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**LEADERSHIP SPECTRUM: A SURVIVAL SUSTAINABILITY OF  
LIFEWORLD MONTESSORI SCHOOL INC., PHILIPPINES  
DURING THE POST PANDEMIC**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study aimed to clarify the survival sustainability of Lifeworld Montessori School Inc., Philippines during post-pandemic. This was coupled with Bandura’s Social Learning theory which states that children observe the people around them behaving in various way. Moreover, this study utilizes phenomenology, a discipline that investigates the structure of conscious experiences from a subjective viewpoint. A key element of any experience lies in its intentionality, indicating its inherent focus on an object. Based on the feedback of the participants, my analysis revealed three emerging themes under survival sustainability namely: instructional leadership, strategic planning, partnerships, and collaborations. In addition, on the educational insights for the survival sustainability there are three emerging themes which are: new normal education, flexible learning models, health and safety measures, and investments in technology and digital infrastructure. The comprehensive approach integrates accessible healthcare, flexible learning, health and safety measures, and substantial technology investments, effectively responding to pandemic challenges and evolving educational needs. Recognizing the interconnectedness of health, adaptability, and technology, this strategy ensures resilience and long-term strength in the ever-evolving educational landscape. Future research on Lifeworld Montessori School, Inc., Philippines, can assess its pandemic response, compare strategies, understand stakeholder perspectives, analyze

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innovations, explore community engagement, identify resilience strategies, study parental involvement, and examine policies to provide insights for global post-pandemic education success.

**Keywords:** *Leadership spectrum, survival, sustainability, post pandemic, insights*

## CHAPTER 1

### The Problem and Its Setting

*“Education is learning what you didn't even know you didn't know.”*

*Daniel J. Boorstin*

In today's present situation, where most things depend on the protocols set by medical practitioners, all institutions, including education, can do nothing but abide. This is brought about by the current health crisis experienced across the world. In this case, academic institutions had to forcibly close schools, which adversely impacted their businesses and the lives of their stakeholders. Some of these are making underprivileged learners access to educational opportunities due to interrupted learning activities, no equal access to digital learning connectivity or no accessibility to the use of technology especially for those learners who come from disadvantaged families; a reduced chance to socialized and missed out the way to interact with others which is essential to learning and development, inability of members of the household to both distance and home learning and most importantly the effect of less productivity due to lesser economic activity.

In the United States, schools are closing due to coronavirus concerns have turned a spotlight on those problems and how they contribute to educational and income inequality in the nation (Mineo, 2020). In addressing the adverse effects of the pandemic, schools

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have now realized the benefit of having a backup system in the form of online instruction. Some big schools are now on the move to develop new, permanent systems and redesign to meet the needs that have been totally exposed to the crisis. However, some members of the educational system took advantage of the pandemic. They believed that the present situation taught them to think of ways to make the school, education, and child-developed systems more individually responsive to their needs. In short, learners themselves are uniquely different from one another; they have their respective backgrounds and have various resources and opportunities inside and outside of the school. Thus, taking the school system uniform may not be effective as well.

As part of the 870 million students who were greatly affected by the pandemic, Indonesian schools were also challenged on how to access distance or remote learning. Instructional leaders realized that distance learning will, at least in the short term, have a negative impact on educational outcomes and qualities, considering the huge diversity of geographic and infrastructural challenges. In addition, the Indonesian education ministry has yet to present several steps with challenges of poor connectivity: launching national TV Stations, simplifications of curriculum to essential numeracy and literacy skills, flexible expenditure of budget allocations, and even the provision of mobile data for students (Lee, 2020).

Meanwhile, in the Philippine setting, the pandemic and national public health emergency provide the country an opportunity to make education relevant in solving the problem today (Cruz, 2020). It is accepted that schools should be opened for the conduct of research on the pandemic to assist the country's biggest challenge and help people like healthcare workers understand using the schools' wide disciplinary perspective. For the government to respond proactively, it is appreciated that school leaders can take part in mobilizing their respective educational systems, considering that there are numerous

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schools in the entire nation. In addition, engineering schools could work with the science schools in studying how to safely resume public activities for economic purposes.

Despite all these discoveries on some possible solutions and measures regarding the impact of the pandemic, still, the small school of the private sector in Davao City still seems to be in shock and making things horrible for us. Sadly, many of these schools decided to shut down while they could still save other things before the pandemic ate them up. Instructional leaders like me are at the edge of the cliff, wondering what things may come if this current situation will continue a bit longer.

Based on the study on "Education Policy Responses to COVID-19" by McKinsey Global Institute, examines the long-term implications of the pandemic on the world of work and provides insights into how businesses can adapt and thrive in the new normal. Further, it highlights the importance of flexibility, agility, and resilience in the face of uncertainty. This study was conducted following the quantitative and qualitative research methods. While the current study sought to use a purely qualitative approach. Moreover, from the qualitative perspective, the former and the current study set different approaches, the current study seeks to explore the experiences of administrators on the survival plan after the pandemic, and the phenomenological approach is more suited while the former used the case study approach. Thus, this study is initiated to realize the individual experiences of instructional leaders during the pandemic and how they cope with it.

### ***Purpose of the Study***

The purpose of this study was to take a look at the involvement of instructional leaders' planning, survival skills, and insights encountered toward educational institutions' survival during the pandemic. This study described the experiences of instructional leaders in carrying out their duties and responsibilities as they gained experiences and their learning insights observed.

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## Research Questions

Specifically, this study sought to answer the queries about the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines during the post-pandemic. This study will answer the following questions:

1. What is the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines during post-pandemic?
2. What learning insights can be drawn from the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines during post-pandemic?

This piece of work would be significant to the following within the preview of this chapter.

*The School Leaders.* This study would help them realize that they are responsible for ensuring the welfare of their students during a crisis. The responsibility can be of support to the communities, thus following clear guidelines on what is expected from them as well as providing support and resources required is their responsibility.

*The teachers.* This study may allow them to address the challenges of distance learning and other modalities, most especially to those teachers handling the most vulnerable learners. Further, teachers are given the chance to help students stay motivated and engaged while learning elsewhere.

*The students.* They are the end recipients of whatever learnings of the new teachers. Students will benefit from whatever plan their instructional leaders have.

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The terms were operationally utilized based on the context of the study to further define the answers to the queries about the survival experiences of instructional leaders in times of pandemic.

*Leadership Spectrum.* This refers to the range or scale, opinions, and emotions of school leaders on the current pandemic and how they see their experiences can shed light on the rest of the school administration.

*Survival Sustainability.* This refers to the survival of educational institutions on how to manage to continue despite difficult circumstances brought about during the pandemic.

## Review of the Significant Literature

This section presents relevant literature and studies that give clear support to the study. In this context, the involvement of instructional leaders' planning, survival skills, and insights encountered towards educational institutions' survival during the pandemic among elementary private schools in the city are highlighted. Due to the limited literature available, technical terms operationally used in the following were adopted to synonymous terms. Aside from the fact that new normal education, instructional leadership, educational institutions, and survival plans are often used in the field of research, contextualization has to be applied to suit its context. Discussions are presented below.

### Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership in education places a focus on learning for children and adults alike. It particularly focuses on learning that can be measured by development in instruction and in the distinction of student learning (Teamwork Definition, 2020). Instructional leadership

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development calls for teams of leaders to become involved, with the principal at the helm. In becoming more impactful in the academic arena, there must be a culture of public practice, and this includes cultural, learning, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversities are all tackled in educational institutions. Additionally, instructional leaders also give emphasis on managing people and other human resources effectively. Leaders, like school principals, vary in many ways in the role they undertake. These roles are heavy vested upon them to carry out the direction of the schools that includes setting clear goals, managing the curriculum, evaluating teachers, monitoring lessons, and even assigning resources to instruction. In short, instructional leadership has become in-depth involved in the very heart of school teaching and learning.

According to Saar et al. (2015), an instructional leadership mindset includes an intense moral purpose focused on promoting deep student learning, professional inquiry, trusting relationships, and seeking evidence in action. Having a good sense of leadership requires attention to daily management tasks that involve running an organization, providing a safe and secure learning environment, and effective interventions. Further, it also assumes the responsibility of catching great teachers and then supporting them. In addition, he mentioned that leadership is not just the work of one person. Today, instructional leadership is distributed across different people and situations. Effective leadership reflects how this influence promotes leader and teacher learning in ways that improve the engagement, learning, and well-being of all students. Today's leadership involves interacting with teachers and developing relevant materials, curriculum planning, and supervision to promote learning. The leaders, in this case, set the tone for the entire school and operate more through the school's culture and by modeling rather than through the direct supervision and evaluation of teaching.

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Instructional coaching can also be seen as a form of leadership which intended to improve teaching and learning. Leaders tend to provide technical assistance to teachers to assist professional development reflected in the observed lessons to build instructional capacity. This form of leadership through coaching provides job-embedded professional development combined with reflective and collaborative work among teachers that sustains professional learning (Theodore, 2005). Coaching in the field of academe is considered the most powerful and has great potential to give importance to classroom instruction. However, for the part of the teachers, it sounds hard and creates a high level of anxiety since it is seen as a close monitoring and may lead to resistance to change.

Instructional leadership requires principals to free themselves of bureaucratic tasks and focus their efforts on improving teaching and learning Jenkins (2009). Though instructional leadership is critical in the realization of an effective school system, it is seldom prioritized. Like for instance, among the many tasks performed by principals, only a few of the time is given to instructional leadership. The reason for this is most leaders lack in-depth training, lack of time, increased paperwork, and the community's perception of the principal's role as that of a manager. Today, most school leaders seek a balance in their roles as manager-administrators and instructional leaders.

DeWitt (2020) stressed that instructional leadership is how those in a leadership position focus on learning. They further want to take the present situation from a pandemic and the teaching experience to a remote area. Therefore, it is now time to put the spot-on learning and make sure an important management side of leadership to keep the balance of learners on the resources they need. In addition, instructional leaders create several potential master schedules for the upcoming school year for the uncertainties of the future.

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Stronge et al. (202) emphasized that to meet the challenges associated with national and state expectations, instructional leaders must focus on teaching and learning, especially in terms of measurable student progress to a greater degree. This is now the major accountability and still a continuing demand to school leaders and the greatest challenge in 21st-century leadership. It emphasizes that instructional leaders have to ensure that learners achieve mastery of the curriculum of both content and competency. Consequently, today's leaders concentrate on building a vision for their schools, sharing leadership with teachers, and influencing schools to operate as learning communities.

