-depth interviews. The researcher prepared an interview schedule to gather data, and participants provided consent for documentation purposes. A panel of experts validated the questionnaire's content in line with the standards provided given by Fraenkel & Wallen as cited by Rahmawati (2021) for the validity of questions.

The comments and suggestions of the panel of validators regarding the items in the interview schedule were carefully considered and incorporated, resulting in the final version of the interview schedule. After the interviews were conducted, the researcher consolidated all the collected data.

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Thematic analysis was employed to analyze and interpret the data. Lochmiller (2021) in his study on Conducting Thematic Analysis with Qualitative Data stated that thematic analysis can potentially reduce voluminous data into clearly articulated thematic statements.

As revealed through the in-depth interviews the administrative and supervisory school heads' practices in integrated schools were overseeing school operations and resources, planning of school projects, activities and programs, engaging stakeholders, conducting classroom observations and giving support to teachers.

In contrast, the administrative and supervisory issues encountered by school heads were resource shortages, performing multiple responsibilities, limited time for instructional supervision, and diverse teaching and learning needs.

The following emerging themes on how they manage the challenges were strategic delegation and team empowerment, building strong partnerships with stakeholders, structured decision-making, ethical leadership, and open communication and professional development initiatives.

A policy recommendation framework was suggested to address the administrative and supervisory difficulties faced by school heads in integrated schools.

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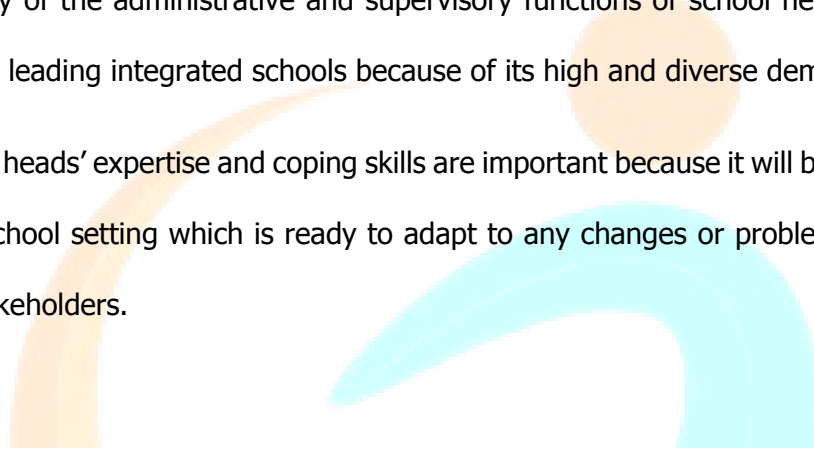
CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, the following insights were derived:

School heads' practices and challenges served as driving forces for sustaining the quality of school leadership and guiding them toward the goal of becoming resilient leaders.

Mastery of the administrative and supervisory functions of school heads is crucial in managing and leading integrated schools because of its high and diverse demands.

School heads' expertise and coping skills are important because it will be a determinant of a flexible school setting which is ready to adapt to any changes or problems through the support of stakeholders.



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