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MANAGING SCHOOL FACILITIES DURING THE IN-PERSON CLASSES THROUGH THE LENS OF SCHOOL HEADS: A PHENOMENOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative-phenomenological study aimed to explore and understand the lived experiences of school heads in managing the school facilities during in-person classes. This also elaborates on how these experiences empower them, as well as how they cope with the challenges, they encounter in managing the school facilities during the in-person classes. The study was conducted in 14 public schools in Sto. Tomas East district, Division of Davao del Norte and there were fourteen participants who participated in this study that were selected through purposive sampling technique. Of these participants, ten were school heads who underwent in-depth interviews, and the remaining four school heads underwent focus group discussion. The data gathered were analyzed through thematic analysis. Results revealed four major themes in their experiences: lacking and damaged school facilities, struggling with insufficient financial resources, promoting shared responsibility in facilities, and maintaining school facilities. To respond to the challenges encountered, participants revealed four coping mechanisms: building strong connections and partnerships, planning in managing the utilization of school facilities, caring for school facility everyone's responsibility, and establishing open communication. Lastly, they have cited four insights that can contribute to managing the school facilities. These include copy best practices in managing school facilities, provision of training on facility management, allocation of budget for repair and maintenance of school facilities, and collaboration with stakeholders. These insights were drawn from the interview of the participants when asked what their key takeaways from all their experiences and challenges were encountered as a school head managing school facilities during the in-person classes.

KEYWORDS: *education, managing school facilities, school heads, in-person classes, qualitative-phenomenological study, Sto. Tomas East District, Division of Davao del Norte*

INTRODUCTION

School leaders needed to be prepared for the new demands of learning to facilitate smooth school operations during the resumption of in-person face-to-face classes. They were required to use all their skills and resources to manage schools appropriately and achieve educational success (Spotlight, 2021). However, not all school heads were trained and knowledgeable on pandemic-induced school lockdowns, thus, practices during the re-opening of in-person face-to-face classes varied among schools (Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė & Ignatavičiūtė, 2022).

In Guangzhou, China, school leaders struggled to create flexible plans to consider possible situations that may arise in their setting, due to a lack of preparedness of school facilities for school re-opening (Chen, Yuzhu & Li Yu, 2021). Similarly, in Korea, some schools face difficulty in sustaining competitiveness due to a lack of extensive and thorough analysis of school facility management which affects student satisfaction and school efficiency (Kim & Kim, 2020). Likewise, elementary schools in Banda Aceh City, Indonesia also had growing numbers in keeping a safe and conducive learning environment because of a lack of school facility plans and monitoring, which led to the deterioration of these learning infrastructures (Sakurai et. al 2017).

In the Philippines, students at elementary schools in Manila lacked basic school infrastructure which affects the teaching and learning process (Agence France-Presse, 2022).

Likewise, in public schools in the Schools Division of Laguna, Valenzuela and Buenvinida (2021) previously reported that school heads needed technical assistance training and mentoring on school facilities and resources management to address challenges that affect school operations due to facility management. JHCCG (2022) added that during the resumption of classes, schools needed to maintain a learning environment that caters to the needs of children during the two years of school closure.

In the Schools Division of Davao del Norte, school leaders were required to plot out actions to prepare for the resumption of in-person classes. A school leader shared that there were a lot of school facilities and resources needed to continue delivering quality education after the pandemic, but they were willing to address these concerns just to avoid sacrificing the learning of the students. One of the common issues was the lack of chairs and poor management of school facilities due to the two-year

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school lockdowns. Another, school head supported that they were pressured to cope with these problems and evaluate their actions just to avoid wastage of school resources, so they need to come up with better plans and programs.

There had been lacking literature on the role of school heads in school facility management during the re-opening of face-to-face classes. Bond, Christakis, and Lach (2022) found out in their study that leaders had the role of coming up with different strategies and better decisions to address problems in school facilities. Furthermore, the study by Ezeugbor, Ongeli, and Okaye (2018) also identified school heads administrative strategies in providing safe and efficient school facilities to demonstrate quality learning. Despite growing research on school facilities, there is an existing gap in how school leaders manage school facilities and ensure that these facilities are properly used to achieve their intended educational goals. This research focused on the administration role of school heads and how they manage school facilities to impact the quality of education.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore and understand the lived experiences of school heads of Santo Tomas-East district, Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte in managing school facilities during the in-person classes.

In this study, the lived experiences of school principals in managing school facilities are generally defined as their challenges and coping mechanisms in managing school facilities during the resumption of in-person classes, and the insight gained from these experiences.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of school heads in managing school facilities during the in-person classes?
2. How do the school heads cope with the challenges encountered in managing school facilities during the in-person classes?
3. What are the insights that can be shared by the school heads in managing school facilities during the in-person classes?