## Strategic Planning

According to Vo (2020), strategic planning is the process of documenting and establishing the direction of a small business by assessing both where it is from and where it is going. The strategic plan in the educational system gives a place to record the mission, vision, and core values of an academic institution, as well as the long-term plans and the action plans used to reach the goal. A well-defined plan can play a turning role in an organization, just like a school's growth and success, because it tells leaders how best to respond to opportunities and challenges. With this plan, the benefit it can give is enormous, especially to the people who are involved. As a leader in an academe, having this strategic plan will allow you to have a better idea of the goals and objectives to want to achieve and have a good sense of direction for the whole organization.

MCI (2015), defined that strategic planning is a process that requires considerable thought and planning on the part of a company's upper-level management. In an academic institution, for example, school leaders are expected to consider many possible options when settling on a plan of action and then determining how to implement it. Moreover, strategic planning is clearly creating strategies, implementation, and evaluation in the process of planning, whether it is long

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or short-term plans. From the perspective of the academic institution, stakeholders should be involved in the process; they are the ones who are involved in the day-to-day operations and can provide a creative and distinct view of the school. But in the end, school leaders will settle on a strategy that is most likely to produce positive results and can be executed in a cost-efficient manner with a high likelihood of success and with a low percentage of financial problems.

Strategic planning isn't just for businesses and nonprofits. Strategic planning in education should apply to any school with a mission to succeed in the best educational interests of its students and must have a plan to get there (Ong, 2016). This kind of planning distinctly allows the schools to identify what it is supposed to achieve for the stakeholders and especially for the students. Both sound planning and good communication will ensure that parents, teachers, school leaders, and the rest of the stakeholders are expected to participate in the planning process and strive for the same goals. Proper management of budget and other resources are requirements in a successful plan implementation.

## Educational Roadmap

The educational roadmap responds to the needs of 21st-century learners and a framework that will support ongoing evolution to prepare students to become career-oriented individuals in the future. The framework is designed to encourage rigorous conversation among all levels of education stakeholders informed by a diverse research base and conceptualized by leading educators and educational organizations. Wherever the schools are on the journey to providing learning environments to accommodate and engage 21st-century students, a strategic and collaborative process is in place (Building Your Roadmap to the 21st-Century Learning Environment, n. d.)

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According to Frazier (1997), a roadmap to quality transformation is then detailed in five phases: preparing for change, assessing school system performance, planning for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), deploying CQI, and sustaining the quality transformation. Clearly, in obtaining quality education, a clearer roadmap is designed and embedded throughout the whole process of transformation. At this point in time, instructional leaders are in deep realization of how they redirect and obtain quality education for the learners since everything they had planned before is now totally challenged by the new normal situation.

Road mapping is conducted to provide decision-makers with an overview of current and likely future developments (Geser, 2007). With the recent pandemic, school leaders are shaken, and every decision they take must address the practical needs and demands of the learners and as well of their employees. Strategic leadership and decision-making are needed for implementing measures that are likely to promote further uptake of open educational practices and resources once the results of the road mapping will provide some basis for policy and institutional planning is available.

A roadmap for education provides immediate outcomes to organizations. Most likely, it supports and empowers students, teachers, schools, and parents in underserved communities to enrich and strengthen the educational experience so that communities are better able to prepare youth academically, socially, and financially for college and create a greater understanding of the benefits of higher education. Instructional learners must always consider the welfare of the learners by guiding them to graduate from junior high school and proceed to universities and colleges even amid the pandemic experienced today (The REAM Foundation, n. d.).

Based on the diagnostic report in Kazakhstan, a roadmap program identifies key actions to effect improvement of the education system. It promotes equal access and enhances social cohesion by reducing the rural/urban divide through the provision of education to all (Road Map

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for the Development of Education in Kazakhstan Higher Education Roadmap Recommendations, 2013). In the field of education, road mapping is designing the plans for future decisions that involve stakeholders, both internal and external, along the process (Georgakaki et al., 2014). In addition, a roadmap is intended for all stakeholders, governments, civil society organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and other relevant institutions that facilitate and support learning and training, all the way to individual teachers and learners (UNESCO 2014).

## New Normal Education

The new normal for education requires us to unlearn what we have always known: rows of desks, heavy bags, mass lectures, public exams, and even parent-teacher communication (Kamalluden, 2020). By unlearning those mentioned things, authorities in the academic arena can establish the new normal of education. Performing online classes and online jobs does not necessarily mean a new normal. Having online classes is an enabler of learning together with these features to give way to learning the new normal. One is the change from public space to personal space, which means that learners do not need to go to physical facilities to learn, but instead, they can stay in their personal space that includes interacting via virtual space. Second is the shifting from one-size-fits-all to individualized and differentiated learning.

Before, students could learn at the same time as the rest of the group at the same pace. But now, with this new normal education, they are assessed and evaluated individually based on their individual capacity. Individualized and differentiated means teaching each student uniquely to meet unique needs and paces. Therefore, educators now can design lessons according to the individual needs of students and give them the flexibility to master the materials accordingly. Third, is the shift from active participation of household members. This time around, members of the household have access to assist and learn together with the students, and family members

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become active agents in the teaching and learning process. This turns the household into a learning facilitator, providing guidance and assistance to make the learning process pleasant for students. And finally, the shift from final exams to formative assessments. This means that alternative ways of evaluating learning must be used to monitor student performance. Formative assessments in any learning area demonstrations are now more desirable means of gauging a student's learning progress.

Lie (2020), mentioned that in the new normal, education leaders and policymakers have prepared for the new normal for over 44 million students across the country. This is quite alarming since the school opening is just around the corner, and guidelines and policies are yet to be designed. Because of this, these lessons were learned like changing the perspective and practices in the educational system amidst current school disruption. School leaders must go beyond the fear of illness and think of new directions and transform themselves that will address the need to learn. Leaders will take into consideration the abrupt changes from face-to-face to learning-from-home mode and will also change their roles as leaders and, as a result, change the roles of the teachers, students, and even parents in the new normal education.

### Health and safety measures

Health and safety are an important consideration for school staff. You and your school have a legal responsibility to protect students from harm, including risks posed by health and safety (Sword, 2020). This contributes to your Ofsted grade since it is seen to be a key component of a school's performance. Additionally, it is crucial for you to feel protected at work as a staff member. Understanding potential risks, putting management plans in place, and being aware of your employer's support for you in this regard are all things you should do. To stop the spread of contagious illnesses and safeguard the wellbeing of students, staff, and the larger community,

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schools must implement health and safety policies. Schools will need to keep giving these precautions top priority in the post-pandemic era to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and other infectious illnesses.

Keeping schools safe allows children to look forward to being in an encouraging environment that promotes social and creative learning (Applebury, 2023). Children who don't feel secure at school run the danger of not attending altogether or of being on edge all day if their fundamental safety needs aren't satisfied. The open environment created by promoting school safety allows children to explore, learn, and grow. To stop the spread of infectious illnesses like COVID-19 and others, schools will need to continue placing a high priority on health and safety measures. This can entail following consistent cleaning and disinfection procedures, encouraging hand hygiene, and maintaining physical separation rules.

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2023), educators and school leaders across the country already are demonstrating that students can safely learn and thrive inside their classrooms, and that, as a nation, we can provide the supports students need and deliver on the promise of an excellent and equitable education for every child. Implementing these health and safety measures requires a coordinated and collaborative effort between schools, families, and the wider community. By prioritizing these measures, schools can help create a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff.

## Flexible learning Models

As mentioned by Casipe (2020), flexible Learning is the appropriate design and delivery of programs, courses, and learning interventions that address these kinds of situations in the new normal. Utilizing both digital and non-digital technologies is part of flexible learning. Time may be flexible during studying. It frequently employs distance education delivery strategies. The major

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goal of flexible learning is to provide students with as much freedom as possible regarding their schedules, access, and new assessment methods, using both digital and analog instruments. Flexible learning seeks to limit the number of students entering a classroom at once or to decongest classrooms during this epidemic. This is done to encourage physical separation and safeguard the pupils' health.

In training, modalities represent different delivery modes of learning through which learners' skills are developed (Round Table Learning, 2023). Modalities provide individualized learning approaches to address the training needs of a company. Each modality has a specialized usage, a special function, advantages, and disadvantages depending on the objectives of the training program. To accommodate students who want or need remote or asynchronous learning choices, schools may need to continue offering flexible learning models like hybrid learning, blended learning, or totally online learning.

Baldwin (2022) mentioned that teaching using multiple modalities means varying instruction methods to reach students of all learning modalities. A teacher can offer content to pupils in a way that has the greatest influence on their learning by mixing visual, aural, kinesthetic, and tactile exercises into a lesson. Understanding how people could utilize various senses to learn, and more especially how different people might learn, is the goal of learning modalities. To create learning activities that address the many learning modalities present in their classroom, teachers must first determine the preferred learning styles of their pupils. This keeps the learning environment at its best. The four basic types of learning are tactile, kinesthetic, auditory, and visual. To accommodate students who want or need remote or asynchronous learning choices, schools may need to continue offering flexible learning models like hybrid learning, blended learning, or totally online learning.

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Investment in technology and digital infrastructure

For the sake of quality education, student safety, and well-being, it's important that school administrators and parents or guardians are in dialogue about basic frameworks and guiding principles related to selecting technology (Johnson, 2022). Since the invention of the chalkboard and the overhead projector, which arrived decades later, technology in its various incarnations has been present in the classroom. Now that classroom settings may constantly be connected to the internet in our digital age, educators must choose both hardware and software. Many of these guidelines for technology and education also apply to parents who may be considering buying technology for their children's home education.

Castelo (2020) stressed that education stakeholders have plenty to consider as they assess technology spending amid budget constraints. For many, the developments have either brought forth new technological issues or brought attention to those that already exist, such as the digital divide and inadequate cybersecurity training. However, when schools reviewed their digital environments and planned expenditures, they encountered a new challenge: significant cuts to public education funding brought on by the state's economic downturn. To facilitate remote and blended learning, as well as to enhance communication and cooperation between students, instructors, and parents, schools may need to invest in technology and digital infrastructure.

