



JOURNAL

OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH,
INNOVATION, AND
MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

An Academic Journal Publication



Website: | <https://jerimspublication.com>

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD SERIAL NUMBERS



PRINT ISSN

3116-5559



ONLINE ISSN

3116-5567

Volume 1, Issue 7, pp 01-10, September
2026

Research Article

Transitions in School Leadership: Lived Experiences of Newly-Transferred DepEd School Heads

Nelia T. Lanzaderas, PhD
Department of Education

Article History:

Submission: July, 2026
Revised: August, 2026
Accepted: August, 2026
Published: August, 2026

Originality: 98%
Similarity Index: 7%
Grammarly Score: 96%

*Corresponding Author:
nelia.lanzaderas@deped.gov.ph

Recommended Citation:

Lanzaderas, N., (2026). Transitions in School Leadership: Lived Experiences of Newly-Transferred DepEd School Heads. *Journal of Educational Research, Innovation, and Multidisciplinary Studies*, 1(7), 01-10.

<https://doi.org/10.67001/jeri.2026.7.K5V1TN>

ABSTRACT

Leadership transfer is a common practice within the Philippine Department of Education (DepEd), yet the transition experiences of newly-transferred school heads remain under-documented. This study explored the lived experiences of newly-transferred school heads during their first six months of assignment in the First Congressional District of Misamis Occidental. Using a qualitative phenomenological design, data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with purposively selected school heads. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis to surface shared meanings and patterns grounded in participants' narratives. Findings revealed that newly-transferred school heads encountered challenges related to administrative discontinuity, infrastructure constraints, school size complexity, and teacher morale. To cope, they adopted adaptive problem-solving strategies, mobilized stakeholder support, practiced relational and modelling leadership, and utilized professional learning mechanisms such as Learning Action Cells. Participants identified financial support, psychosocial assistance, and supportive supervision as critical during the transition period. The study highlights that leadership transition is a multifaceted process encompassing technical, relational, and emotional dimensions. While DepEd has established leadership development and support structures, findings suggest the need for strengthened implementation, contextual responsiveness, and supportive monitoring to better address transition realities. Grounding leadership support programs in lived experiences can enhance school head effectiveness and contribute to sustainable school leadership development.

Keywords: school leadership transition, newly-transferred school heads, leadership support systems, qualitative phenomenology, Department of Education

Copyright Notice:

2026 Author(s). This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), allowing third parties to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format and to remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially, provided the original work is properly cited and states its license.

Introduction

Leadership transitions are an inherent part of educational systems, particularly within large public institutions such as the Department of Education (DepEd). In the Philippine context, the transfer of school heads across schools is a common administrative practice aimed at strengthening leadership distribution and ensuring equity in school management. While these transfers are policy-driven and strategically aligned with organizational needs, they often require school heads to navigate new environments, cultures, and expectations within a limited adjustment period.

Newly-transferred school heads are expected to assume leadership roles immediately despite unfamiliar school contexts, varying stakeholder dynamics, and differing resource conditions. These transitions are not merely administrative in nature; they are deeply personal and professional experiences that influence leadership performance, school climate, and overall school effectiveness (Clarke & Wildy, 2016). DepEd Order No. 19, s. 2022, which outlines the Career Progression System for Public School Teachers, facilitates such mobility and reassignment as part of leadership development and organizational strengthening (Department of Education, 2022).

While policies provide clear guidelines on reassignment, the actual experiences of school heads undergoing transfer—particularly during the early months—are seldom documented. In practice, newly-transferred school heads often face challenges related to institutional culture, community relations, instructional supervision, and administrative workload. These challenges are intensified in rural and geographically dispersed areas such as the First Congressional District of Misamis Occidental, where schools differ significantly in terms of resources, community engagement, and organizational maturity.

This study was conducted to capture and give voice to the lived experiences of newly-transferred school heads during their initial months in their new assignments. By listening to their narratives, the research sought to better understand how they navigated challenges, adjusted their leadership practices, and accessed or lacked technical assistance during the transition period. Documenting these experiences provides valuable insights that can inform more responsive leadership support systems, onboarding mechanisms, and technical assistance programs within DepEd. Ultimately, this study contributes to strengthening leadership transition processes by grounding policy and professional development initiatives in the real experiences of school leaders.

