# EXPLORING THE OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT OF DIOCESAN PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN BATAAN: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

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## ABSTRACT

*This study investigates the experiences, challenges, and strategies of school principals in managing Diocesan Private Schools in Bataan. Utilizing a qualitative multiple case study design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with eight school heads, allowing for an in-depth exploration of their perspectives. The findings reveal significant issues faced by these principals, including financial instability, parental involvement, teacher turnover, and the absence of succession planning. The study concludes with targeted recommendations aimed at enhancing leadership competencies among school principals and implementing structured succession planning processes. These recommendations are intended to improve overall school management and ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of Diocesan Private Schools in the region.*

**Keyword:** *Challenges, Leadership competencies, Parental involvement, Succession planning, Teacher turnover*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

As educational institutions navigate an increasingly challenging landscape, the role of school principals becomes paramount in ensuring operational efficiency and fostering a positive learning environment. Previous studies have highlighted various challenges faced by school leaders, including financial constraints, stakeholder engagement, and teacher retention. Despite the existing literature, there remains a notable gap in understanding the unique experiences of school principals within Diocesan Private Schools, particularly in Bataan. Thus, this study aims to explore the experiences of school principals, focusing on the challenges they face in operations and management which are considered complexities of school management and the need for effective leadership are critical.

School heads, being given multifarious responsibilities, should strictly abide by legal bases [RA No. 9155] [DO No. 88, s.2010] known as the Revised Manual of Operations for Private Schools in Basic Education which serves as a basis for the operations and management and all other provisions and regulations of Private Schools in Basic Education. Also, the qualifications, functions and powers of school principal are also specified in Sections 55-57 of the said order, which assure that they will strictly adhere to the policies stated. To further strengthen provisions and guidelines on implementing Guidelines of the Revised SBM Framework, Assessment Process and Tool was formulated. Stated in this DepEd order are the four (4) principles as the basis of their relative importance to the aim of school-improved learning outcomes and school operations: Leadership and Governance; Curriculum and Learning; Accountability and Continuous Improvement; and Management of Resources. The underlying concepts, guiding principles and the operational framework for both public and private schools were stipulated in the DepEd order which also serves as a bedrock in managing and leading private schools in basic education [DO No. 83, s.2012].

In Schools Division of Bataan (SDO), from eighty-nine Private Schools operating from Kindergarten to Senior High School, eight are considered as Parochial Schools or Diocesan Private Schools. Diocesan Private

Schools of Bataan maintain its distinctiveness from other schools for how many decades. Acidre [2019] said that private schools have a more pronounced space for innovation, creativity, flexibility, and cultural or ideological specialization—including religious education. Despite the distinctiveness, Diocesan Private Schools go through the same dilemmas of other private schools. Given that the complementary roles of public and private schools are provided for by Article XIV, Section 4 of the Constitution, the opposite appears to happen, much to the detriment of our private schools. It is said that educational policies, especially the allocation of resources, seem to favor government school with limited opportunity available for private schools to cope with the demands of the revised curriculum and other learning requirements. In fact, in 2019, Education Secretary Leonor Briones, mentioned that more than 1,000 private schools had already closed down due to dwindling resources and decreasing enrollment.

Further, Estrada [2017] said that even the private and religious schools share in the responsibility of government to deliver education, it should be able to thrive and maintain its distinctiveness, as non-government schools. However, over the past few decades, the private schools have been fighting against legislative measures and administrative issuance that make them look like public schools. Due to the need of a strict compliance with the law and DepEd orders, private schools do not gain a large chunk of freedom because DepEd still restricts some of their actions and there is a need to comply with the policies.

Hence, it is on this principle, conducting this type of study on the issues and challenges as regards to school operations and management that private schools heads are facing such as insufficient resources, poor succession planning, lower teachers' salary compared to public schools, turn-over of teachers, lack of screening of students' admission because of their need to accept all students to increase numbers of enrollees, low attrition rate, and the competition with public schools, to immediately address and be given preventive measures before things get worse.

## 1.1 Challenges in Leading Private Schools

According to e-Skool [2012], Challenges facing private schools make it extremely difficult to keep them thriving and competitive. The 5 greatest challenges facing private school administrators: Competition, Parental Engagement, Communication, Pitfalls of Technology, and Inefficiencies. *Competition* is beneficial to a school and to students in ensuring that all schools strive to improve student outcomes, advance technology, and maintain facilities. However, it can make an administrator's job even more stressful and demanding as they try to maintain a competitive edge. "Every private school is looking for a competitive edge so they can attract the top tier of kids". *Parental Engagement.* The parents of private school students tend to be extremely committed to having a say in their child's education. 36% of teachers say they often come across parents who need 'constant reassurance'. Interacting with faculty, students, the community, policymakers, and parents can be stressful and demanding for administrators. *Communication.* The majority of contact parents have with schools takes place in a rush at the end of the school day. Parents were asked what type of communication they needed to feel more in touch and involved with the school and their child's learning process. *Pitfalls of technology.* Rampant viruses, malware, human error, and other technology issues are prevalent in schools where data may be permanently lost, incurring high costs. *Inefficiencies.* The lack of effective continued training makes it difficult for teachers to find a place for integrative technology in their classrooms. Office staff continue to be burdened with paper-work and retyping data. Teachers complain they do not have the support personnel or training they need to take advantage of current technologies. Investments in technology don't promise the returns and benefits expected.

It was supported by Silva [2018] when he quipped that Academia is an always changing industry, just like technology. Today, institutions are doing their best to stay on the cutting edge when it comes to technology and forms of education their students. Administrators face new and foreign challenges daily because everything is changing so rapidly and adapting to our new society. This now becomes a deterrent and does not allow the administrators to focus on what is important: the student's educational lives.

In an article written by Malipot (2018) entitled "Private School encounters problems due to shortage of licensed tutors," Earlier, a group of private schools expressed concern on the recent directive issued by the DepEd National Capital Region (NCR) reminding them on "minimum qualification of teaching personnel." The Federation of Associations of Private Schools & Administrators (FAPSA) said that this will "lead to the closure" of many private schools because they will lose teachers. While hiring teachers without license is a violation of the guidelines mandated by the Department of Education (DepEd), private schools were assured that they will not be closed down without going through the proper channels. Due process is still required before DepEd can close the school," Education lawyer Joseph Noel Estrada told the Manila Bulletin. "Definitely, they cannot close within the school year because students will be affected and displaced," he added. It is further noted that private schools have the right to exhaust administrative remedies all the way up to the Secretary's office, he explained, pertaining to the office of Education Secretary Leonor Briones. If it becomes very urgent the schools can ask the courts of law to intervene.