By integrating technology into existing curricula, as opposed to using it solely as a crisis-management tool, teachers can harness online learning as a powerful educational tool (American University, 2020). Digital learning technologies used effectively in the classroom may boost student engagement, assist teachers in creating better lesson plans, and promote individualized instruction. Additionally, it aids pupils in developing crucial 21st-century abilities. Virtual learning environments, video, augmented reality (AR), robotics, and other technological tools may not only make classes more engaging but also more inclusive learning settings that encourage

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cooperation and inquisitiveness as well as provide teachers the ability to gather statistics on student performance. However, it's crucial to remember that technology is a tool and not an aim in education. The potential of educational technology depends on how educators use it and how it may be used to best meet the needs of their pupils.

According to Mastos (2021), pointed out that students need to learn with technology. Schools have been discovering this since the first big push to put computers into classrooms in the 1980s, and student technology programs continue to expand and grow to this day. Unfortunately, even though educators are aware of their relevance, technology is sometimes difficult to justify financially. When students are not given the chance to practice using computers and everyday tools like spreadsheets and document editors, they will be at a severe disadvantage when they enter the job.

## Partnerships and collaborations

Adopting a public school is not only beneficial for students and teachers but the community as well. Learn about four successful examples of adopt-a-school that can inspire your community (Chen, 2023). As more and more towns become aware of the advantages adopt-a-school programs provide for both children and community members, they are sprouting up all across the nation. Adopt-a-school fosters a better understanding of the community's educational system, strengthens, and improves school programs and curricula, and fosters a sense of personal involvement and interaction between organizations and schools, according to the American Chemical Society, which runs the program.

In addition, the linkages within the community are also important for the partnership to prosper. This is particularly significant for rural schools because their families tend to establish a deep sense of values and practices due to a powerful generational tie to the community (Sulong

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Udyong, 2016). The listed six school-community connections that help schools succeed: creating a connection with social capital; recognizing the strong sense of place that is especially apparent in rural areas; increasing parental involvement; utilizing the influence of the secular community; evaluating the connections between educational institutions and the business community; and developing the community as a means of resource coordination. According to some, each of these 6 traits has a role in academic performance. School-community cooperation is a two-way street, meaning that both sides should cooperate since they both have an impact on one another. The author makes the point that more mature social functioning will undoubtedly result from contact between the school and the community in a way that benefits both parties. Schools may need to work more closely with businesses, community groups, and other stakeholders to enhance kids' learning and well-being, especially in underserved or disadvantaged areas.

## Synthesis

The foregoing review of significant literature and studies discussed the relevance of a survival plan for educational institutions during the pandemic as perceived by the school leaders of the private school sectors. In this quest, significant literature proposed the survival plan and leadership spectrum which are customized to describe their experiences during the times of pandemic.

## Theoretical Lens

This study is coupled with Bandura's Social Learning theory which states that children observe the people around them behaving in various ways (McLeod, 2016). As learners in society, children are surrounded by many influential models, such as parents within the family, characters on children's TV, friends within their peer group, and teachers at school. They consider these to

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be their models. But in the context of this study, the ones being observed are the strategies being used by other school leaders which are effective in their respective contexts and are considered as models. In learning from the experiences of others, school leaders pay attention to some of the other leaders as models and encode their systems. Later, they may copy these behaviors, which may serve them better in terms of planning.

Another theory anchored to this study is the Problem-based Theory is initially used to rigorously test the skills of medical students by allowing them to become more involved in their learning rather than using the passive lecture approach. However, in the context of academic institutions, this PBL model consists of groups collaboratively working together to solve a problem. The school leaders are expected to be engaged in their group discussions and then facilitate the process by asking questions that might help their own problems. By doing strategic planning, the school leaders are responsible for creating an environment in which they receive systematic instruction in conceptual, strategic, and reflective reasoning in the context of a discipline that will ultimately make them more successful in preparing their entire school during the times of pandemic.

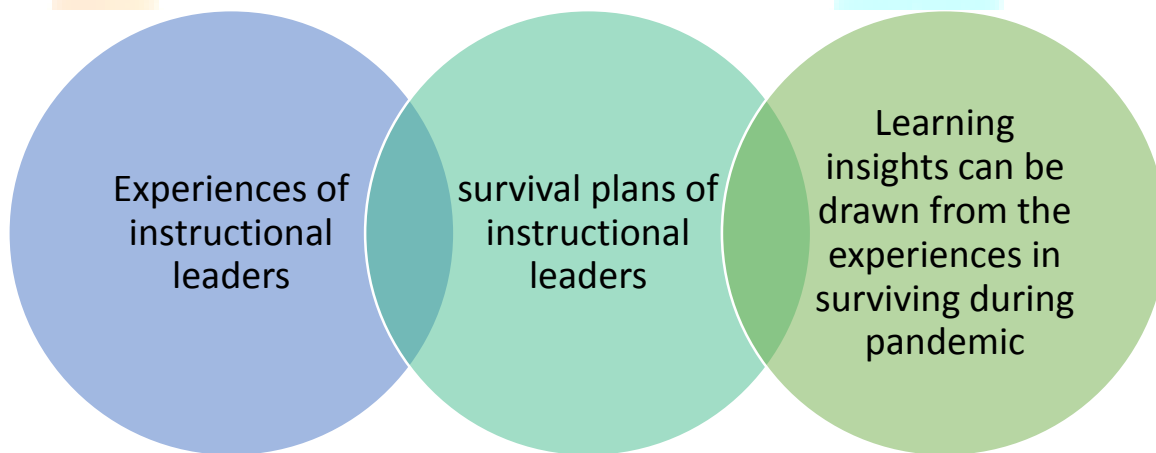


Figure 1. Theoretical/conceptual Framework of Study

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## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

This section presented the method used in the study. It comprised philosophical assumptions, qualitative assumptions, research design, environment, participants, ethical considerations, the role of the researcher, data collection, data analysis, and trustworthiness of the data.

#### Philosophical Assumptions

This study used the three (4) basic assumptions that qualitative research undertakes as Creswell (2005) pointed out. The methodologies that the researcher developed were influenced by these four assumptions, namely, ontology, epistemology, rhetoric, and axiology.

Ontology. Reality is subjective and multiple. It suggests that every human being differs in perception and interpretation of it. Creswell (2012) mentioned that the reality which humans themselves encounter is considered an ontological issue that needs to be explored or investigated for the purpose of addressing it.

With this, as a researcher and an instructional leader, I investigated the perspectives of the participants who had a direct encounter with performing survival planning during the times of the pandemic. I relied on the information they shared during the conduct of focused-group discussions (FGD) and individual interviews.

*Epistemology.* In view of epistemological assumption, as a researcher, I attempted to lessen the distance between opinion and a researcher as mentioned by Creswell (2012). This suggests that as a researcher I must collaborate, spend time in the field with the participants,

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and become an “insider”. In this study, I already established relationships with my participants identified with the selected school leaders in the private school sectors. Therefore, I can tell that with my exposure to the participants, I can clearly understand what they had expressed during the discussion.

*Axiology.* For the axiological assumptions, Creswell (2012) discussed that the role of values in a study is significant. It suggests that the researcher openly discussed the values that shape the narrative and included their own interpretation in conjunction with the interpretation of instructional leaders.

In this study, I considered the information of my participants very valuable, as it served as my basis for improving the established mechanism or system for the survival of schools in the private sector during a pandemic.

*Rhetoric.* Rhetorical assumptions suggest that the investigator uses specific terms and a personal and literary narrative in the study. In adherence to this, I wrote the texts in this study with the use of personal voice and qualified terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability instead of internal and external validity.

In this study, I keenly observed the gestures, nuances, and facial expressions of the participants during the interviews. Although it was conducted in an online setting, I still personally observed how the participants reacted, especially in relation to their opinions about the topic.

## Qualitative Stance of the Study

The qualitative method is utilized to explain, clarify, and elaborate the meanings of different aspects of the human life experience. Therefore, researchers can interpret people’s experiences because they were involved in human activities. The principles of no “no harm” to

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participants ought to be considered by researchers, who should be aware of the potential harm that might be inflicted upon the study subject. Obviously, sometimes a conflict between the right to know and the right to privacy (advocated based on the rights of the individual) may happen (Bloor & Wood, 2006).

There were several effective strategies to protect personal information, for instance, secure data storage methods, removal of identifier components, biographical details amendments, and pseudonyms (applicable to names of individuals, places, and organizations) (Bloor & Wood, 2006). Researchers have the responsibility of protecting all participants in a study from potentially harmful consequences that might affect them because of their participation.

## Design and Procedure

This study used qualitative research. Phenomenological research gathered and worked with non-numerical information tried to decipher the significance of this information which helps and assists us in comprehending social life through the investigation of focused populaces or spots Crossman (2017). A subjective outline was depicted as an approach for investigation and understanding the importance people or gatherings credit to a social or human issue Creswell (2012). The procedure of research included raised questions and techniques, information commonly gathered in the member's setting, information investigated inductively working from particulars to general topics, and the scientist made elucidations of the importance of the data.

This examination utilized the phenomenological approach that portrays and guides the selected participants who are taking charge of their own schools in Davao City. The objective of subjective phenomenological was to look into how to depict the lived experiences of school administrators or leaders during the pandemic and what are their survival plans for the entire school. As this is a subjective investigation of account information based on experiences,

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strategies to break down its information are not quite the same as more conventional or quantitative techniques for this kind of research are looked into. Basically, it will center on significance, the importance of the experience, strategic or survival planning, the story, struggles, and so forth (Waters, 2017).

### Ethical Considerations

The understanding and the direction of academic research and being aware of what constitutes ethical research is an essential part of planning for a research project. Ethical principles would be strictly observed in the conduct of this study to avoid any violations of participants' rights. This matter of ethical research was the basis of this chapter. At all times, the researcher ensured that the participants were safe from harm and were protected from unnecessary stress.

This research was conducted in a setting where participants were non-native speakers of English, involving additional ethical reflections for researchers. I used the term 'EAL' (English as an Additional Language) to cover all these categories of my participants. Koulouriotis (2011) drew attention to the complexities that arose when conducting research with non-native speakers of English. Cultural boundaries, translation issues, and perceptions of power and authority were all 'ethical considerations inherent in research. She further reiterated the point that a great proportion of research in ESL (English as a Second Language) would be conducted by teacher-researchers in countries where ethical concerns might not have been addressed formally. This chapter examined principles of ethical deliberations that researchers working in the field of EAL considered and contextualized. Some of these principles are discussed below.

First, informed consent was obtained. Participants were given informed consent forms that indicated their roles in the research. They were asked to read and sign the terms and

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conditions. It was explicitly stated that they were not forced or threatened in any way to participate in the activity.