Existing literature on school leadership transitions emphasizes that the first year of assuming leadership in a new context is critical to long-term effectiveness (Bush & Glover, 2020; Nguyen, 2021). Studies consistently show that newly-assigned school leaders experience heightened stress and uncertainty, often brought about by unclear expectations, pressure to deliver immediate results, and the need to build trust with new stakeholders. Nguyen (2021) highlighted that leadership transitions involve emotional, cognitive, and organizational adjustments, requiring school heads to quickly develop contextual awareness and adaptive leadership strategies. Bush and Glover (2020) further stressed that effective transition is closely linked to the availability of mentoring, structured induction, and institutional support.

Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory provides a useful lens for understanding how school heads develop confidence and leadership efficacy through interaction with their environment. As newly-transferred leaders engage with teachers, learners, parents, and local stakeholders, their beliefs, behaviors, and leadership decisions are continuously shaped. Kotter's (1996) 8-Step Change Model further underscores the importance of building relationships, creating shared vision, and consolidating early gains during periods of organizational change—processes that are particularly relevant to leadership transfer. Research focusing on rural and under-resourced school contexts (Clarke & Wildy, 2016; Brauckmann-Sajkiewicz et al., 2020) revealed that school heads often assume multiple roles, balancing instructional leadership with administrative and community responsibilities. These studies emphasized the need for leadership development programs that are context-sensitive and responsive to local realities.

Despite these findings, the literature points to a gap in localized studies that document the actual, lived experiences of newly-transferred school heads within DepEd. Most leadership programs remain generic, providing limited transition-specific guidance. This study addressed this gap by examining leadership transition through the authentic experiences of school heads in Misamis Occidental, thereby generating evidence-based insights for

policy and program enhancement.

Methods

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of newly-transferred school heads. Purposive sampling identified information-rich participants who were newly transferred to their current schools during School Year 2024–2025 in the Calamba, Plaridel, and Baliangao Districts of Misamis Occidental Division. A preliminary survey screened eligible school heads. Selected participants then took part in in-depth semi-structured interviews, while a subset participated in a Focus Group Discussion to validate and deepen emerging themes. All interviews and FGDs were audio-recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and anonymized. Data analysis followed thematic analysis through familiarization, open coding, theme development, interpretation, and member checking, with the constant comparative method used to refine themes across data sources. Ethical standards aligned with DepEd research guidelines were observed, including informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, the right to withdraw, and ethical clearance from the Schools Division Research Committee. The study was conducted in the Calamba, Plaridel and Baliangao Districts of Misamis Occidental Division. It focused exclusively on school heads who were newly transferred during School Year 2024–2025. The exploration of experiences covered the period from their assumption of office up to six months into their new assignment. Findings were contextual and did not aim to generalize beyond the identified setting and participants.

Results and Discussions

On Challenges Encountered by Newly-Transferred School Heads

Table 1. Emergent Themes on Challenges Encountered by Newly-Transferred School Heads

Emergent Theme	Core Meaning from Participants' Experiences
Disruption in Administrative Continuity	Incomplete or inadequate turnover of essential records such as MOOE files, budget matrices, SIPs, and related documents affected early planning and decision-making.
Infrastructure and Resource Constraints	Dilapidated classrooms, damaged ceilings, classroom shortages, and lack of office spaces required immediate attention and competed with instructional leadership priorities.
Complexity of Organizational Size	Larger schools brought broader personnel-management concerns, more operational demands, and increased expectations from stakeholders.
Teacher Morale and Organizational Culture	Limited promotion opportunities, prolonged career stagnation, resistance to change, and diminished motivation complicated the process of establishing a new leadership direction.

Analysis of the participants' narratives revealed that assuming leadership in a new station involved more than becoming familiar with routine administrative procedures. The school heads entered organizations with existing histories, relationships, practices, unresolved concerns, and expectations. Consequently, their first months required simultaneous learning and leading. They had to understand the school culture while already making decisions that affected personnel, resources, learners, and community stakeholders. The four themes—administrative discontinuity, infrastructure and resource constraints, organizational complexity, and teacher morale and culture—show that leadership transfer is both an organizational and human transition.

The first theme, disruption in administrative continuity, emerged from participants' accounts of inadequate turnover of important documents, including MOOE files, budget matrices, School Improvement Plans, and other records needed for informed school management. The concern was not simply the physical absence of documents. In a new assignment, records function as institutional memory: they help the incoming school head understand previous decisions, financial commitments, ongoing programs, targets, and unfinished responsibilities. When these are incomplete or poorly transferred, the incoming leader must reconstruct information while simultaneously performing current duties. This can delay planning and create uncertainty during a period when stakeholders already expect the new school head to provide direction.