## 1.2 School Management

According to Brooks, J., and Sutherland, I [2013] in their article entitled "School Leadership in the Philippines: Historical, Cultural, and Policy Dynamics" they pointed out that the development and practice of school leadership in the Philippines is influenced by a rich history that has helped to shape policy and education in a diverse cultural landscape. The role of school leaders in the Philippines is further framed by kinship dynamics, which have been consistently integral to the Filipino concept of self and to the way individuals interact with others. Kinship is the nucleus of the Filipino social organization, from indigenous groups to colonial aristocratic ethnic and social groups. The Filipino concept of leadership is derived from a value set that rests on both biological and ritual forms of kinship, which in turn drives leadership practice in communities and schools.

Change is a natural phenomenon that should be monitored in order to be able to cope with it and know how to manage it, without forgetting that people in the institution are going to accept or refuse the change, and that mostly their behavior will be affected by the culture they are living in and the way they think and believe. Smith and Wild [2001] said that in the 21st century, productivity demands on educational management will increase, and in reacting to the productivity imperative, schools and educational management will have to improve their organization's primary function and processes of teaching and learning.

Statement is emphasized: The State shall establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people, the country and society-at-large . Likewise, it is hereby declared the policy of the State that every graduate of basic education shall be an empowered individual who has learned, through a program that is rooted on sound educational principles and geared towards excellence, the foundations for learning throughout life, the competence to engage in work and be productive, the ability to coexist in fruitful harmony with local and global communities, the capability to engage in autonomous, creative, and critical thinking, and the capacity and willingness to transform others and one's self [Republic Act 10533].

For this purpose, the State shall create a functional basic education system that will develop productive and responsible citizens equipped with the essential competencies, skills and values for both life-long learning and employment. In order to achieve this, the State shall: (a) Give every student an opportunity to receive quality education that is globally competitive based on a pedagogically sound curriculum that is at par with international standards; (b) Broaden the goals of high school education for college preparation, vocational and technical career opportunities as well as creative arts, sports and entrepreneurial employment in a rapidly changing and increasingly globalized environment; and (c) Make education learner-oriented and responsive to the needs, cognitive and cultural capacity, the circumstances and diversity of learners, schools and communities through the appropriate languages of teaching and learning, including mother tongue as a learning resource.

## 1.3 School Culture

According to Hinde [2014], culture is influenced by staff interactions, and staff activities are guided by a culture that is a cycle of self-repetition. School culture is an all-encompassing component of schools but it is hard to discover and hard to describe. It includes the basic assumptions, beliefs and practices shared by a school community's members which shape how a school view itself and its environment and shapes its activities and how it works. It reflects the shared ideas, assumptions, values, and beliefs that give an organization its identity and standard for expected behaviors. School culture is embedded and also based on previous experience that offers a model for future action based on how organization views stuff as if they were accomplished.

As stated by Shafer [2018] in her article entitled "What Makes a Good School Culture" she said that most principals have an instinctive awareness that organizational culture is a key element of school success. They might say their school has a "good culture" when teachers are expressing a shared vision and students are succeeding — or that they need to "work on school culture" when several teachers resign or student discipline rates rise. But like many organizational leaders, principals may get stymied when they actually try to describe the elements that create a positive culture. It's tricky to define, and parsing its components can be challenging. Amid the push for tangible outcomes like higher test scores and graduation rates, it can be tempting to think that school culture is just too vague or "soft" to prioritize.

A culture will be strong or weak depending on the interactions between the people in the organization. Beliefs, values, and actions will spread the farthest and be tightly reinforced when everyone is communicating with everyone else. In a strong school culture, leaders communicate directly with teachers, administrators, counselors, and families, who also all communicate directly with each other. A culture is weaker when communications are

limited and there are fewer connections. In addition, Valentine [2016] suggested that school culture should be thoroughly examined as it was an essential factor in improving schools, but it must be understood that it was complex and complicated to shape a school culture.

Further, the establishment of a private school shall be subject to prior approval of the Department thru its Regional Director having jurisdiction over the place where the school or branch shall be established and shall be pursuant to law and to 2010 Revised Manual of Regulations for Private Schools in Basic Education. With regard to the issue on Tuition Fees as stipulated to Republic Act 6139, any private educational institution proposing to increase the tuition and/or other fees being charged and/or collected by it for any course shall adopt the following procedure: (a) At least 180 days before the school year, semester, or term in which the increase is to be effective, it shall serve written notice thereof on the student council or government, or in case of schools or courses below the college or university level, on the Association of Parents, or in default thereof, the Parents-Teachers Association of the school concerned.

In a dissertation conducted by Najjar [2008], entitled "Effectiveness of Management in Private Schools in Lebanon," where it tackled the following aspects: the structure of the schools, decision-making, financial resources, relations at schools (administration-teachers, teachers-students), the culture, parents and their relation to the school, and private- public ideology. It was found that there were some major differences between the private and public schools which did not just relate to their student intake or resources. This related to the external control of the school and the internal authority patterns and relationships. Teacher security was linked to their job performance and sense of belonging to the school. In the private schools, greater freedom in decision-making by both the principal and staff meant a more efficient operation; greater accountability to parents meant a more conducive and less punitive culture for learning.

In a study completed by Magulod [2016], "Factors of School Effectiveness and Performance of Selected Public and Private Elementary Schools: Implications on Educational Planning in the Philippines," a mixed-method research found out that school effectiveness was measured using the seven correlates of effective schools. On the other hand, the level of school performance was gauged through the National Achievement Test (NAT) results for the past three years. The qualitative findings revealed that the level of school effectiveness of both private and public elementary schools was excellent. However, test of difference showed that public schools exhibited stronger home-school relations than the private schools. In terms of the level of school performance, public schools perform better than the private schools for the past three years. Significantly, there exists a strong positive relationship between school effectiveness and school performance. The factorial analysis revealed that among all the correlates of school effectiveness, school leadership competency and professional collaboration influenced the performance of both schools.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design utilizing a multiple case study approach to explore the phenomena that is specifically focusing on inquiry about relative meaningful experiences, issues, challenges, and the coping mechanism in addressing these issues and challenges on the school operations and management of Diocesan Private Schools in Bataan. The goal is to replicate findings across cases. Because comparisons will be drawn, it is imperative that the cases are chosen carefully so that the researcher can predict similar results across cases, or predict contrasting results based on a theory [Yin, 2013]. The fitted strategy applied in this study is Replication Strategy. The replication strategy allows the researcher to identify possible patterns in the data and explore them by returning to the field for more data. Careful application of these techniques ensures that explanations for the phenomena developed from the data are verified during the course of the research process. The process of data collection, analysis, comparison, and revision during the entire study is referred to as the "constant-comparative" method [Strauss & Corbin, 1998 2016].