Second, peer debriefing was conducted. This was done because the researcher sought feedback from uninterested peers who observed the focus group discussion (FGD).

Third, information gathered during the interviews and FGDs was treated with confidentiality. It was ensured that participants' identities were not disclosed to the public, and pseudonyms were used instead of real names. Fourth, intrusiveness was minimized. The schedule and timing of the participants were carefully considered to ensure that the FGDs occurred at their convenience.

It is important to note that unethical research practices can leave participants and researchers feeling vulnerable and exposed in negative ways. Such unethical behavior by the researcher can also compromise the validity and trustworthiness of the collected data.

## Research Participants

The primary participants in this investigation are the instructional leaders of the private sector in Davao City, specifically from Lifeword Montessori School Incorporated Inc., Philippines. The participants were identified using purposive sampling, as the study focused on specific individuals who are responsible for managing academic institutions. These individuals were chosen because of their direct involvement in the school's operations and served as a valuable source of information for this investigation.

Qualitative analyses typically require a smaller sample size than quantitative analyses. Qualitative sample sizes should be large enough to obtain enough data to sufficiently describe the phenomenon of interest and address the research questions. The goal of qualitative

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researchers would be the attainment of saturation. Saturation occurred when adding more participants to the study did not result in additional perspectives or information. Glaser and Strauss (1967) recommended the concept of saturation for achieving an appropriate sample size in qualitative studies. Other guidelines have also been recommended. For phenomenological studies, Creswell (1998) recommended 5 – 25, and Morse (1994) suggested at least six. These recommendations helped the researcher estimate how many participants she would need, but ultimately, the required number of participants should depend on when saturation was reached. In this study, a sum of 5 members of instructional leaders will be recognized and incorporated into the investigation of the examination.

Most scholars argue that the concept of saturation is the most important factor to think about when mulling over sample size decisions in qualitative research Mason (2010). Saturation was defined by many as the point at which the data collection process no longer offered any new or relevant data.

In this study, the researcher made use of snowball sampling, also known as chain-referral sampling. It was a non-probability sampling method used when characteristics to be possessed by samples were rare and difficult to find Research Methodology (2019). For example, in this study, the experiences of instructional leaders on how their survival plan works in their respective schools. It would be increasingly difficult to find primary data sources from the instructional leaders unless a member is willing to provide contacts of other members. This sampling method involved primary data sources nominating another potential primary data source used in the research. The snowball sampling method was based on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects in other words. The sampling method was applied to members of the sample group that will be recruited via chain referral. This study specifically will utilize Linear snowball sampling in which a sample group will start with only one subject and the subject will provide

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only one referral. The referral will be recruited into the sample group, and he/she also provides only one new referral. This pattern will be continued until the sample group is fully formed.

There will be 5 instructional leaders who will be recruited to participate in this study. Each participant will give specific codes to hide their identities to freely express their opinions and knowledge regarding the phenomenon. The members of the group will be coming from different private school sectors in Davao City. Each will give their responses regarding the instructional leadership on their survival plan during the pandemic.

To further provide the reader with a better understanding of the participants of the study, here is a short background of the research environment.

### Role of Researcher

The fundamental role of the researcher was to establish themselves as the primary information authority in qualitative research. The data-gathering method employed for qualitative data collection, such as focus group discussions (FGDs), was conducted by the researcher. The approach to interacting with participants involved semi-structured interviews. During the FGDs, the conversations were transcribed to capture the participants' responses verbatim, ensuring that genuine reactions were accurately recorded. Additionally, the researcher played the role of a participant observer. This meant that during conducting the FGDs, the researcher observed the behavior of the participants discreetly. In this multifaceted role, the researcher acted as the interviewer, observer, note-taker, and transcriber.

Like in quantitative methods, it required implementing specialized skills correctly to carry out the task. Competence in these skills was required all as pointed out by (n. a, n. d.): explained, study without bias with the potential participants, conducted interviews properly, accorded it to

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the design, made appropriate field observations, selected appropriate artifacts, imaged, journal portions, and so on, and handled data per design, analyzed, and interpreted the data per design.

## Data Collection

Several steps were undertaken in the gathering of data, and they were as follows: First, a written communication from the dean of the Graduate school was endorsed by the researcher to the participating schools of Davao City, bearing the requested permission to conduct the study. After the approval was granted, a letter was sent to selected private school instructional leaders, who were tapped as participants of the study based on the referrals of the school heads. A researcher-made questionnaire was developed and subjected to face validation. The reflected guide questions were asked during the focus group discussions (FGD). The data was gathered through focus group discussions. Additionally, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. During the pandemic, the proper protocol was observed; thus, online interviews using Google Meet or Zoom were utilized.

## Data Analysis

Participant responses underwent thematic content analysis, generating substantial data volumes, as highlighted by Sutton (2015). Audio recordings using modern technology captured interview and focus group interactions, extensively utilized for data collection. Subsequently, verbatim transcription preceded data analysis. As a rough guideline, it could take an experienced researcher or transcriber approximately 8 hours to transcribe one 45-minute audio-recorded interview. In addition to audio recordings, the researcher utilized "field notes" to complement the data gathered from interviews. These field notes allowed the researcher to maintain and comment upon impressions, environmental contexts, behaviors, and nonverbal cues that may not have been adequately captured through audio recording alone. Field notes offered vital context for

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interpreting audio-recorded data and served as reminders of crucial situational factors during analysis. Handwritten notes were also taken during the interviews in a small notebook.

## Framework Analysis

In the analysis of data, the following tools were presented and discussed below.

Thematic Content Analysis. Thematic content analysis was a standout amongst the most widely recognized types of investigation in subjective research Guest (2012). As referred to by Maglente (2018), it underlined, pinpointing, analyzing, the recording examples (or "topics") inside information. Subjects are designed crosswise over informational collections that were vital to the portrayal of wonder and are related to a particular research question. Further, this technique stressed association and rich portrayal of the informational collection. The topical investigation went past just including expressions or word content and proceeded onward to recognize certain and unequivocal thoughts inside the information.

Triangulation. Cohen and Manion (2000) characterized triangulation as an "endeavor to delineate, or clarify all the more completely, the extravagance and many-sided quality of human conduct by contemplating it from in excess of one angle." Altrichter et al., (2008) battle that triangulation "gives a nitty gritty and adjusted photo of the circumstance. O' Donoghue & Punch, (2003), call attention to that triangulation was a "technique for cross-checking information from various sources to scan for regularities in the explored information as referred to by Maglente (2018).

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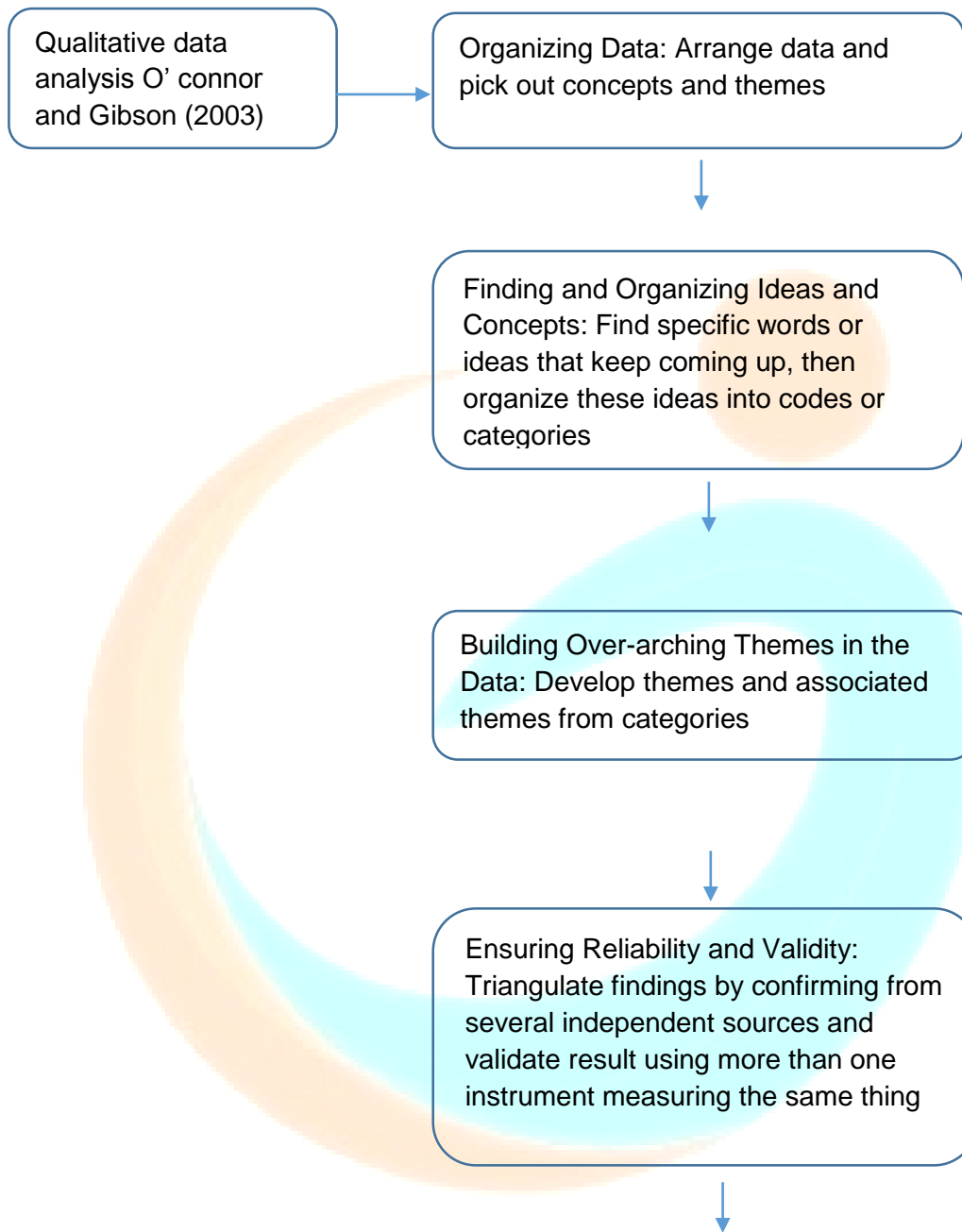
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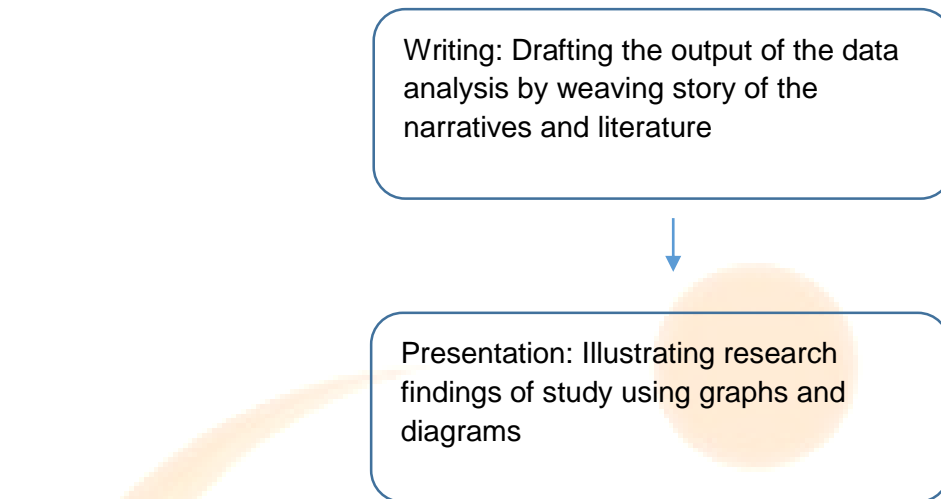
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*Figure 2: Analytical Framework of the Study*

### **Trustworthiness of the Study**

The trustworthiness of a subjective report was expanded by keeping up high believability and objectivity, Maglente (2018). For quantitative studies, it is referred to as validity and reliability.