METHODS

This study employed qualitative research particularly using the phenomenological approach which sought to explore the lived experiences of school heads in managing the school facilities during the in-person classes. Phenomenological study was used to describe and understand the lived experiences of school heads in managing the school facilities during the in-person classes. Besides, phenomenological study could interpret the perception and beliefs of the school heads.

The participants of this study were the 14 selected school heads of Sto.Tomas East district, Sto. Tomas Davao del Norte. According to Creswell and Poth (2019), to produce a thorough and comprehensive description of the phenomenon under inquiry, the sample size for a phenomenological study may range from three to 25 people. I purposefully selected fourteen (14) research participants for this study,ten participants would undergo In-Depth Interview (IDI) and four participants would have the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The interview was done face to face in the selected large schools in Sto. Tomas East district. The participants of this study were chosen through a purposive sampling technique. The following criteria was used in selecting the participants: (a) they were a school head for at least three (3) years; (b) they were managing school facilities during in-person classes, and (c) they were handling public schools in Sto. Tomas-East district.

Furthermore, thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method that involves reviewing a data collection and looking for patterns in meaning throughout the data to extract themes.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Role of School Heads in Managing School Facilities

School management of school facilities is an integral part of the overall management of the school. During the actualization of the education goals, it requires the availability, planning, organizing, maximum utilization, and appropriate maintenance of the school facilities (Adamu et. al. 2019). Schools need to adapt new practices in school facility management to continue delivering educational services. With this, school heads need to be aware of their functions in managing school facilities (NEDA, 2021).

Accordingly, effective facility management among is crucial in increasing the achievement of educational objectives and establishing a suitable learning environment. Effective school facility management is a precursor that permits the long-term development, usage, and maintenance assistance that improves students' and teachers' overall efficiency. (Fadahunsi et al.2019). Likewise, school heads should make sure that a school's facilities are adequately maintained, stored, or run effectively. They can perform site visits to learn more about the upkeep procedures followed by instructors and students (Alsayyari et al. 2019).

Furthermore, Krysiak (2022) cited that managing school buildings is a crucial duty for school heads. They should have a clear potential to enhance the learning environment by managing the school's facilities. They need to gather fresh perspectives and develop an improvement strategy. They must interact with instructors and other facility workers to know the existing conditions of school facilities.

School Facility Management

School facility management is a multifaceted discipline encompassing the strategic planning, organization, decision-making, coordination, and control of the physical environment within educational institutions to achieve educational objectives (Atogenzoya & Kidodo, 2020). It involves the effective and efficient utilization of all educational equipment, including planning, procurement, maintenance, and control of facilities and infrastructure (Safitri et al., 2021).

The comprehensive nature of school facility management is crucial for ensuring the smooth functioning of educational institutions. According to Christopher and Okoye (2022), educational facilities encompass the entire school that administrators, teachers, and students utilize. The availability and proper management of these resources are critical for

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achieving effectiveness in the learning process and supervision within schools. This comprehensive approach ensures that all aspects of the physical environment are conducive to learning and teaching.

Furthermore, effective school facility management plays a significant role in supporting the educational process and social needs of students. The efficient management of educational facilities and infrastructure is vital for enhancing the learning process. It involves utilizing all resources owned by schools to improve the educational experience. This includes ensuring that physical structures and equipment are maintained and utilized effectively to create an environment conducive to learning (Pangestu & Hariri, 2022).

Similarly, school facility management also involves planning for preventive and corrective maintenance of school facilities and resources which improves school efficiencies, reduce administrative burden, and saves money in the long run (HES, 2021). However, the study of Leal,et.al.(2018) revealed that these planning for sustainable school facility management are often challenged by lack of institutional support and lack of capacity to sustain school facility management.

School Facility in the Resumption of In-person Classes

One challenge during the opening of in-person classes was enough space for socially distanced teaching. Guadix, et al. (2020) pointed out that there were limited classrooms and traditional classrooms were not enough to adhere to the suggested physical distancing of learners. Atalian Global Services (2019) shared that these educational changes influenced the designs, nature, and types of school facilities. Today, these school facilities create spaces both for academic purposes and social activities.

Moreover, school facilities in the new normal will focus on flexibility, digital interaction, safety and well-being of learners and teachers (Europa, 2020). Classrooms will be adaptable to the changing needs and will allow configurations based on the needs of the class or activities to be conducted. Schools should implement several ways to accelerate the improvement of school quality by analyzing the availability of facilities and infrastructure that support the learning process (Nurabadi, 2021).