### 2.1 Research Design

The qualitative multiple case study design allows for a comprehensive exploration of the individual experiences of school principals. For this specific study, the preliminary theory was described by some identified themes and patterns evidently seen from the first case- Saint John's Academy, Inc. for among the eight (8) Diocesan Private Schools in Bataan it was one of the established Catholic and Private Schools in Bataan since 1960 and having it compared to the second case- Saint Catherine of Sienna Academy, Inc, next to the third case- Holy Rosary Parochial Institute, followed by the fourth case- Saint Michael the Archangel Academy, next case was the St. Nicholas, the sixth case was the Our Lady of the Pillar, the seventh case- Saint Peter of Verona Academy for the

Literal Replication Stage. Moreover, since this is a Multiple Case Study the results of the first comparison were protracted to the eight and last case study to do the Theoretical Replication Stage. In this particular stage, Blessed Regina Prothman Academy was selected for among the eight (8) Diocesan Private Schools it was only established in 2007 to explore, confirm, or disapprove the patters identified in the initial cases in the stage of literal replication. Introduction related your research work Introduction related your research work Introduction related your research work Introduction related your research work Introduction related your research work Introduction related your research work Introduction related your research work.

## 2.2 Research Participants

The participants in this study consisted of eight school principals from various Diocesan Private Schools in Bataan, selected based on their roles and experience. Maximum variation (heterogeneity) sampling, as discussed by Patton [2002] was used in this study to document variations that have emerged in adapting to different conditions and is the preferred sampling mode for constructivist inquiry. The researcher purposefully selected school principals from Diocesan Private School operating in Bataan so as to include a diverse set of organizational contexts. The sample was purposefully built up in a serial manner by using the criteria of including eight (8) school principals only in a Diocesan Private Schools who would be information rich for the study which was supported by Zikmund [2000] (2000) who suggested that a target population consist of a specific or complete grouping of people who are relevant to a research project and serve a specific purpose. The researcher excluded the school consultants and or advisers for they were not involved in the daily operations and management of the schools.

The eight (8) Diocesan Private Schools given its government recognition by the Department of Education that has been subjected in this qualitative study as cases that were explored and investigated namely; Blessed Regina Prottman Catholic School, Inc. (BRPCS) in Mariveles, Holy Rosary Parochial Institute of Orani, Inc. (HRPIO) in Orani, Our Lady of the Pillar Parochial School, Inc. (OLPPS) in Morong, Saint John's Academy Inc. (SJAI) in Dinalupihan, St. Michael the Archangel Academy, Inc. (SMAA) in Orion, St. Peter of Verona Academy (SPVA) in Hermosa, Saint Catherine of Sienna Academy of Samal, Inc. (SCSA) in Samal, and St. Nicholas Catholic School of Mariveles, Inc. (SNCSM) in Mariveles. Excluded in the study are the Private Schools in the Schools Division Office of Bataan which were given government permit to operate and government recognition by the Department of Education but not manned and operationalized by the Diocese of Balanga, Bataan.

## 2.3 Data Gathering Procedure

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis. Three principles of data collection for case studies were done: use multiple sources of data, create a case study database, and maintain a chain of evidence, considering the essential parts of a data-gathering plan- definition of the case, list of research questions, identification of helpers, data sources, allocation of time, expenses, and intended reporting. A stepwise procedure for the development of valid and reliable procedures for measurement (data collection) was also followed: formulate a precise definition of the concept; determine the object of measurement; identify the location of the object of measurement; specify how evidence of the value of the variable will be extracted from the object of measurement; specify how sources of evidence will be identified, selected, and accessed; specify how evidence will be recorded; specify how data will be categorized; and lastly write a measurement protocol.

The data collected in Multiple Case Study contained texts and words. Data were collected through semi-structured online teleconferencing interviews, and some were interviewed through telephone calls for further clarifications with 8 study participants using open-ended questions until data reached saturation. The semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were designed to obtain the views and opinions of the study participants pertaining to school operations and management of Diocesan Private Schools in Bataan. These interviews provided a complex and holistic picture, painted by the study participants in their own words, seen through their own eyes and experienced by their own feelings and was scheduled for minimum of 30 minutes and maximum of 90 minutes till the saturation points exceeded where the conversation becomes repetitive. Prior to gathering of experiences, an informed consent was obtained from the select study participants. Rapports was established and a permission to use documentation materials like audio recorder, video recorder or mobile device were facilitated. Study participants were informed about the aim of the study, the voluntary and confidential nature of their participation, as well as the potential benefits of the study.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study explored the experiences, challenges, and strategies faced by school principals in managing Diocesan Private Schools in Bataan, revealing several key findings:

### 3.1 Part I: Profile of the Participants / Key Informants

The profile of the study participants was described in terms of their designated school, years of school establishment, age, gender, length of service as principals, length of service as teachers, and educational attainment. Eight (8) school principals who are working at Diocesan Schools of Bataan, were interviewed from March 18, 2020 to March 31, 2020 through teleconferencing due to the threat of pandemic COVID-19 from which 60 to 90 minutes is consumed per interview of each study participant depending upon the answers if the participants became repetitive that indicates that the researcher needs to stop asking questions. Study Participants were provided a copy of the study protocol, informed consent, demographic data form and study interview guide questionnaire.

**Table -1**: Table of Study Participants/Key Informants

| Participant | DSOB | Years Established | Age | Sex | Length of Service as Principal | Length of Service as Teacher | Educational Attainment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | SJAI | 60 | 55 | F | 18 yrs. | 14 yrs. | BSE major in English; Master of Arts in English Language and Literature-; Master of Management in Educational Management; Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership; Management (PhDELM) |
| 2 | SCSA | 60 | 30 | M | 10 mos. | 9 yrs. | Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Certificate in Teaching Program; MAEd Gen Sci (finished academic requirements only); MA in Curriculum Development, Design, & Supervision (ongoing) |
| 3 | HRPI | 57 | 37 | F | 10 mos. | 15 yrs. | Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Mathematics; Master of Arts in Education Major in Mathematics |
| 4 | SMAA | 38 | 40 | F | 5 yrs. | 12 yrs. | Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in General Science; Master of Arts in Education Major in Educational Management |
| 5 | SNM | 36 | 34 | M | 10 yrs. | 3 yrs. | Bachelor in Business Teacher Education; MAED-Major inEducational Management (42 Units); MAED-Curriculum Development and Design Supervision (on-going) |
| 6 | OLP | 28 | 48 | F | 4 yrs. | 9 yrs. | Bachelor of Science in Nursing; MSN with Behavioral and Psychiatric Mental Health (academic requirements only); Certificate in Teaching Program; MA in Curriculum Development, Design and Supervision (on going) |
| 7 | SPVA | 22 | 45 | M | 8 yrs. | 14 yrs. | College: Bataan State College; Masters: De La Salle University; Doctorate Degree: St. Joseph's College of Quezon City (Undergraduate) |
| 8 | BRPA | 13 | 31 | M | 2 yrs. | 7 yrs. | MAEd Major in Educational Administration (candidate) |

### 3.2 Part II: Relative Experiences on Schools Operations and Management of the Study Participants

The relative experiences conveyed the school heads' personal encounters of circumstances they experienced with regard to school operations and management of Diocesan Schools of Bataan. These comprised the three organizing themes namely "Wave of Challenges Brought by Paradigm Shift," "Combat Against Asperities," and "Lessons Learned through a School Head's Journey."