Validity was how sure the subjective scientist was of the exploration study's discoveries. This came down to the topic of "How would you realize that your discoveries are valid and precise?" Qualitative specialists would utilize triangulation to demonstrate the examination study's discoveries were dependable (Olivia, n. d.).

Then, Transferability was how the subjective analyst exhibited that the examination of the study's discoveries was appropriate to different settings. For this situation, "different settings" would mean comparable circumstances, comparative populaces, and comparative marvels.

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Subjective specialists utilized thick portrayal to demonstrate that the examination study's discoveries were appropriate to different settings, conditions, and circumstances (Olivia, n. d.).

Confirmability was the level of lack of bias in the exploration study's discoveries. At the end of the day, this implied that the discoveries depended on members' reactions and no potential inclination or individual inspirations of the analyst. This included and ensured that analyst inclination did not skew the elucidation of what the examination members said to fit a specific story. To set up confirmability, subjective scientists would give a review trail, which featured each progression of information examination that was made keeping in mind the end goal to give a basis to the choices made. This sets up that the exploration study's discoveries precisely depicted members' reactions (Olivia, n. d.).

At long last, dependability was the degree to which the examination could be rehashed by different specialists and that the discoveries would be reliable. At the end of the day, if a man needed to reproduce your examination, they ought to have enough data from your exploration answer to do so and get comparative discoveries as your investigation did. A subjective analyst would utilize request review to set up steadfastness, which required an outside individual to audit and analyze the examination procedure and the information investigation keeping in mind the end goal to guarantee that the discoveries were predictable and could be rehashed (Olivia, n. d.).

After the conduct of an interview and focus group discussion with the identified participants, I will gather essential information that might help my study. The following steps presented in the framework above (Figure 2) are to be followed which is adopted from Giorgi's four-phase phenomenological method, Ojala (2018). Questions like: What are the experiences of instructional leaders during the pandemic? What are the survival plans of instructional leaders during the pandemic? What learning insights can be drawn from the experiences of surviving during the pandemic?

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Follow-up questions were also asked, as indicated in the question matrix found in the appendices. The group interview was expected to last from 45 to 60 minutes, and the interviews were transcribed based on the audio recorder. The complete collection of interviews consisted of transcribed pages taken from the participants. The data was analyzed using a phenomenological method, according to Giorgi, which was briefly presented in the figure above. The approach involved reading each interview carefully several times and writing a complete description of each participant's experience on their respective journey in the first phase.

In the second phase of data gathering, I discriminated meaning units of their experiences' journey from each participant's transcription, using their own words, and expressions, and even allowing them to use their own language to express subjective meaning units for their journey. After discriminating the answers and their experiences, I described and collected them together to form themes (phase 3), as they were articulated by the participants.

The themes were arranged in such a way that the most valuable ones were placed in an order that reflected how they related to each other. The value of each theme was defined by how the participant described their experiences and how they referred to or made other meanings from them, with the support of the literature gathered in Chapter 1. Furthermore, a meaningful perspective was written to represent the entire experience and journey of each participant, providing a comprehensive understanding of their unique perspectives and insights. In this phase, the language was changed to reflect a third-person perspective (phase 4). In the synthesis, determining the essential theme of their journey was extracted from the meaning structures of all participants.

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## Research Instrument

For this study, the preparation, strategies, and stories of instructional leaders with not less than three years in the service were the bases and had to be documented. A semi-organized meeting was utilized in the examination for the gathering of data. Semi-organized meetings, as per Bernard (1988), as said by Crabtree (2006), were used when there wouldn't be more than one opportunity to talk with somebody and when sending several interviewers out into the field to collect data. Meetings were often preceded by observation, informal, and unstructured talking to help the researchers develop a sharp understanding of the point of interest necessary for generating relevant and meaningful semi-organized questions.

Moreover, Keats (1999) believed that the inclusion of open-ended questions and allowing interviewers to follow relevant themes that might deviate from the interview guide did, however, provide the opportunity to identify new ways of understanding the current topic. This allowed the questionnaire to be prepared and appear strong and organized throughout the interview. Semi-structured interviews also allowed participants the opportunity to share their views on their own terms. Semi-structured interviews would provide reliable, comparable qualitative data.

## Chapter 3

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the interview data analysis, presented as themes followed by in-depth discussions aligning with the study objectives, quoting the study participants. Accurate symbols, denoting participants as P1 through P5, were employed in the interview transcripts to distinguish research participants from other interviewees.

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## The Survivability of LifeWord Montessori School Inc.,

### Philippines during post-pandemic

Figure 3 shows the survivability of Lifeword Montessori School, Inc., Philippines during the post-pandemic. The survivability of Lifeword Montessori school is geared towards three major themes namely: instructional leadership, strategic planning, and partnership and collaborations. The participant's responses were professionally marked with codes to maintain confidentiality in accordance with the study ethics and focus on their responses to the questions, which are significantly more important, to appropriately orient the readers. P1 through P5 represent Participants 1 through 5. The provided interview transcripts and the appendices contain the codes, which are quite clear to see.

As a teacher with sufficient service experience, I heard anecdotes, thoughts, feelings, and emotions about the survivability of Lifeword Montessori School, Inc., Philippines during the post-pandemic. Three themes arose from the findings of the study.

### Instructional leadership

This is the first main theme under the survivability of Lifeword Montessori School, Inc., Philippines during the post-pandemic. Instructional leadership in education places a focus on learning for children and adults alike. It particularly focuses on learning that can be measured by development in instruction and in the distinction of student learning (Teamwork Definition, 2020). In becoming more impactful in the academic arena, there has to be a culture of public practice, and this includes cultural, learning, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversities are all tackled in educational institutions. The claims offered in support of the school's survivability were as follows:

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...our school basically prepared, prepares three things, first is that the school make sure that the clinic is available and accessible to all the students and teachers... (P1)

According to Saar et. al (2015), an instructional leadership mindset includes an intense moral purpose focused on promoting deep student learning, professional inquiry, trusting relationships, and seeking evidence in action. Having a good sense of leadership requires attention to daily management tasks that involve running an organization, providing a safe and secure learning environment, and effective interventions. Further, it also assumes the responsibility of catching great teachers and then supporting them. In addition, he mentioned that leadership is not just the work of one person. Today, instructional leadership is distributed across different people and situations. Effective leadership reflects how this influence promotes leader and teacher learning in ways that improve the engagement, learning, and well-being of all students.

In the post-pandemic era, it is crucial to uphold the presence of an accessible clinic at Lifeword Montessori School, Inc. in the Philippines. This commitment is pivotal for safeguarding the health and welfare of both students and teachers, enabling swift responses to health-related issues and emergencies, ensuring adherence to regulatory standards, and fostering trust among parents. These factors collectively bolster the school's long-term viability and enrollment figures. Moreover, it promotes consistent attendance, thereby upholding uninterrupted educational processes. By prioritizing healthcare accessibility, the school underscores its unwavering dedication to the well-being and safety of its community, underpinning its resilience and enduring prosperity.

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...basically as a teacher here in Lifeword Montessori, ahm, our school prepare not only the parents and teachers through, through orientation but it also prepares us ahm I mean everybody ahm as all of the stakeholders of the school... (P2)

Instructional leadership requires principals to free themselves of bureaucratic tasks and focus their efforts on improving teaching and learning Jenkins (2009). Though instructional leadership is critical in the realization of an effective school system, it is seldom prioritized. For instance, among the many tasks performed by principals, only a few of the time is given to instructional leadership. The reason for this is most leaders lack in-depth training, lack of time, increased paperwork, and the community's perception of the principal's role as that of a manager. Today, most school leaders seek a balance in their roles as manager-administrators and instructional leaders.

Facilitating easy access to the school clinic for all students, teachers, and stakeholders at Lifeword Montessori School, Inc. in the Philippines has a substantial impact on the institution's capacity to navigate the post-pandemic landscape, particularly for instructional leaders. By proactively prioritizing health and safety, the school empowers instructional leaders with the resources and support needed to maintain a secure learning environment. This ensures that instructional leaders can concentrate on their primary roles of educational leadership and innovation, knowing that the institution is well-prepared to address health-related challenges swiftly and efficiently. Furthermore, this approach reinforces trust and collaboration among instructional leaders, parents, and the broader school community, fostering a holistic and resilient educational environment.

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## Strategic Planning

Strategic planning isn't just for businesses and nonprofits. Strategic planning in education should apply to any school with a mission to succeed in the best educational interests of its students and must have a plan to get there (Ong, 2016). This kind of planning distinctly allows the schools to identify what it is supposed to achieve for the stakeholders and especially for the students. Both sound planning and good communication will ensure that parents, teachers, school leaders, and the rest of the stakeholders are expected to participate in the planning process and strive for the same goals. Proper management of budget and other resources are requirements in a successful plan implementation.

