



EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITIES' EXPERIENCES ON CARES (COLLABORATION, ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBLE ENGAGEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS) PROGRAM: BASES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive-qualitative study aimed to determine the experiences of educational communities regarding CARES (Collaboration, Active Participation, and Responsible Engagement of Stakeholders) for a sustainable school program at Barasan Primary School during the school year 2023-2024. Based on the results of in-depth interviews with the participants, it was found out that the experiences of the members of the educational community regarding the implementation of CARES included full support from the parents, active participation, teamwork among stakeholders, and a realization of the importance of the program. The good practices associated with CARES involved coming together, providing empowerment, offering support to school learners, and encouraging involvement in school activities. Effective implementation of the CARES program was achieved through encouragement, active participation and taking initiative. The successful execution of the program was characterized by positive relationships, strong leadership, and a sense of ownership among the participants.

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Keywords: *Educational Community, Collaboration, Active Participation and Responsible Engagement of Stakeholders (CARES), Sustainability*

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education acknowledged that stakeholders had a significant influence on how learners learned. The department collaborated with stakeholders to offer learners a high-quality, easily accessible education tailored to their individual needs and skills. Mutual respect, trust, and cooperation were the cornerstones of this partnership, wherein all parties collaborated to establish a welcoming and inclusive learning environment.

CARES was a program that stood for Collaboration, Active Participation, and Responsible Engagement of stakeholders in the community of Barasan, which served as the foundation for a sustainable school program. It emphasized the importance of collaboration among stakeholders, including teachers, parents, administrators, and community members. This meant working together to identify goals, develop strategies, and implement programs that benefited the school and its community. By collaborating, stakeholders shared their expertise, resources, and perspectives to create a more effective and efficient school program.

Active participation was crucial in Barasan Primary School CARES Program, as it encouraged stakeholders to take an active role in shaping the school program. This included participating in decision-making processes, attending meetings and events, and contributing to the development of policies and programs. Through active participation, stakeholders developed a deeper sense of ownership and commitment to the school program, fostering a

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ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume VI, Issue III

February 2025

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sense of community and shared responsibility for its success. Responsible participation was important to BPS (Barasan Primary School) CARES Program because it allowed stakeholders to support the program's aims and objectives, which ultimately propelled its success. This entailed taking responsibility for one's choices and actions, communicating openly, and showing consideration for the opinions of others. Stakeholders increased credibility and trust in the school community by acting appropriately. Building a long-lasting school program that benefited the whole school community was the ultimate purpose of Barasanon CARES.

Stakeholders were also essential to enhancing educational institutions and advancing learners' development. Through interacting with stakeholders, schools established a constructive and encouraging learning environment that was advantageous to all parties.

When stakeholders collaborated, they created a collaborative and supportive environment that fostered a positive and productive school culture. This led to increased learner success, as learners felt more engaged, motivated, and supported in their learning. When teachers, parents, and community members worked together, they identified and addressed potential challenges and obstacles, providing learners with a more comprehensive and well-rounded education. This collaborative environment promoted teacher satisfaction, as educators felt valued and respected for their expertise and contributions. When teachers were happy and fulfilled, they were more likely to be motivated to teach and inspire their learners, leading to better learner outcomes.

A collaborative and supportive environment also promoted overall school sustainability. When stakeholders worked together, they shared resources, expertise, and responsibilities,

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reducing the burden on individual staff members. This helped to prevent burnout and reduce turnover rates, allowing the school to retain its most valuable assets—its teachers and staff. It also fostered innovation and creativity, as stakeholders shared ideas and best practices. This led to new initiatives and programs that benefited the school and its learners, such as mentorship programs, community partnerships, or extracurricular activities. By working together, stakeholders created a vibrant and thriving school community that was well-equipped to meet the needs of its learners and staff for years to come.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter presented the research method, research design, participants of the study and data-gathering procedures.

Research Method

The research method utilized in this study was the descriptive method under qualitative research, employing in-depth interviews. The descriptive method of research was a systematic approach used to observe and document various variables and conditions affecting a particular phenomenon without manipulating those variables. Its primary goal was to provide a detailed account of the characteristics, trends, and correlations within a specific population or situation (Singh, 2023).

During the interviews, the interviewer and interviewee were allowed to sit at a distance while considering a series of questions regarding a certain problem. The goal was to elicit the

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major or necessary perspectives of participants on a certain subject in a social environment through their responses to the questions.

Research Design

The study utilized a phenomenological research design. Phenomenology was considered a philosophical approach to undertaking qualitative research. The goal of phenomenology was to understand how others viewed the world and how this view might have varied from commonly held beliefs by focusing on a person’s subjective interpretations of their experiences. Phenomenology was conducted by interviewing the subjects to learn their impressions and was frequently used in fields such as psychology, sociology, and social work.

Phenomenology focused on the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from a first-person perspective. The central aim of phenomenology was to investigate and describe phenomena as they were consciously experienced, without resorting to theories about their causal explanations or being influenced by unexamined preconceptions (Biemel & Spiegelberg, 2024)

Sampling Design

A purposive sampling design was used in the study. According to Berg and Lune (2021), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique commonly employed in qualitative research. This method involved intentionally selecting participants based on specific characteristics, knowledge, experiences, or other criteria relevant to the research objectives.

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The goal was to gather information-rich cases that could provide deeper insights into the phenomenon being studied.

Research Instrument

The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made interview schedule. The interview schedule contained four (4) major questions that focused on the experiences of members of the educational community regarding the implementation of the CARES program. These questions addressed the good practices of CARES as experienced by the members, how the members implemented these good practices within the school, and the factors that contributed to the effective implementation of the CARES program.