**3.2.1 Wave of Challenges Brought by Paradigm Shift**

The organizing theme "Wave of Challenges Brought by Paradigm Shift" refers to the encounters of the study participants since they became school heads of DSOB. This also uncovers how the participants are adjusting while they are in their transition phase from being a teacher to becoming a school principal. This organizing theme supports Burns' Transformational Leadership Theory as highlighted by Achary in [2012], introduced the concept of transforming leadership in his descriptive research on political leaders, but this term is now used in organizational psychology as well. According to Burns, transforming leadership is a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation". These comprised the following basic themes "Surviving the Transition Phase" and "Resisting the Difficulties and Rigors."

**Surviving the Transition Phase.** Given the fact that beginning is always the hardest, all the study participants struggled during the initial years of their designation as school principals of DSOB. They all started with being clueless of what to do and what to comply in order to perform their duties as school heads. The participants shared different stories about their experiences but have the same description which is "challenging." It was not an easy experience. Based on the responses, there is no clear succession planning in DSOB that is why all of them were handpicked through their credentials and recommendations from other stakeholders.

**Resisting the Difficulties and Rigors**. School heads have their own ways of resisting the hardships encountered in their paradigm shift. They all shared the actions to surpass the difficulties and rigors that they are experiencing throughout their journey. They shared a glimpse of their usual encounters with regards to their duties and responsibilities as school heads. It is described that all of them struggled at first because they are not familiar with the duties of being a school principal. There are also adjustments with their roles because all of them came from the nature of classroom setting, then suddenly shifted into school operations and management. They went through pressure to meet the expectations of their co-teachers who became their subordinates and other stakeholders just to prove through their actions that they are qualified to the position given to them

## 3.2.2 Combat Against Asperities

It is a natural coping mechanism for leaders to think of ways on how they will survive the pressure and stress brought by their responsibilities. All of the study participants struggled at first because all of them did not undergo specific intensive training or even job shadowing on how they are going to perform their duties as school principals. Despite that, they still managed to succeed through strategizing and learning little by little as they encounter more circumstance along their journey as school heads. The study participants see to it that they possess the qualifications of school heads as stipulated in DepEd order no. 88, s.2010, such as having adequate teaching experience, managerial competence and technical expertise in school management, and has a good moral character. These comprised the following basic themes "Strategizing through Holistic Managerial Skills" and "Supervising School Operations and Stakeholders."

**Strategizing through Holistic Managerial Skills**. Even though some of the study participants are novice when it comes to school operations and management, they are still aware of the strategies that they may use in order to be a more effective school head. Based on the responses, the study participants tend to seek for the strategies that will fit the needs of the school. They also always consider the welfare of their subordinates' other stakeholders in order to assure that they are attending and acting on the pressing needs of the school they serve. The study participants shared their experiences on how they are trying to pull out things in order to set everything in order. All of them started from having no experience and having no formal training in this paradigm that is why they find their designation as challenging. They conquered these through pondering on techniques and plan of actions through applying their innate managerial and leadership skills depending on the needs of the school and its stakeholder.

**Supervising School Operations and Stakeholders.** Handling school operations as well as human resource is a challenging task, just like how the study participants described their tasks. They should not only go after the school facilities, transactions, and planning because they still have the human resource to lead. Establishing cooperation and coordination is important because managing a school is not a one-man show. School heads need to supervise their teachers as well as its stakeholders in order to assure that their constituents are also aiming and contributing for the success of the school plans and operations. The responses show that the study participants highlight the importance of supervising their teachers as well as the stakeholders because they believe that they are of great help in contributing to the progress of the school thus, attaining its goals and objectives. Relating this to Burns' (1987) Transformational Leadership, he stated that it enhances the motivation, morale and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to the mission and the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers that inspires them; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, so the leader can align followers with tasks that optimize their performance and in turn performance of the school in general covering its management and operations.

**3.2.3 3. Lessons Learned through a School Head's Journey**

One of the best ways to learn is through experience, and this is what the school heads had proved throughout their journey as school principals. While some took a great leap and became pressured of the responsibilities given to them from which they are not familiar with at first, they managed to learn a lot of things as they go through some phases in leading their school. They learned that putting themselves in the shoes of others and being understanding can help them look into another perspective. Open System Theory of Management by Bertanlanff as cited by Bastedo [2004] refers simply to the concept that organizations are strongly influenced by their environment. The environment consists of other organizations that exert various forces of an economic, political, or social nature. The environment also provides key resources that sustain the organization and lead to change and survival. Although it came in many flavors, different theorists share the perspective that an organization's survival is dependent upon its relationship with the environment. These comprised the following basic themes "Considering Concerns and Welfare of Others" and "Seeking for Best Practices and Ideologies."

**Considering Concerns and Welfare of Others.** Possessing good managerial and leadership skills is an edge to be a good school head. However, these skills should also come with empathy and being considerate to other stakeholders of the school. Considering the concerns as well as the welfare of other stakeholders is one of the shared experiences of the study participants. They believe that knowing the needs and struggles of their constituents is one of the best moves to execute a good leadership. Also, involving them with decision-making and resolving conflicts can be a great help to establish harmonious relationship and friendly environment. The responsibility of the school heads also lies on how they will involve their teachers and stakeholders to be part of the change. Involving their subordinates are also a means to promote good working relationship and to give them a sense of belonging in terms of imparting holistic development of the school. This also a way to show them that school heads are trusting them and that they are important for the school to be better. Culture is influenced by staff interactions, and staff activities are guided by a culture that is a cycle of self-repetition. These assumptions, beliefs and procedures shape how a school view itself and its environment and shapes its activities and how it works. It reflects the shared ideas, assumptions, values, and beliefs that give an organization its identity and standard for expected behaviors. It develops as staff members interact with each other, the students, and the community and becomes the behavior guide that is shared across the school members.