This finding reinforces the argument that leadership transition depends on organizational continuity, not only on the competence of the incoming leader. Huber and Pruitt (2024) describe school leadership as highly contextual, requiring leaders to understand the organizational environment in which decisions are made. Similarly, Duray (2025) emphasizes the difficulties school heads experience while responding to reforms and changing institutional conditions. Viewed in this context, a systematic turnover process can reduce unnecessary uncertainty and allow the incoming school head to devote more attention to instructional and developmental priorities rather than spending substantial time locating or reconstructing essential information.

The second theme concerns infrastructure and resource constraints. Participants reported concerns such as dilapidated classrooms, damaged ceilings, insufficient classrooms, and the absence of adequate office spaces. These conditions immediately placed physical safety, facility management, and resource mobilization among the school heads' priorities. The finding is significant because school heads are expected to exercise instructional leadership, yet urgent infrastructure problems can redirect their time and attention toward operational concerns. In under-resourced contexts, leadership therefore becomes a process of balancing long-term educational goals with immediate and visible school needs.

The experience also illustrates how context shapes leadership priorities. A school head may enter a new station with plans for instructional improvement, but unsafe or inadequate facilities may require immediate intervention before other initiatives can be pursued. Clarke and Wildy (2016) similarly observed that leaders in rural or resource-constrained schools often perform multiple roles and must manage administrative, instructional, and community responsibilities simultaneously. The participants' experiences support the need for transition assistance that recognizes the actual condition of the receiving school rather than assuming that all school heads begin their assignments under comparable circumstances.

The third theme, complexity of organizational size, reflects the participants' perception that larger schools create broader and more complicated leadership demands. A larger organization means more personnel relationships to understand, more programs and activities to coordinate, more records and resources to manage, and more stakeholders with whom the school head must communicate. This does not imply that smaller schools are free from leadership challenges; rather, participants' accounts indicate that organizational scale changes the volume and complexity of concerns requiring attention. Huber and Pruitt (2024) likewise emphasize the importance of differentiated and context-responsive leadership development because school leaders operate in substantially different organizational environments.

The fourth theme centers on teacher morale and organizational culture. Participants observed that some teachers who had remained in the same position for many years experienced frustration related to limited promotion opportunities, which could be associated with reduced motivation or resistance to change. For a newly-transferred school head, this becomes a relational challenge because improvement initiatives cannot be implemented effectively through directives alone. The leader must first understand the experiences and concerns that shape teachers' attitudes. Montañez and Aclao (2023) connect career progression with teacher motivation, supporting the participants' observation that professional growth opportunities influence engagement and receptiveness to organizational initiatives.

Taken together, the four themes demonstrate that the challenges of newly-transferred school heads are interconnected. Weak turnover can complicate administrative decision-making; infrastructure deficiencies can redirect resources and attention; organizational size can intensify workload; and low teacher morale can make change more difficult to introduce. The findings therefore suggest that the early transition period should not be treated merely as the formal assumption of a new post. It is a critical period of organizational diagnosis, relationship building, prioritization, and contextual learning in which the school head must establish continuity while gradually creating a direction for improvement.

Adjustments and Coping Mechanisms Adopted

Table 2. Emergent Themes on Adjustments and Coping Mechanisms Adopted

Emergent Theme	Core Meaning from Participants' Experiences
Acceptance and Adaptive Problem-Solving	School heads accepted contextual realities, identified urgent concerns, prioritized manageable problems, and pursued practical solutions.
Stakeholder Engagement and Resource Mobilization	They built connections with alumni, NGOs, community partners, and other stakeholders and utilized mechanisms such as Income Generating Projects.
Relational and Modelling Leadership	They listened to personnel, modelled professionalism, and balanced firmness with flexibility in managing people and change.
Professional Learning as a Motivational Tool	They used Learning Action Cell sessions, including discussions on Expanded Career Progression, to address professional concerns and encourage growth.

The participants did not respond to transition difficulties through a single coping strategy. Instead, they combined personal adjustment, practical problem-solving, relationship building, resource mobilization, and professional learning. This pattern indicates that effective coping during leadership transfer is adaptive rather than fixed. Newly-transferred school heads continually assessed what the school required, what resources were available, and how teachers and stakeholders were responding before deciding how to act.