...Our school leaders prepared health and safety measures by encouraging students and staff to do proper hygiene such as regular hand washing with soap and water, covering mouth when you cough or sneeze, and using alcohol or sanitizer... (P4)

According to Vo (2020), strategic planning is the process of documenting and establishing the direction of a small business by assessing both where it is from and where it is going. The strategic plan in the educational system gives a place to record the mission, vision, and core values of an academic institution as well as the long-term plans and the action plans used to reach the goal. A well-defined plan can play a turning role in an organization just like a school's growth and success because it tells leaders how best to respond to opportunities and challenges. With this plan, the benefit it can give is enormous, especially to the people who are involved. As a leader in an academe, having this strategic plan will allow you to have a better idea of the goals and objectives to want to achieve and have a good sense of direction for the whole organization.

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Implementing rigorous health and safety measures, including handwashing, proper hygiene, and sanitizer use, as part of strategic planning at Lifeword Montessori School, Inc. in the Philippines is pivotal in safeguarding the institution's post-pandemic survivability. Beyond immediate health benefits, these measures ensure continuity of education, bolster the school's reputation, and ensure compliance with regulations. Furthermore, integrating health education into the curriculum strengthens students' lifelong commitment to well-being, contributing to the school's long-term resilience in the face of unforeseen challenges, and aligning with the broader theme of strategic planning aimed at safeguarding the institution's future.

...as part of our job as teachers so we will not just teaching or we will not just teach our learners academically but we have also to teach them on how to to ahm help themselves in order to ahm avoid from any ah sickness. (P3)

MCI (2015) defined that strategic planning is a process that requires considerable thought and planning on the part of a company's upper-level management. In an academic institution for example, school leaders are expected to consider many possible options when settling on a plan of action and then determining how to implement it. Moreover, strategic planning is clearly creating strategies, implementation, and evaluation in the process of planning whether it is long or short-term plans. From the perspective of the academic institution, stakeholders should be involved in the process; they are the ones who are involved in the day-to-day operations and can provide a creative and distinct view of the school. But in the end, school leaders will settle on a strategy that is most likely to produce positive results and can be executed in a cost-efficient manner with a high likelihood of success and with a low percentage of financial problems.

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The school's proactive approach to ensuring the availability and accessibility of the clinic for both students and teachers aligns with a strategic planning imperative, especially in the context of post-pandemic survival. By emphasizing not only academic education but also essential life skills related to health and well-being, Lifeword Montessori School, Inc. in the Philippines is strategically positioning itself to create a resilient and health-conscious learning community. This holistic approach not only supports the immediate needs of its stakeholders but also contributes to the long-term sustainability of the institution by fostering a healthier and more prepared generation capable of navigating challenges effectively in the uncertain post-pandemic landscape.

## Partnerships and collaborations

Adopting a public school is not only beneficial for students and teachers but the community as well. Learn about four successful examples of adopt-a-school that can inspire your community (Chen, 2023). Adopt-a-school programs are gaining popularity nationwide as towns recognize their benefits for children and communities. These programs enhance understanding of the educational system, improve school programs, and promote personal involvement and interaction between organizations and schools, as noted by the American Chemical Society, which operates such initiatives.

...during the pandemic days, it is actually rampant ahm the virus is actually rampant so therefore we have to follow the rules and regulations that the government has imposed... (P3)

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Adopting a public school is not only beneficial for students and teachers but for the community as well. Learn about four successful examples of adopt-a-school that can inspire your community (Chen, 2023). As more and more towns become aware of the advantages adopt-a-school programs provide for both children and community members, they are sprouting up across the nation.

Prioritizing the availability and accessibility of essential healthcare services, such as a clinic, has far-reaching implications for the survivability of any institution during the post-pandemic period. The pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of maintaining a safe and healthy environment in compliance with government regulations and guidelines. By doing so, organizations can not only safeguard the well-being of their stakeholders but also demonstrate their commitment to health and safety standards. This proactive stance enhances the institution's attractiveness for potential partnerships and collaborations, as partners are likely to be drawn to entities that prioritize the health and safety of their constituents. By establishing a strong foundation in these areas, organizations can position themselves for resilience and mutually beneficial collaborations in a post-pandemic landscape.

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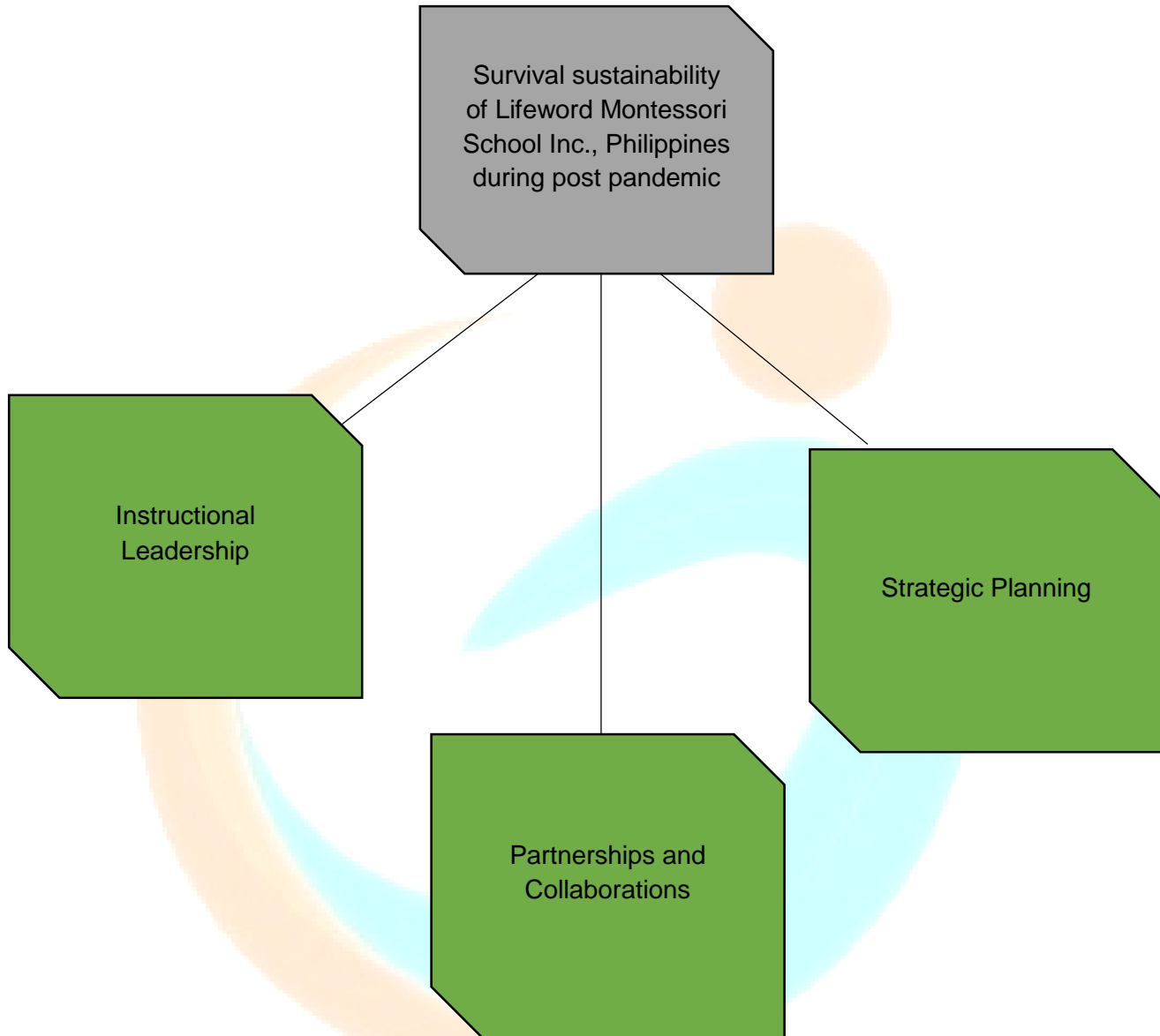
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**Figure 3. Emerging Themes on Survival Sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines during post-pandemic**

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*Learning insights drawn from the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School, Inc., Philippines during post-pandemic*

Figure 4 shows the learning insights that were drawn from the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines during the post-pandemic. The insights of these teachers were geared toward four themes namely: new normal education, flexible learning models, health and safety measures, and investments in technology and digital infrastructure.

## **New Normal Education**

The new normal for education requires us to unlearn what we have always known: rows of desks, heavy bags, mass lectures, public exams, and even parent-teacher communication (Kamalluden, 2020). Academic authorities must unlearn old practices to establish the new normal in education. Online classes and jobs alone don't define the new normal; they are facilitators of a transformative learning experience. There are two key shifts to highlight: first, a transition from public to personal space, where learners can access education from their own surroundings and engage virtually; second, a shift away from a standardized approach towards personalized and differentiated learning.

....we were provided with different ideas on how to continue teaching and learning through this set up despite of the situation we are here we are in to now we are more enhanced by the meaningful use of technology in a new normal education. (P5)

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Before, students could learn at the same time as the rest of the group at the same pace. But now, with this new normal education, they are assessed and evaluated individually based on their individual capacity. Individualized and differentiated means teaching each student uniquely to meet unique needs and paces. Therefore, educators now can design lessons according to the individual needs of students and give them the flexibility to master the materials accordingly. Third, is the shift from active participation of household members. This time around, members of the household have access to assist and learn together with the students, and family members become active agents in the teaching and learning process. This turns the household into a learning facilitator, providing guidance and assistance to make the learning process pleasant for students. And finally, the shift from final exams to formative assessments. This means that alternative ways of evaluating learning must be used to monitor student performance.

The commitment to ensuring that essential resources like accessible clinics are available to students and teachers reflects a holistic approach to addressing the challenges posed by the pandemic and the new normal in education. The incorporation of technology and innovative teaching strategies, as informed by the challenges of the pandemic, has empowered educators and learners to enhance their pedagogical methods, aligning with the demands of the new normal in education. The fusion of technology and a focus on health equips stakeholders with valuable insights into navigating the evolving landscape of education in a post-pandemic world.

### **Flexible Learning Models**

In training, modalities represent different delivery modes of learning through which learners' skills are developed (Round Table Learning, 2023). Modalities provide individualized learning approaches to address the training needs of a company. Each modality has a specialized usage, a special function, advantages, and disadvantages depending on the objectives of the training program. To accommodate students who want or need remote or asynchronous learning

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choices, schools may need to continue offering flexible learning models like hybrid learning, blended learning, or totally online learning.