**Seeking for Best Practices and Ideologies.** As times pass by, the school heads who were once novice leaders are learning as they encounter different circumstance and being familiarized more with their duties and responsibilities. Although it is hard for them at first and they went through some setbacks, they used those experiences for them to learn and to become great leaders. They used their mistakes as instruments to become better in leading the school and handling people. As they delve more in their duties and responsibilities as school heads, they discovered that there are a lot of things to consider, to deal with, and to improve. As they uncover more challenges and difficulties, it also gives them the opportunity to learn many things that can transform them into being holistic leaders. Valentine [2016] suggested that school culture should be thoroughly examined as it was an essential factor in improving schools, but it must be understood that it was complex and complicated to shape a school culture. In order to fully understand the school culture, it was imperative to identify the fundamental expectations, values, customs and beliefs of the school culture and to determine the goodness of fit between the assumptions, the school goals, and the beliefs of the teacher about each one if a positive cultural shift was to occur -- and all of these could be achieved through extracting the school heads' best lessons from their experiences.

**3.3 Part III: Issues and Challenges Encountered by the Study Participants**

Part of supervising the school operations and management are the issues and challenges brought by different factors. The school heads are facing difficulties in terms of finances, other stakeholders, academic performance, teachers' mobility, competition from other schools, and other instances that they usually encounter. This part tackles the issues and challenges that they are experiencing as school heads, as well as the analysis for each issue and challenge based on the responses of the participants.

**3.3.1 Issues**

**Tuition Fee (Finances).** Seven out of eight participants are struggling when it comes to financial stability because the major income of DSOB is coming from the tuition fee of the students. Unsettled school fee balance of students is the reason why schools sometimes need to loan in order to sustain their expenses. As expressed by the participants, most of them are facing issues when it comes to finances, except from Study Participant A. However, the statements of the rest of the participants are opposite to the statement of Participant A. While the first participant does not have an issue regarding collection of tuition fees, other study participants experience the other way around.

Study participants mentioned the issue regarding tuition fee and the financial stability of their school. Out of eight participants, it turned out that it was only Study Participant A who does not experience issues when it comes to tuition fees and other finances not only because they apply total quality management but also they develop design and systems thinking that made them worked hand in hand with the teachers and parents as regards to this concern which makes their collection of school fees well-managed. The rest of the study participants revealed that they are struggling with the collection of tuition fees which causes financial instability. This shows that the majority of DSOB experience financial issues, but there is still one which does not experience just like what the rest of DSOB are encountering.

As Generalizing Analysis, financial stability is one of the most prevalent issues that private schools in the Philippines is going through. One of the factors why private schools encounter such issue is due to low number of enrollment rate, which also signifies the income of the school. If there will only be few students, schools will struggle when it comes to sustaining salary for its employees, improving facilities, and dealing with other major expenses of the school. This issue of financial constraints is one of the prediction of Wakeling [2018] mentioning that one of the struggles that independent schools will be facing by 2018 is the lack of financial reserves.

**Parents' Involvement.** The role of the school alone is not enough for the students to have better school performance because their parents also play a vital role in the development of their children. With the communication and participation of parents in their children's learning endeavors, it would be easier for them to achieve different goals and pass through difficulties that they encounter in the learning process. However, some of the study participants encounter issues with the parents because of their lack of involvement, high expectations, and sometimes being too involved to the point that they are crossing the line of their roles as stakeholders. They always aim to meet the expectations of parents.

The study participants have encountered issues with regard to parental involvement, but they have different stories to share, but the majority of them meet to an end point that they are having issues when it comes to meeting the parents' expectations and involving them and other stakeholders when it comes to decision-making. They usually have to always consider and involve the parents because they are the ones who invest in DSOB through their children who are enrolled in their school. Their involvement sometimes becomes an issue due to some point when they are crossing the line and being involved more than how much they should be.

As generalizing analysis, educational leadership is a multi-faceted role. It does not only require a good sense of leadership to supervise school operations. It must also aim to help others build harmonious relationships among the teachers, parents and students because striving hard to achieve school's excellency is not a one-man show. Aside from teachers, school heads also need the cooperation of parents that is why they must have excellent communication skills in able to seek help from others. They are also part of the education community and having collaboration with them will increase the chance to achieve the school's goals and objectives. Encouraging parents to monitor their children's academic performance and supporting students with their good interests may these be school or classroom activities are very important things to consider.

According to Fedena [2018], parents nowadays are very concerned about what their kids are learning and what is the process they follow in their learning structure. Also, the school's reputation is highly important for the parents, and if the school has operated for years and ran programs that have proven to be successful over the years, it is a great thing for parents.

**Contextualization of Curriculum.** It has always been a challenge for the study participants to contextualize their curriculum because it is the core of learning of the students. They are facing issues on how to reform their curriculum to establish a 21st century school. It cannot be achieved through simple planning because this should involve parents, teachers, and other stakeholders.

For the generalizing analysis, since the generation is changing along with the people belong in it, leadership styles and characteristics must also get along with those changes. A leader of 21st century generation, particularly in school leadership, must be flexible and persistent so that whatever changes may come, always prepared to deal with those adjustments needed in order to improve the school and its different resources. It is also important to be resilient because challenges brought by 21st century generation can be tougher since the educational system is also upgrading.

Driscoll [2018] said that there is always something to be gained from the past, but preparing students for the future requires forward-thinking, 21st century leaders. Strategic school building is important as she added because education in the 21st century is a new frontier, and 21st century learners are a new breed. 21st century school leaders enthusiastically face the challenging task of preparing young minds for the future, and they think strategically about the goals and systems that will support this task.

**Teachers' Mobility/Turnover.** One of the main issues that DSOB are facing is the turnover of teachers because most of them are seeking better opportunities in public schools as the years go by. Due to fast turnover of

teachers, DSOB are struggling with hiring teachers every year. Since beginning teachers are usually the ones applying to their schools, they also have to deal with honing them through providing training in order to assure that they will be giving quality teaching despite being beginning teachers. This shows that private schools like DSOB is becoming training grounds for teachers who wish to pursue their later years of teaching in public schools. All of DSOB in this study experience issue when it comes to teachers' mobility/turnover,

All of the study participants have consistent answers when it comes to their dilemma in teachers' turnover because they always experience where teachers are resigning after a year or so because they are seeking greater opportunities to uplift their livelihood and status in the society once they get a plantilla item position in the public-school system. This shows that private schools, particularly DOSB, are becoming training grounds for many teachers who will be pursuing their career in public schools.