Acceptance and adaptive problem-solving emerged as a foundational response. Acceptance in the participants' accounts did not mean passivity or resignation. Rather, it involved recognizing the actual conditions of the new station and working from those realities. School heads identified concerns that required immediate attention, distinguished urgent problems from those that could be addressed gradually, and looked for feasible solutions. This approach allowed them to avoid being overwhelmed by multiple concerns and to establish priorities during the early months of assignment.

This adaptive behavior is consistent with the contextual leadership perspective discussed by Huber and Pruitt (2024), in which effective leaders adjust their approaches according to the needs and conditions of the organization. The participants' actions also demonstrate that transition competence includes judgment: leaders must determine which concerns demand immediate action and which require consultation, resource generation, or longer-term planning. In this sense, coping is closely connected to decision-making and the ability to remain functional despite uncertainty. Stakeholder engagement and resource mobilization constituted another important coping mechanism. Participants reported building relationships with stakeholders and exploring support through alumni networks, Income Generating Projects, NGOs, and community partnerships. These strategies were especially important when school resources were insufficient to address immediate needs. Rather than viewing resource limitations solely as an internal school problem, the school heads expanded the circle of participation and sought collaborative solutions.

This finding highlights the community dimension of school leadership. Resource mobilization becomes more sustainable when it is grounded in trust and shared responsibility rather than occasional solicitation. By engaging stakeholders, newly-transferred school heads also create opportunities to introduce themselves, understand community expectations, and establish legitimacy in the new station. The process therefore serves two functions: it generates material or technical assistance while simultaneously strengthening relationships. Huber and Pruitt (2024) emphasize collaborative and participatory approaches to school leadership, which closely reflect this pattern in the participants' experiences. Relational and modelling leadership also emerged strongly. Participants described the importance of being good listeners, modelling professionalism, and balancing firmness with flexibility. These practices suggest that school heads recognized that authority alone would not be sufficient to secure cooperation in a new organizational setting. Teachers and staff first needed opportunities to observe the new leader's behavior, consistency, fairness, and willingness to understand existing concerns. Modelling thus became a practical way of communicating expectations without immediately relying

on formal directives.

The balance between firmness and flexibility is particularly important during transition. Excessive rigidity may intensify resistance, while excessive accommodation may weaken clarity and accountability. The participants' narratives suggest that they attempted to establish professional standards while remaining sensitive to the existing culture and individual circumstances of personnel. This relational orientation supports the view that leadership transition is fundamentally a trust-building process.

Professional learning served as another mechanism for addressing teacher concerns. Participants used Learning Action Cell sessions to discuss Expanded Career Progression and related professional issues. This response is noteworthy because it reframed frustration over promotion into an opportunity for information sharing, reflection, and professional development. Rather than treating low morale solely as an attitude problem, school heads attempted to respond through learning structures already familiar within DepEd.

Technical Assistance and Support Needed and Received

Table 3. Emergent Themes on Technical Assistance and Support Needed and Received

Emergent Theme	Core Meaning from Participants' Experiences
Adequate Financial and Material Resources	Support was needed to respond to urgent facility concerns, operational requirements, and other immediate school needs.
Psychosocial and Emotional Support	Participants identified moral, emotional, mental, peer, mentoring, and coaching support as important during adjustment.
Supportive Monitoring and Supervision	School heads valued follow-up that involved reflective dialogue, guidance, contextual validation, and shared accountability.

The participants' accounts indicate that technical assistance during leadership transition must be understood broadly. Their needs were not limited to instructions on policies, reports, or administrative procedures. Three dimensions of support emerged—financial and material assistance, psychosocial and emotional support, and supportive monitoring and supervision. Together, these dimensions demonstrate that newly-transferred school heads require a support ecosystem that responds to the physical, professional, and emotional realities of entering a new leadership environment.

Financial and material support was considered important because many transition challenges required resources before they could be resolved. Infrastructure deficiencies and operational concerns cannot always be addressed through leadership skill alone. Even a highly capable school head may have limited capacity to repair facilities or respond to resource gaps without adequate funding or access to assistance. This distinction is important because leadership performance should not be evaluated without considering the conditions and resources available to the leader.