Voice and video recorders were also used for data gathering and documentation, depending on the permission of the participants.

Validity of the Research Instrument

Prior to determining the validity of the interview schedule created by the researcher, the adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School, and a panel of jurors, all recognized for their expertise in the fields of research, testing and assessment and an English critic, were requested to validate each question for review and modification. Validity referred to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, correctness, and usefulness of the inferences made by the researcher. In the context of content-related evidence of validity, it was essential that the content and format of the measurement tool were consistent with the definitions of the variables and the sample of subjects to be measured. This consistency was crucial for

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validating the items in the questionnaire, ensuring that the instrument accurately assessed the intended constructs (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

Comments, corrections, and suggestions from the panel of validators regarding the interview schedule were considered using the appropriate form from Good and Scates (Appendix A).

Data Gathering Procedures

Permits from the adviser, Dean of the Graduate School, Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, Office of the District Supervisors, School Heads, and individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools/community/place convenient on the part of the participants to conduct the interview.

The researcher conducted an interview to the participants but prior to this, the researcher encouraged the participants with their parents to sign a waiver or permission relative to the conduct of the study.

Using in-depth interview, a voice and video recorder were also provided to completely capture the interviewee's words. The researcher consolidated all collected data after series of interviews.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2023).

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This approach served as a flexible qualitative analytic method, enabling the researcher to discern and report patterns within the qualitative data gathered during the interviews.

To analyze the data, the researcher transcribed the respondents' answers from the recorded interviews. This transcription process allowed for a thorough examination of the participants' responses, facilitating the identification of key features and significant patterns within the data. The researcher then organized this information into preliminary codes, which were systematically applied across the dataset. By examining these codes, the researcher identified potential themes that encapsulated the essence of the respondents' experiences and perspectives.

Finally, the researcher refined and reviewed the themes, ensuring that they accurately represented the data and maintained coherence. Clear definitions and names were assigned to each theme, providing a structured framework that highlighted the insights derived from the participants' responses. The analysis culminated in the production of a comprehensive report that integrated the thematic findings with relevant data extracts, effectively presenting the researcher's conclusions and interpretations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study determined the educational communities' experiences on CARES (Collaboration, Active participation, and Responsible Engagement of Stakeholders) as bases for sustainable school programs of Barasan Primary School during the school year 2023-

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2024. The research method used in this study was qualitative method using in-depth interview and the research design was phenomenology.

The total number of participants in this study was 22: 10 parents, 10 community members, and 2 teachers from Barasan Primary School during the school year 2024-2025. A researcher-made interview schedule was used as the instrument to gather data. Voice and video recorders were also used for data gathering and documentation, depending on the permission of the participants.

The questionnaire underwent content validation by a panel of experts. The criteria for content validation by Fraenkel and Wallen (2021) were used to determine the validity of the questions in the interview schedule. The researcher considered all comments and suggestions concerning the validation of the tool. After the questionnaire was found to be valid, permits were prepared to allow the researcher to start conducting in-depth interviews.

Permits from the adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, the School Head, and individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally visited the community or location that was convenient for the participants to conduct the interviews.

The researcher consolidated all collected data after a series of interviews. The information was gathered, analyzed, and interpreted using a thematic approach.

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

The experiences of the educational community members revealed that there was full support from parents, active participation, and teamwork among stakeholders. These factors

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were crucial for the successful implementation of the CARES program, which hinged on collaboration, support, and a shared understanding of its importance among all members of the educational community. These insights underscored the need for ongoing communication and partnership to ensure that the program met its objectives and positively influenced the educational experiences of learners.

The good practices of the CARES program involved bringing people together, providing empowerment, supporting school children, and encouraging involvement in school activities. These practices created a robust framework for fostering a positive educational environment. They not only enhanced learner experiences but also strengthened the community, ultimately contributing to better educational outcomes.

The effective implementation factors of the CARES program included encouragement, active participation from everyone, and the willingness to take initiative. These factors established a dynamic and supportive educational environment. By fostering such an environment, these practices not only enhanced the program's effectiveness but also strengthened bonds within the community, ultimately leading to better outcomes for learners and a more cohesive school culture.

The contributing factors to the effective implementation of the CARES program included positive relationships, strong leadership, and a sense of ownership of the program. These factors significantly influenced the establishment of a supportive and collaborative environment. This environment not only enhanced the program's impact but also fostered a vibrant educational community dedicated to the success of its learners.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the findings and insights derived from this study, the following recommendations were put forward:

The CARES program needed to sustain its collaborative efforts, support systems, and shared understanding among all members of the educational community. This, in turn, would help ensure that the program effectively met its objectives and positively influenced learners' educational experiences.

The CARES program could further strengthen its good practices, creating an even more robust framework for fostering a positive educational environment. This would ultimately enhance learners' experiences, strengthen community ties, and contribute to better educational outcomes for all involved.

By fostering a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration, the CARES program could enhance its effectiveness, strengthen community ties, and ultimately lead to a better educational outcome for learners. This approach not only supported the program's goals but also cultivated a more cohesive and engaged school culture.

By establishing a Community Engagement Framework, the CARES program could enhance its impact, foster a vibrant educational community and ultimately contribute to the success of its learners. This approach not only strengthened the program's implementation but also cultivated a collaborative environment that benefited all stakeholders involved.

A copy of the proposed sustainability program was to be shared with the Schools Division Office, District Office, and other school heads for their information and guidance, and

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ISSN: 2704-3010

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if necessary, implement in their respective schools to better improve the implementation of their own initiatives.

A similar study was also encouraged to be conducted in the future, considering other variables not used or mentioned in this study, and if possible, conducting quantitative research in line with the level of implementation of the program, acceptance, and the effect of the program on learners' achievement.



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