As generalizing analysis, in the Philippine context of education, one of the common challenges that the private schools are facing is the quick transition of the teachers, by being teachers in private school and their immediate desire to transfer to public schools once they have passed the Board Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (BLEPT) and become qualified with the requirements of the Department of Education (DepEd). Ongaki [2015] stated in his study that private schools experience high turnover of teachers, weakening its capacity to access efficient service and achieve good performance. Arising thereof, the private schools' management incur huge expenditures in progressively frequent recruitment of its staff. The private school management opted for untrained teachers to provide it with teaching services. His study concluded that high turnover of teachers was a major problem with private schools that needed immediate actions to reverse the trend. Similarly, Wang (2019) also tackled the teacher turnover in private schools. She said that teacher turnover continues to concerns K-12 educators who see teachers leave every year. Although some teacher turnover can be beneficial in certain cases, high teacher attrition has potentially harmful effects. Furthermore, teacher attrition reduces student achievement and can also harm school operations by disrupting school stability, collaboration, collegial relationships among faculty, and results in a loss of vital institutional knowledge.

**Teachers' Salary.** All of the study participants when it comes to facing issue about teachers' salary. Since DSOB are non-stock and non-profit educational institution, they cannot provide the same salary grade with the public schools. Just like any private schools, all DSOB faces issues when it comes to teachers' salary because theirs is lower than the salary grade of public-school teachers. The reason is that, the profit of DSOB is coming from the tuition being paid by the students, unlike public schools that are subsidized by the government. The low salary grade for teachers is also the main reason why there is a high turnover of teachers in DSOB. However, despite the low-grade salary as compared to public schools, there are still teachers who have been in DSOB for several years due to satisfaction they are getting in the school.

Generalizing Analysis. The major reason why many teachers tend to leave private schools is because they are getting paid lower than the public schools. Private schools cannot provide what the public schools can in terms of salary, subsidy, and benefits because they only get their income from the school fees of the students. This means that there is a lesser chance for private school teachers to receive high salary because the income of school is only based on its clients. Despite the presence of TSS given to licensed private school teachers, it still does not match the compensation and benefits being given to public school teachers. Until now, there is still no increase with the private school teacher's salary because the schools are also hardly earning their income from the tuition fees of the students. Also, even though they have more freedom and have their own autonomy, they cannot increase their fees as much as they want to because they still need to abide by DepEd policies. Due to this, many beginning teachers are applying in private schools in order just to gain teaching experience in order for them to be prepared once they will be transferring to public schools.

**Succession Planning.** Succession planning is important in any educational institution because this practice ensures that employees are developed in order to fill a role or a position. It is a preparation and a process of recognizing and creating future leaders. However, all of the study participants did not undergo succession planning, but rather handpicked because potentials were seen among them. The absence of succession planning is considered as an issue for the study participants because all of them are not fully prepared to fill such role. They revealed that there was no succession planning when they were chosen as school heads. DSOB have no structured process on how to choose the next school leaders and are just basing on the credentials and capabilities of teachers.

Generalizing Analysis. Breeding new leaders is one of the ways in order to have an orderly transition of school leadership and to assure that those who will replace previous leaders are competent and flexible enough to manage the school. This is the reason why succession planning is highly encouraged. Succession planning will serve as a means to groom the possible future leaders so that when they are already in the position, errors and failed decisions will avoided, or at least, will be immensely lessened. Even though all the teachers have already

experienced having authority inside the classroom for how many years or decades, school management is still different because there are a lot of things to compromise and to consider.

According to Benezet [2018], some possible explanation is that succession planning requires serious time and money because an organization must decide what future it wants and then identify the skills needed to advance it. Those skills could represent a change in direction, such as expertise in emerging technologies.

### 3.3.2 Challenges

**Administration Organization and School Management.** It is normal to face challenges when it comes to managing school and its operations, but the challenges are still needed to be identified in order to prevent them to become issue or problem. Although the study participants are equipped with different strategies to know how to take actions in different circumstances, challenges are still inevitable in any managerial position because they are managing a wider scope which comes with several considerations and circumstances. All are experiencing challenges when it comes to administration organization and school management.

The responses of the study participants based on the conducted interview revealed that despite having same designation as school heads, they are experiencing and encountering challenges differently. This part highlights how their experiences vary when it comes to administration organization and school management, and the degree of difficulty varies depending on the challenges they are facing and depending on the way how they handle the challenges. Their years of service is also a factor because it shows that school heads who are new to their position experience more struggles than those who have already been there for several years.

Generalizing Analysis. For the school to achieve its goals and objectives toward educational success, several processes must be done in order to plan, organize, direct and evaluate different school operations. A well-established educational administration and supervision can create a great impact to the progress of the school because administrative and supervisory roles bring about the practice of current philosophies, assessment, reporting, community collaboration, and proactive leadership. Integrating human and material resources is also one of their roles in order to achieve goals of the school.

It was also highlighted in the discussion that school heads are experiencing different challenges, and their managerial performance also differs. In the study of Cruz, et. al. ([2016], it was revealed that there were significant differences in the managerial performance of school heads in the areas of vision-mission goals, financial and budgeting, physical plant and facilities, community relations and management of school improvement plan.

**Compliance to DepEd Policies and Requirements.** Abiding by DepEd policies is somehow a challenge for some school heads because the policies stipulated in DepEd orders and memorandum sometimes become conflict with their school's own policies, which makes decision making quite hard for them. Another challenge is the compliance to the requirements of the department because there are times that DepEd is giving short notice of deadlines. Another factor is that some of the study participants are not yet familiar with what to comply because they are just new to the position. Based on the responses of the study participants, the only challenge they are facing when it comes to DepEd policies is the increase in tuition fee because they have to strictly the DepEd guidelines. Tuition fee increase should also be reasonable and has too many considerations. Meanwhile, the rest of the study participants are facing challenges when it comes to the compliance of requirements. Generally, the challenges being faced are the deadline being given by the central office, as well as submitting again some of the documents that they already submitted. Further, some school heads who are new to their position are challenged when it comes to complying with DepEd requirements because they do not have an idea at first about what to comply.

Generalizing Analysis. The study participants are facing challenges when it comes to compliance to DepEd policies and requirements, aside from supervising school operations and managing employees and stakeholders. Added to the battle of the study participants are the requirements of DepEd that are needed to be met. This is one of the major struggles of the school heads because according to them, there are times that the department is giving them short notice of the deadline.

In order have a more stabilized guidelines and policies intended for private schools, DepEd issued DepEd Order No. 88, s.2010 or the "2010 Revised Manual of Regulations for Private Schools in Basic Education." This provides general provisions with regards to the operations of private schools like DSOB, since they are private educational institution. Rules and regulations governing private schools in basic education are also included since the design of their system differs from public schools. However, despite being considered as private institution and having an isolated system under DSOB, the schools still need to comply with the necessary requirements being required by DepEd.