The participants' experiences therefore point to the importance of context-responsive resource allocation. Duray (2025) likewise highlights the burden experienced by school heads operating amid changing demands and resource constraints. During transition, an assessment of the receiving school's most urgent needs could help supervisory offices distinguish problems that require leadership action from those that require system-level resource support. Such differentiation can prevent newly-transferred leaders from carrying problems that exceed the resources available at the school level. Psychosocial and emotional support emerged as equally significant. Participants articulated the need for moral, emotional, and mental support, indicating that the transition experience can create pressure beyond technical workload. A newly-transferred school head must make decisions while establishing new relationships, responding to expectations, and adapting to unfamiliar organizational conditions. The emotional demands of this process may be intensified when the leader feels that difficult decisions must be managed alone.

Leontopoulos (2025) emphasizes mentoring and coaching as mechanisms that can strengthen resilience and emotional intelligence among educational leaders. In the context of this study, mentoring can provide more than advice: it can offer a confidential space for reflection, validation, and examination of difficult leadership situations. Peer support may likewise reduce professional isolation by allowing school heads to recognize that

transition challenges are shared experiences rather than purely individual difficulties.

The third theme concerns supportive monitoring and supervision. Participants valued follow-up from supervisory levels when it was experienced as guidance and shared accountability. This suggests an important distinction between monitoring for compliance and monitoring for development. Compliance-oriented visits may confirm whether requirements have been completed, but developmental supervision can help the school head interpret challenges, evaluate possible responses, and reflect on early leadership decisions. Huber and Pruitt (2024) emphasize sustained leadership development and support rather than one-time preparation. The participants' experiences support this position because many transition difficulties emerge only after the school head has assumed the new assignment. Therefore, assistance provided before transfer or during initial orientation may be insufficient unless it is followed by continuing dialogue during the first months. The findings suggest that supervisory monitoring is most meaningful when it is responsive to the actual context encountered by the school head.

Collectively, these themes demonstrate that successful transition cannot be produced by training alone. Financial resources address material constraints; psychosocial support strengthens the leader as a person and professional; and supportive supervision helps connect individual leadership practice with the wider education system. The absence of any one dimension may weaken the effectiveness of the others. A well-trained school head, for example, may still struggle when urgent facility needs are unfunded or when professional isolation remains unaddressed.

Policy and Program Implications for DepEd

Table 4. Policy and Program Implications Drawn from the Lived Experiences

Emergent Theme	Core Meaning from Participants' Experiences
Strengthened Onboarding and Turnover Protocols	Consistent handover documentation, clearance processes, induction, and transition checklists can protect administrative continuity.
Context-Responsive Resource Support	Transition assistance should consider the actual physical, operational, and logistical condition of the receiving school.
Enhanced Mentoring and Coaching	Early transition should include sustained moral, emotional, and professional guidance rather than one-time orientation.
Enriched Professional Learning	Leadership development can give greater attention to adaptive leadership, relational skills, community engagement, and contextual problem-solving.
Supportive Supervisory Monitoring	Follow-up visits can emphasize reflective dialogue, developmental feedback, and problem-solving alongside accountability requirements.

The lived experiences provide practical implications for strengthening DepEd's existing leadership support systems. The findings do not suggest that leadership structures are entirely absent; rather, they indicate areas where implementation can become more consistent, contextual, and responsive to the realities of transfer. The five directions that emerge from the study concern onboarding and turnover, resource support, mentoring and coaching, professional learning, and supervisory monitoring.

First, the difficulty participants experienced with incomplete turnover documents demonstrates the need to strengthen onboarding and handover procedures. A standardized and consistently monitored turnover process can help preserve institutional memory and reduce avoidable administrative disruption. Clearance forms, inventories, financial records, program status reports, SIP-related documents, and other essential records can provide the incoming school head with an organized picture of the school at the point of assumption. The value of such a process is not merely procedural; it gives the new leader a more reliable foundation for early decisions. Second, resource support should be responsive to the receiving school's actual condition. The findings show that some school heads assumed leadership while facing urgent infrastructure and operational problems.

Although regular funding mechanisms exist, transition may be strengthened when division or regional support systems recognize significant contextual differences among schools. An initial needs assessment could help identify concerns that require immediate system-level attention and allow the school head to establish realistic priorities.

Third, mentoring and coaching mechanisms can be reinforced during the early months of transition. The participants' need for moral, emotional, and professional support indicates that leadership development should continue after formal training. Lemoine (2019) and Leontopoulos (2025) emphasize mentoring and coaching in the development of school leaders. Applied to the present findings, a mentor can help a newly-transferred school head interpret unfamiliar situations, reflect on difficult decisions, and develop confidence without removing the leader's responsibility for decision-making.