...The modalities that we prepare and offer for instruction are modular learning and online learning during the pandemic time... (P5)

Baldwin (2022) mentioned that teaching using multiple modalities means varying instruction methods to reach students of all learning modalities. A teacher can offer content to pupils in a way that has the greatest influence on their learning by mixing visual, aural, kinesthetic, and tactile exercises into a lesson. Understanding how people could utilize various senses to learn, and more especially how different people might learn, is the goal of learning modalities. To create learning activities that address the many learning modalities present in their classroom, teachers must first determine the preferred learning styles of their pupils. This keeps the learning environment at its best. The four basic types of learning are tactile, kinesthetic, auditory, and visual. To accommodate students who want or need remote or asynchronous learning choices, schools may need to continue offering flexible learning models like hybrid learning, blended learning, or totally online learning.

The emphasis on accessible healthcare services and the utilization of flexible learning modalities like modular and online education during the pandemic carries significant implications for the sustainability and resilience of educational institutions in a post-pandemic context. Prioritizing accessible healthcare ensures the well-being of both students and educators, fostering trust among stakeholders. Moreover, the adoption of adaptable learning methods like modular and online education demonstrates an institution's capacity to pivot in response to challenging

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circumstances, making it better equipped to navigate future uncertainties in the evolving landscape of education where flexible learning models continue to play a crucial role.

The modalities that I used for instruction are lectured based approach in which I deliver the content through lectures with a combination of a direct interactions between me and my students... (P4)

As mentioned by Casipe (2020), flexible Learning is the appropriate design and delivery of programs, courses, and learning interventions that address these kinds of situations in the new normal. Utilizing both digital and non-digital technologies is part of flexible learning. Time may be flexible during studying. It frequently employs distance education delivery strategies. The major goal of flexible learning is to provide students with as much freedom as possible regarding their schedules, access, and new assessment methods, using both digital and analog instruments. Flexible learning seeks to limit the number of students entering a classroom at once or to decongest classrooms during this epidemic. This is done to encourage physical separation and safeguard the pupils' health.

The emphasis on securing the availability and accessibility of the clinic within the school, as mentioned, holds significant implications for the learning insights drawn from the survival and sustainability during the post-pandemic era. In the context of flexible learning models, this commitment to healthcare accessibility underscores the importance of a holistic approach to education, which extends beyond traditional classroom instruction. By prioritizing the physical well-being of students and teachers, the school not only contributes to a safe learning environment but also recognizes the interconnection between health and effective learning outcomes. In a post-pandemic landscape, where flexible learning models have become

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increasingly vital, this holistic approach aligns with the broader shift towards adaptable educational strategies that consider the overall welfare of all stakeholders.

## Health and Safety Measures

Health and safety are an important consideration for school staff. You and your school have a legal responsibility to protect students from harm, including risks posed by health and safety (Sword, 2020). This contributes to your Ofsted grade since it is seen to be a key component of a school's performance. Additionally, it is crucial for you to feel protected at work as a staff member. Understanding potential risks, putting management plans in place, and being aware of your employer's support for you in this regard are all things you should do. To stop the spread of contagious illnesses and safeguard the wellbeing of students, staff, and the larger community, schools must implement health and safety policies. Schools will need to keep giving these precautions top priority in the post-pandemic era to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and other infectious illnesses.

...Ahm, my learning experiences during the pandemic time ahm it's really important to be sensitive also with our surroundings not just by ourselves kasi sometimes we only take priority of our health but it's also very important for us to be sensitive of the health of the others kasi ah during pandemic ah pandemic that is a virus right so it's really important also that we should be careful ahm in order for us to to be sensitive enough *para hindi naman natin mahawaan or madamay pa yung ibang tao sa ating ahm being irresponsible or or not taking ahm responsibility of our ahm health. (P2)*

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Keeping schools safe allows children to look forward to being in an encouraging environment that promotes social and creative learning (Applebury, 2023). Children who don't feel secure at school run the danger of not attending altogether or of being on edge all day if their fundamental safety needs aren't satisfied. The open environment created by promoting school safety allows children to explore, learn, and grow. To stop the spread of infectious illnesses like COVID-19 and others, schools will need to continue placing a high priority on health and safety measures. This can entail following consistent cleaning and disinfection procedures, encouraging hand hygiene, and maintaining physical separation rules.

The experiences and insights gained during the pandemic have highlighted the critical importance of being sensitive and responsible not only for our individual health but also for the well-being of others and our community. This lesson underscores the necessity of health and safety measures to ensure survival and sustainability during the post-pandemic period. The pandemic has underscored the interconnectedness of our health and how our actions can impact others, reinforcing the need for comprehensive health protocols and a strong sense of collective responsibility in maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all.

...so it is important that during survival matter as teachers you have to ah help yourself you have to be physically fit ok ah that is the term you have to to be ahm let's say ahm careful *kung ano yung ginagawa mo...* (P3)

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2023), educators and school leaders across the country already are demonstrating that students can safely learn and thrive inside their classrooms, and that, as a nation, we can provide the support students need and deliver on the promise of an excellent and equitable education for every child. Implementing these health and

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safety measures requires a coordinated and collaborative effort between schools, families, and the wider community. By prioritizing these measures, schools can help create a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff.

Prioritizing the availability and accessibility of health and safety measures for everyone in the post-pandemic period has important implications. It underscores the crucial significance of individuals' overall well-being and physical fitness as they confront the challenges of survival and sustainability. In this post-pandemic context, personal health and safety take on a central role, contributing to the establishment of a secure and resilient environment. This approach aligns with the necessity for individuals to exercise care and mindfulness in their actions, fostering resilience and guaranteeing a sustainable future beyond the pandemic.

## Investment in technology and digital infrastructure

For the sake of quality education, student safety and well-being it's important that school administrators and parents or guardians are in dialogue about basic frameworks and guiding principles related to selecting technology (Johnson, 2022). Since the invention of the chalkboard and the overhead projector, which arrived decades later, technology in its various incarnations has been present in the classroom. Now that classroom settings may constantly be connected to the internet in our digital age, educators must choose both hardware and software. Many of these guidelines for technology and education also apply to parents who may be considering buying technology for their children's home education.

...The school provide the teachers and staff all the necessary gadgets or technologies to use in teaching... (P5)

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Castelo (2020) stressed that education stakeholders have plenty to consider as they assess technology spending amid budget constraints. For many, the developments have either brought forth new technological issues or brought attention to those that already exist, such as the digital divide and inadequate cybersecurity training. However, when schools reviewed their digital environments and planned expenditures, they encountered a new challenge: significant cuts to public education funding brought on by the state's economic downturn. To facilitate remote and blended learning, as well as to enhance communication and cooperation between students, instructors, and parents, schools may need to invest in technology and digital infrastructure.

The provision of essential gadgets and technologies for teachers and staff reflects a forward-thinking approach that aligns with the commitment to confirm educational continuity and adaptability in the face of post-pandemic challenges. By investing in technology and digital infrastructure, this strategic move not only supports effective teaching in times of crisis but also positions the institution for long-term sustainability, fostering a dynamic learning environment that can seamlessly navigate the complexities of the post-pandemic era.

...It is very important that the technology will be integrated in education since we are already in the 21st century where technology is very useful to everyone because it is what we need right now... (PI)

By integrating technology into existing curricula, as opposed to using it solely as a crisis-management tool, teachers can harness online learning as a powerful educational tool (American University, 2020). Digital learning technologies used effectively in the classroom may boost student engagement, assist teachers in creating better lesson plans, and promote individualized instruction. Additionally, it aids pupils in developing crucial 21st-century abilities. Virtual learning environments, video, augmented reality (AR), robotics, and other technological tools may not only make classes more engaging but also more inclusive learning settings that encourage

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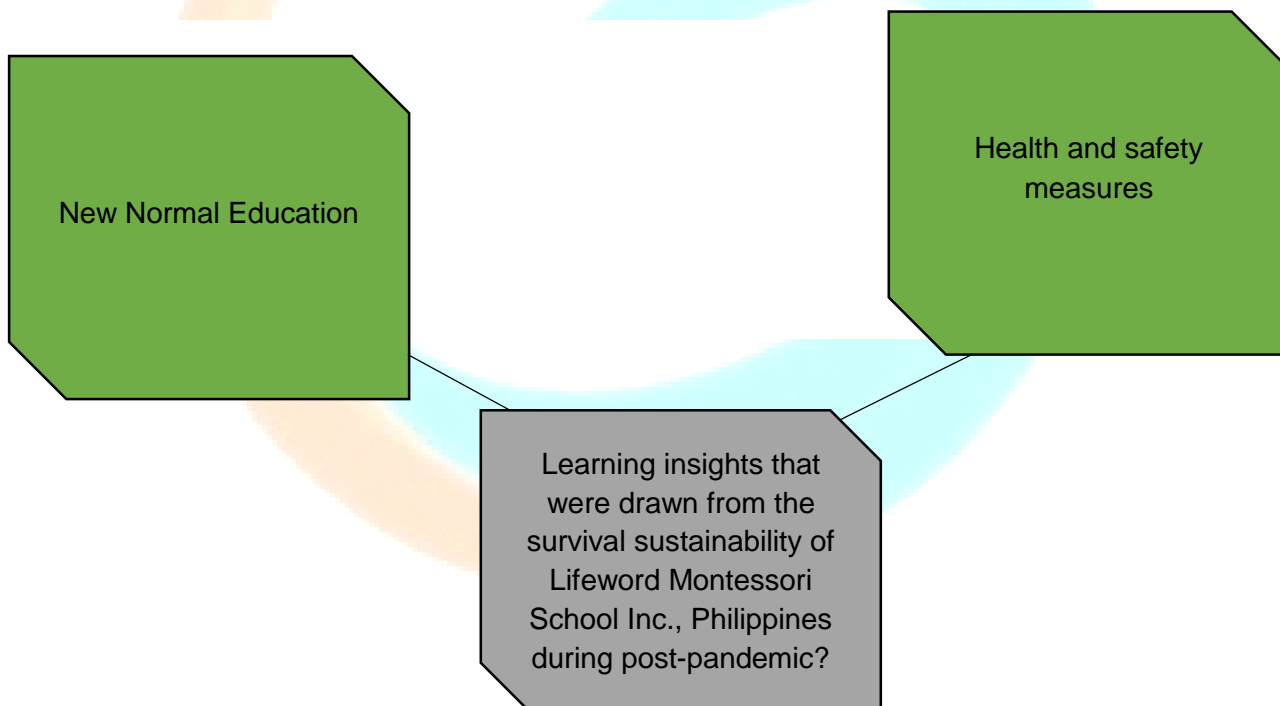
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cooperation and inquisitiveness as well as provide teachers the ability to gather statistics on student performance. However, it's crucial to remember that technology is a tool and not an aim in education. The potential of educational technology depends on how educators use it and how it may be used to best meet the needs of their pupils.