**Enrollment Rate.** It has been a challenge for many school heads to increase or at least maintain the enrollment rate of the students in their schools. Yearly, it is a challenge for them to encourage old students to stay in their school and encourage others who have been in other schools. Since DSOB are non-profit and non-stock educational institution, their income is hardly earned through the tuition fees being paid by the students. This is the

reason why school heads are trying their best to make it possible to increase their enrollment rate yearly. It is a challenge for many private schools, including some DSOB, to increase their enrollment rate. It becomes a yearly challenge for some because the enrollment rate has a big impact to the income of school in order to support its expenses. Even though there is an Education Contracting Scheme (ESC) that grants discount for students who are studying in eligible private schools, some DSOB still struggle to encourage students and parents to enroll in their school. Also, there are some instances where students are dropping out in the middle of the school year or transferring to public schools due to financial issues, which also affects the enrollment rate of DSOB.

Generalizing Analysis. With a wide variety of education options available along with the presence of other schools in the community, private schools struggle to increase enrollment rate. Some of the diocesan schools in Bataan is facing this challenge because their financial stability depends on the student population. This opts some DSOB to rethink their marketing approach in order to gain clients and to be able to convince students to retain in their schools. It is a big challenge for them because the whole school is at stake if the enrollment rate will decrease, which could result into worst case scenario which is the shutting down of school.

**School Branding.** One of the toughest challenges that DSOB are facing is the competition with other schools, which is also the major reason why the enrollment rate remains low or is not increasing. Due to many competitors, DSOB encounter challenges when it comes to school branding. They always tend to look for several ways on how they are going to encourage clients and how they are going to leave a remarkable impression or image in order for the old students to remain in their schools and how to gain enrollees. It is a great challenge for most of the DSOB to establish school brand that will attract many clients. Since the school income are mostly coming from the school's fees paid by the clients through students enrolled in school, it becomes a tough battle for DSOB to promote their school in order to encourage more enrollees. The major factor is the presence of many public and private schools within their locality which makes it more challenging for DSOB to get their clients. Establishing school brand is also another battle because they have to think of offers that other private schools do not have.

Generalizing Analysis. Establishing a trademark or school brand is also considered as a challenge for some school heads of DSOB. It is a tough thing for the study participants because school branding refers to the whole impression of the school which defines not just the achievements of the school, but also the quality performance of teachers and students, consistency in providing quality service, and the proof of assurance that students are being holistically developed in their school. Leedy [2018] considered branding as 'winning the heart' of the parents.

**Teachers' Work Practices.** Supervising teachers' work practices is also considered as a challenge for some study participants. Teachers are considered to be assets of their school and it is important to assure that they are competent and committed when it comes to performing their duties and responsibilities. Teachers are also one of the factors in establishing good school branding and potential clients will increase if they were informed that teachers in a particular school are great. However, some of the study participants are challenged with the tardiness of teachers and late compliance of the requirements. In this case, only three study participants are facing these challenges brought by the work practices of teachers were commonly observed from those who are newly hired. Not all the teachers had already fully embraced their profession because they are still new in the field of teaching. However, it becomes more challenging for some school heads to supervise their teachers with regards to the problem of tardiness, late compliance of requirements, and being more creative in teaching. Still, the study participants always see to it that undesirable work practices will be eradicated through constant reminder and mentoring.

Generalizing Analysis. Due to the requisition in upgrading the teaching methodologies to meet the demands of the 21st century learners, teachers must not settle into traditional way of teaching. As the call for changes continues to progress, the teachers should also keep with the pace of the innovations needed in education because the old ways may not be applicable anymore to the modern classroom setting. The teacher's role is crucial in nurturing young people because they are the ones who prepare them in attaining higher level of achievements. This condition of RA 10533 is considered to be one of the reasons why there are teachers who seem not to meet the qualifications but were hired due to shortage of teachers. The persisting challenge with regards to teachers' work practices are experienced by the study participants most especially among the newly graduate teachers that were hired in their school. Some of them have no choice but to hire unlicensed teachers because of the low salary rate that they could offer compared to public schools. Still, the study participants claim responsibility for this challenge. Since school heads integrate human and material resources, they always see to it that they empower the faculty members by providing excellent trainings regarding classroom management, teaching practices and other trends in education. Despite the challenge in supervising the work practices of teachers, the study participants assure that to empower the teaching workforce is always taken into consideration.

**3.1 Part IV: Case Series Analysis of the Eight Participants**

**Table -2**: Matrix of the Case Series Analysis on School Operations and Management of DSOB

| | Case 1 | Case 2 | Case 3 | Case 4 | Case 5 | Case 6 | Case 7 | Case 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tuition fee (finances) | Collection policy is well-managed | Has existing loan | Delayed payment of tuition fee | Insufficient amount of tuition fee collected | Shortage of income | Low tuition fee | Delayed payment of tuition fee | Delayed payment of tuition fee |
| Parents' involvement | Returning trust given to parents | No problem | No problem | Parents' high expectations | Parents' high expectations | No problem | No problem | Lack of parents' involvement |
| Conextua-lization of curriculum | Improving curriculum, instruction, and assessment | Improving curriculum, instruction, and assessment | No problem | No problem | Students have no mastery of the subjects | Improving curriculum, instruction, and assessment | Insufficient learning materials | Demographic or policy changes |
| Teachers' mobility / turnover | Fast teacher turnover | Fast teacher turnover | Fast teacher turnover | Fast teacher turnover | Fast teacher turnover | Pace of teachers' turnover is tolerable | Pace of teachers' turnover is tolerable | Pace of teachers' turnover is tolerable |
| Teachers' salary | Low salary compared to public school | Low salary compared to public school | Low salary compared to public school | Low salary compared to public school | Low salary compared to \public school | Low salary compared to public school | Low salary compared to public school | Low salary compared to public school |
| Succession planning | Lack of succession planning | Lack of succession planning | Lack of succession planning | Lack of succession planning | Lack of succession planning | Lack of succession planning | Lack of succession planning | Lack of succession planning |
| Administration, organization and school management | Cycle of hiring, training, mentoring of teachers | Transition phase | Transition phase | Administering teachers and students | Financial matter | Transition phase | Considering stakeholders | High cost in maintenance and operations |
| Compliance to DepEd policies and require-ments. | No issue with DepEd Order No. 88, s.2010 | Short notice of deadline | Not mentioned | Not mentioned | DepEd ranking in public school which opts teachers to resign in the middle of school year | Not mentioned | Compliance to deadline of submission of documents | Unfamiliarity with the compliance of documents |
| Enrollment rate | No problem | Improving areas that are needed to be developed to attract enrollees | No problem | Presence of public and private schools nearby | Grade 10 completers transfer out | Improving areas that are needed to be developed to attract enrollees | Transfer out/ drop outs due to financial problems | No problem |
| School branding | Not mentioned | Competition with other schools nearby | Competition with other schools nearby | Competition with other schools nearby | Competition with other schools nearby | Competition with other schools nearby | Competition with other schools nearby | Competition with other schools nearby |
| Teachers' work practices | Not mentioned | Teachers' tardiness and late compliance | Thinking of extra and co-curricular activities | Not mentioned | Not mentioned | Not mentioned | Not mentioned | Harmonizing culture of school |