Fourth, professional learning for school heads can be enriched by explicitly addressing adaptive leadership, relational skills, stakeholder engagement, resource mobilization, and organizational diagnosis. The challenges reported by participants show that technical knowledge of policies is necessary but insufficient. Newly-transferred leaders must also read organizational culture, establish trust, manage resistance, communicate priorities, and work with stakeholders under varying resource conditions. These competencies are especially relevant because transition problems are often unpredictable and highly contextual.

Finally, supportive supervisory monitoring can transform the transition period into an ongoing developmental process. Participants valued follow-up and monitoring when these provided contextual validation and reflective dialogue. Supervisory visits during the first months can therefore include conversations about emerging problems, leadership decisions, resource constraints, teacher relations, and progress toward early priorities. Such an approach retains accountability while making supervision more developmental and responsive. Across these five implications, a common principle emerges: leadership transition should be treated as a process rather than a single administrative event. The formal transfer marks only the beginning of adjustment. Effective support continues as the school head learns the organization, develops relationships, responds to inherited concerns, and establishes a leadership direction. Strengthening existing DepEd mechanisms around this principle can help make transition more systematic without disregarding the distinct conditions of individual schools.

Conclusions

The study concludes that newly-transferred school heads encountered interconnected challenges involving administrative discontinuity, physical resource limitations, organizational complexity, and teacher morale. These concerns required immediate adjustment and often redirected leadership attention toward urgent operational and relational needs. School heads responded through adaptive and relational leadership, including problem prioritization, stakeholder engagement, modelling positive leadership behaviors, and the use of professional learning platforms such as Learning Action Cells. Financial resources, psychosocial and emotional support, and supervisory monitoring characterized by reflective dialogue were perceived as important forms of transition assistance. The findings underscore the importance of strengthening existing DepEd leadership support structures through

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends the following directions: Conduct a longitudinal study tracking newly-transferred school heads beyond the first year to examine leadership growth and sustained impact. Expand the study to urban and geographically isolated contexts to compare leadership transition experiences across settings. Examine the perspectives of teachers and supervisors to triangulate leadership transition experiences. Investigate the effectiveness of SHDP modules specifically in preparing school heads for transfer-related challenges. Explore the role of mental health and well-being interventions in supporting school head resilience during leadership transitions.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares that they have no conflicts of interest

References

- [1] Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice Hall.
- [2] Brauckmann-Sajkiewicz, S., Pashiardis, P., & Ärlestig, H. (2020). School leaders' professional learning: Comparative perspectives. *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 28(2), 213–230.
- [3] Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(13), 1802–1811. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316654870>
- [4] Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- [5] Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2020). School leadership models: What do we know? *School Leadership & Management*, 40(5), 455–472.
- [6] Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- [7] Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- [8] Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- [9] Clarke, S., & Wildy, H. (2016). Improving the small rural or remote school: The role of the teaching principal. *Australian Journal of Education*, 60(3), 233–246.
- [10] Department of Education. (2022). DepEd Order No. 19, s. 2022: Career Progression System for Public School Teachers.
- [11] Duray, I. L. (2025). Lived experiences of school heads in the change and reforms in the educational landscape: A phenomenological study. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.90400071>
- [12] Fullan, M. (2016). *The new meaning of educational change* (5th ed.). Teachers College Press.
- [13] Huber, S. G., & Pruitt, J. (2024). Transforming education leadership through multiple approaches to develop and support school leadership. *Education Sciences*, 14(9), 953. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14090953>
- [14] Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading change*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- [15] Lemoine, P. A. (2019). Mentoring and coaching new school leaders. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 14(3), 45–59.
- [16] Leontopoulos, S. (2025). Mentoring and coaching in educational leadership: Contemporary empirical findings. *European Journal of Educational Studies*.
- [17] Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- [18] Montañez, M. J., & Aclao, R. S. (2023). Teacher motivation and career progression in Philippine public schools. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*.
- [19] Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus groups as qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- [20] Nguyen, D. (2021). Understanding leadership transitions: The experience of newly appointed principals. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 49(4), 512–530.
- [21] Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533–544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- [22] Resnik, D. B. (2020). What is ethics in research & why is it important? National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/bioethics/whatis/index.cfm>

- [23] Seidman, I. (2019). Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences (5th ed.). Teachers College Press.
- [24] van Manen, M. (1990). Researching lived experience