Guaranteeing the availability and accessibility of essential facilities like a clinic in the post-pandemic era underscores a proactive approach to health and safety, reflecting a readiness to adapt to evolving challenges. This preparedness extends to the broader context of embracing technology as a fundamental component of education in the 21st century, where digital resources play an indispensable role. Investing in technology and digital infrastructure aligns with the commitment to learning insights, recognizing that technology is a crucial tool for enhancing educational experiences and affirming resilience in the face of unforeseen circumstances, such as those posed by the pandemic.



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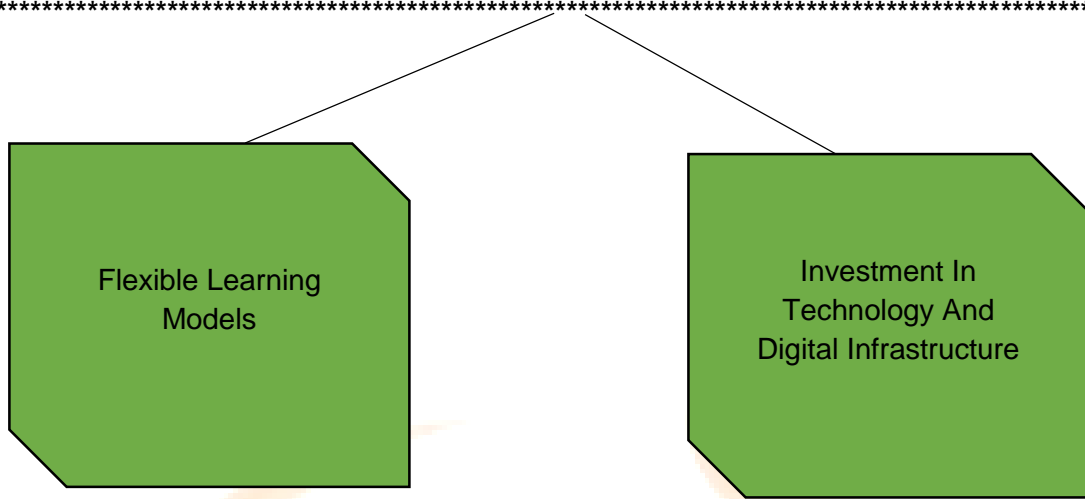
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***Figure 3. Emerging Themes on the learning insights that were drawn from the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines during post-pandemic***

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## Chapter 4

### Implications and Future Directions

Contained within this chapter is a concise outline of the research. Additionally, this section delves into potential future pathways within the domain of addressing the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School, Inc., Philippines during post-pandemic.

This study aims to clarify the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School, Inc., Philippines during post-pandemic. It specifically endeavors to uncover and describe this survival sustainability, explore strategies for addressing them, and derive educational insights from the experiences of teachers in the school.

This study is coupled with Bandura's Social Learning theory which states that children observe the people around them behaving in various ways (McLeod, 2016). As learners in society, children are surrounded by many influential models, such as parents within the family, characters on children's TV, friends within their peer group, and teachers at school. They consider these to be their models. But in the context of this study, the ones being observed are the strategies being used by other school leaders which are effective in their respective contexts and are considered as models. In learning from the experiences of others, school leaders pay attention to some of the other leaders as models and encode their systems. And later, they may copy these behaviors which may serve them better in terms of planning. Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of the investigation. There are three interrelated variables, as shown in the diagram. The survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School, Inc., Philippines during post-pandemic led to action research in qualitative inquiry, which allows researchers and teachers to be resilient, acquire fresh abilities, and information, and concentrate on participating in meaningful inquiry, and contribute to progress and growth in the field of education. Teachers must recognize the need to continue to learn new things, whether casually or in a more structured environment, and

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that they must do always so. The first circle, which connects to the second, shows that a challenge is already in place. Nonetheless, because the center of the two circles specifies the coping mechanisms, this action research is critical for improving the teaching and learning process.

Moreover, this study utilizes phenomenology, a discipline that investigates the structure of conscious experiences from a subjective viewpoint. A key element of any experience lies in its intentionality, indicating its inherent focus on an object. This object-oriented characteristic manifests through the experience's content or meaning, which represents the object in conjunction with relevant contextual elements. Phenomenology distinguishes itself while also establishing connections with fundamental areas of philosophy such as ontology, epistemology, logic, and ethics. Additionally, it revolves around the examination of consciousness structures through a first-hand perspective.

Based on the feedback of the participants, my analysis revealed three emerging themes under the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines during the post-pandemic, namely: instructional leadership, strategic planning, partnerships and collaborations. In the post-pandemic era. Instructional leadership ensures that the school maintains effective teaching and learning processes even in challenging times, contributing to the school's continued success. Strategic planning helps in adapting to changing circumstances and identifying opportunities for growth and improvement. Partnerships and collaborations with other educational institutions or stakeholders can provide additional resources and support, enhancing the school's resilience and capacity to thrive in the post-pandemic landscape. These elements collectively contribute to the school's survival and sustainability in a rapidly evolving educational environment.

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Finally, on the educational insights for the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines during the post-pandemic, there are three emerging themes which are: new normal education, flexible learning models, health and safety measures, and investments in technology and digital infrastructure. Adapting to the new normal education, characterized by a shift towards flexible learning models, has been crucial. This adjustment enables the school to remain resilient in the face of uncertainties. Prioritizing health and safety measures ensures the well-being of students and staff, which is essential for continued operation. Through the use of flexible learning, the school has not only ensured continuity in education but has also gained valuable insights into the importance of adaptability and innovation in the face of challenges. Also, investments in technology and digital infrastructure are vital for facilitating effective remote learning and maintaining educational continuity. These insights collectively underline the importance of adaptability, safety, and technological readiness for educational institutions navigating the challenges of a post-pandemic world.

### ***Implications***

During the discussion, I encountered situations that resonated with my own experiences as an experienced teacher with many years in the field. I listened to anecdotes and heartfelt accounts of the difficulties teachers face, and several common themes emerged from their remarks. As a result of the study's discoveries, the following insights and conclusions were drawn.

The survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School, Inc., Philippines during the post-pandemic period has three emerging themes: instructional leadership, strategic planning, partnerships, and collaborations. In the post-pandemic landscape, the availability of an accessible clinic at Lifeword Montessori School, Inc. in the Philippines stands as a critical pillar for the institution's long-term viability. Beyond safeguarding the health of students and teachers, it

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ensures swift responses to health-related issues, compliance with regulatory standards, and fosters trust among parents, ultimately bolstering enrollment figures and uninterrupted education. This commitment not only empowers instructional leaders by providing a secure learning environment but also strengthens collaboration and trust within the school community, enhancing overall resilience. Incorporating health measures into strategic planning safeguards the school's reputation, ensures compliance, and nurtures lifelong well-being habits among students. This holistic approach positions the school for sustainability by fostering a health-conscious generation capable of navigating post-pandemic challenges effectively and attracting potential partnerships, thereby strengthening its resilience in the ever-evolving landscape.

The learning insights for the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines during post-pandemic have four emerging themes namely: new normal education, flexible learning models, health and safety measures, and investments in technology and digital infrastructure. Amid the new normal education, the comprehensive commitment to accessible healthcare, the incorporation of flexible learning approaches, the elevated focus on health and safety precautions, and substantial investments in technology and digital infrastructure collectively constitute a well-rounded response to the challenges stemming from the pandemic and the evolving educational landscape. This strategy acknowledges the interconnectedness of health, adaptability, and technology, ensuring the resilience and long-term strength of educational institutions. It addresses immediate health concerns, enables uninterrupted education through adaptable methods, and positions schools for success in a digital age. It underscores these components' vital role in creating a secure, effective learning environment suited to the "new normal" in education.

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## ***Future Directions***

The experience at Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines during the post-pandemic period involved a blend of enthusiasm for acquiring new skills and coping with heightened work demands. The presence of a supportive network and a positive outlook towards the post-pandemic landscape, coupled with resilience in the face of challenges, are factors that may impact the survival and sustainability of the school. These findings provide valuable insights that can inform strategies and actions for ensuring the continued success of Lifeword Montessori School, Inc. in the post-pandemic era.

*The DepEd Officials.* may support the Lifeword Montessori School, Inc. in the post-pandemic era by embracing innovative teaching methods, providing ongoing professional development, ensuring reliable digital infrastructure, implementing health and safety protocols, engaging in strategic planning, fostering partnerships and collaborations, involving the school community, managing finances wisely, integrating technology thoughtfully, monitoring progress, offering flexible learning options, promoting resilience, and maintaining transparent communication. These multifaceted efforts will help educational institutions adapt to changing circumstances, deliver quality education, and thrive in the new educational landscape.

*The Teachers.* They should actively seek leadership roles within the school, offer mentorship, and provide input to the school's strategic planning process. Teachers can also build professional networks, advocate for needed resources, and embrace data-driven decision-making. Additionally, they should be open to change and innovation while developing strong communication skills. By taking these steps, teachers can play a pivotal role in enhancing the educational experience and the overall success of their school.

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*The Learners.* They can actively contribute to their school's success by participating actively in class, providing feedback on their experiences, taking responsibility for their learning, collaborating with peers, and engaging in open communication with educators and administrators. Encouraging community involvement, offering leadership opportunities, exploring innovative solutions, and advocating for positive changes can further enhance the school's strategic planning efforts and partnerships with external organizations. Fostering a respectful and supportive learning environment is essential to creating a positive school culture and ensuring the learners' active role in achieving instructional leadership and overall success.

*Future Researchers.* Future research on the survival sustainability of Lifeword Montessori School Inc., Philippines, post-pandemic, can focus on several key areas. This research can evaluate the school's pandemic response, compare its strategies with others, understand stakeholder perspectives, assess ongoing technology and health measures, analyze pedagogical innovations, explore community engagement, identify resilience strategies, study parental involvement, and examine policies and governance. Investigating these areas can provide valuable insights into how schools succeed in the post-pandemic education landscape, benefiting institutions worldwide.

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