The following descriptions are true to all cases which means these are existing in the case of Case 1, Case 2, Case 3, Case 4, Case 5, Case 6, Case 7, and Case 8. These are (1) tuition fee (finances); (2) teachers' mobility / turnover; (3) teachers' salary; (4) succession planning; (5) and administration organization and school management. The description (6) school branding is true to all mentioned cases except for Case 1. Further, the description (7) parents' involvement is only true to Case 1, Case 4, Case 5, and Case 8. The description (8) contextualization of curriculum is true to all cases except for Case 3 and Case which sees no problem regarding this. With regards to description (9) compliance to DepEd policies and requirements, it is only true to Case 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, while Case 3, 4, and 6 did not mention this description. Lastly, the description (10) enrollment rate is only true to Case 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 while the description (11) teachers' work practices is only true to Case 2, 3, and 8 and the rest of the cases did not mention about the said description.
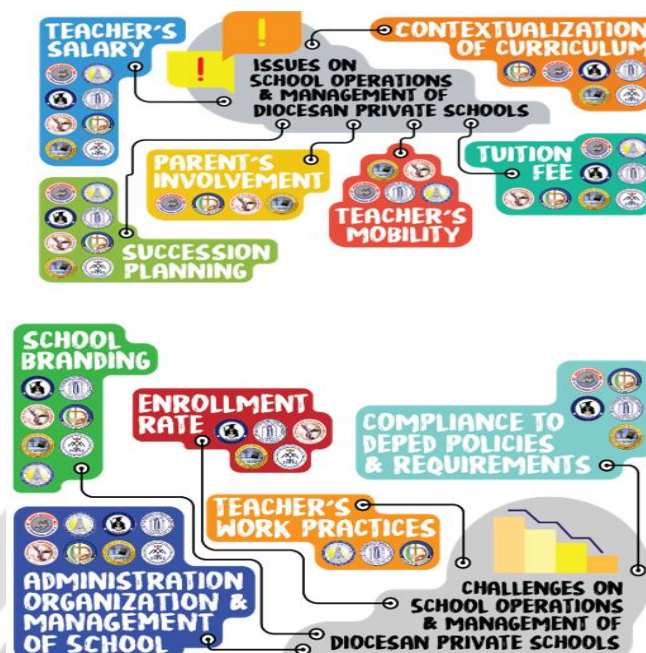
**Figure- 1:** Illustration of the Case Series Analysis on School  Operations and Management of DSOB

School heads integrate human and material resources. They are the ones who empower the faculty members by providing excellent trainings regarding classroom management, teaching practices and other trends in education. They are also responsible in developing the curriculum to assure that their schools are able to provide the necessary skills and knowledge for the students that will equip them with potentials for different competencies in education. Establishing rules and regulations in schools is also their role because they also must focus in the discipline and not just only in flourishing education. Supervision contains elements of providing knowledge, helping to organize tasks, enhance motivation, and monitoring activity and results. They are involved in any operations because they should see problems and setbacks in order to be immediately addressed before these will affect the school as a whole.

The major commonalities of the study participants when it comes to the issues and challenges, they are facing include (1) tuition fee (finances); (2) teachers' mobility / turnover; (3) teachers' salary; (4) succession planning; (5) and admin organization and school management; (6) school branding; (7) and contextualization of curriculum. Although they have different leadership styles, most of the study participants with the same issues and challenges being faced have almost the same coping mechanisms on how those circumstances are being addressed.

**3.1 Part V: Proposed Strategic Management Plan**
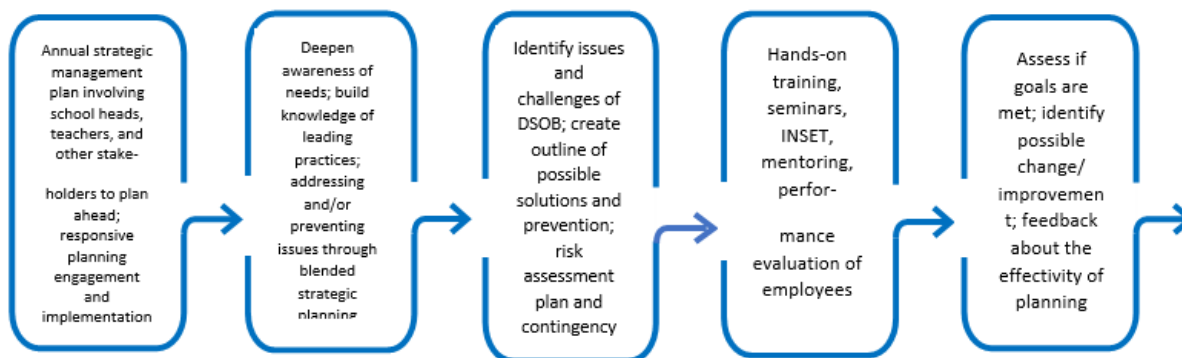


**Figure 3:** Proposed Strategic Management Plan Using ADDIE Model

The ADDIE Model was adopted in order to have a more structured management plan. this represents "Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation". Educators and training developers found out that this model is useful because of having stages that are clearly defined with the use of effective training tools. This simple model also represents a dynamic and flexible guideline in establishing efficient training program. Due to the hierarchical structure of the steps, one had to complete the process in a linear fashion, completing one phase before starting the next.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The study highlights several significant challenges faced by school principals in managing Diocesan Private Schools in Bataan, including financial instability, low parental involvement, high teacher turnover, and inadequate succession planning. The findings indicate that most principals possess only master's degrees, suggesting a need for further professional development to enhance their leadership capabilities. The transition from teaching to administrative roles often leaves principals unprepared for the complexities of school management, which can hinder their effectiveness.

To address these issues, the study recommends implementing structured professional development programs focused on financial management, stakeholder engagement, and leadership skills. Additionally, fostering stronger parental involvement and addressing teacher compensation can help reduce turnover rates. Establishing formal succession planning processes is also crucial for ensuring smooth leadership transitions. By addressing these areas, Diocesan Private Schools can improve their operational effectiveness and better serve their communities, ultimately enhancing the quality of education provided to students.

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