Accordingly, Yearout Energy (2022) also posed the challenge of space utilization during the in-person classes since there is a required occupancy rate in the classroom. School facility management must be carefully decided on how to best use existing space to meet these requirements while also achieving the goals of education. Navarro (2022) also reported that there is still a problem in classroom-student ratio that must be addressed. More classrooms are needed to meet the safety standards and the increasing enrollment. Existing classrooms must be properly maintained due to wear and tear, and calamities.

Furthermore, Krysiak (2022) also shared that during the school lockdowns, some schools failed to thoroughly assess the condition of school facilities which lead to safety issues, disrepair, and lack of maintenance. These issues impact students coming to school as it takes away from the student's educational experience and can lead to public concerns about the ability of a school to meet the required needs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Experiences of School Heads in Managing School Facilities during the In-person Classes

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Lacking and Damaged School Facilities	• having dilapidated classrooms need minor and major repairs. • facing problem with water facilities • having insufficient handwashing facilities • lacking classrooms • using substandard classrooms for learning • lacking armchairs • having damaged lamps and school fence
Struggling from Insufficient Financial Resources	• receiving limited budget from DepEd • having encountered problem sourcing out funds for school improvement • having difficulty managing the limited budget • needing budget for repair and maintenance of physical facilities • being challenged with no budget for the shortage of classrooms
Receiving Help from Stakeholders	• being grateful to community partners for the promised two classrooms • getting the help of co teachers, PTA and LGU • having received help from barangay council for the school • being helped by the parents repair the armchairs
Maintaining School Facilities	• assuring the functionality of facilities provided by DepEd for the learners • utilizing available resources in the school • improving the school physical facilities • addressing issues in plumbing and electrical system

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Lacking and Damaged School Facilities

We have repairable chairs and desk, and we have a problem also in our water facilities.IDI-03

One of the problems is lack of classrooms. IDI-08

Facilities like classrooms and handwashing facilities are the main concern considering that some of our classrooms need minor and a major repair because their classrooms are almost dilapidated. IDI-01

School heads confirmed that one of the challenges they encounter in managing school facilities during the in-person classes is diverse. They also agreed that paying attention to the various issues is necessary as it will establish the best possible learning environment for both students and staff. As a school head they were expected to address maintenance difficulties, deal with resource shortages, and cope with the physical deficiencies. Furthermore, proactive action is also necessary to effectively address these fundamental problems. School heads who prioritize infrastructure enhancements ultimately set the stage for a more rewarding and enriched educational experience for all parties concerned.

This emerging theme was supported by Pandi (2022) stressing that it is important for school leaders to address the inadequacy of school facilities as it significantly impacts the quality of education. Furthermore, Aini (2023) also added that failing to address this issue will not only directly affect the academic performance of the students but also some of the administrative services. Likewise, Penti's (2023) findings also indicates that inadequate school facilities have direct correlation to school achievement. Limitations in school facilities hinder ability of the teachers to achieve learning goals and affect academic outcome of the students.

Hardiana et al. (2023) also added that adequate school facilities do not only facilitate effective teaching but also include overall well-being of the students. School heads should invest in comprehensive infrastructure and resources to reflect a school that elevates educational experience among students and empowers teachers. School heads contribute in achieving a thriving academic atmosphere if they understand the value of school facility management and how it relates to their educational targets.

Struggling from Insufficient Financial Resources

To resolve that kind of problem, lacking of classroom is challenging because it involves large budget. FGD-01

I experience difficulty especially which involves money, financial resources, and producing budget for the repair and maintenance of the physical facilities. IDI-06

I have difficulty in the limited budget. Managing limited budgets and resources is a common challenge. School heads need to allocate funds strategically to address the diverse needs of the school facilities, considering maintenance, repairs, and potential upgrades. IDI-10

School heads during the in-person classes encountered difficulty in managing the limited budget to address the maintenance and procurement of some essential school facilities for the in-person classes. This also led to devise strategies necessary to address the problem on financial constraints, as it may affect the quality of learning of the students.

This result is supported by Mulyadi et al. (2022) highlighting that limited budget may defer school facility maintenance and plans. This may lead to poor resource management and contribute to gradual school facility deterioration. Limited budget poses an obstacle to addressing critical maintenance needs which hinders the functionality and sustainability of school facilities. Furthermore, this is also supported by Pandi (2022) saying that the lack of school facilities is coupled by the constrained school funds which compelled school heads to innovate solutions, especially on funding strategies. Herath et al. (2022) also shared the importance of exploring alternative funding avenues such as donations from private partnership and key community stakeholders to improve the quality of school infrastructures and enhance the maintenance process.

The challenges on budget constraints were also linked to issues of classroom-student ratios, and inadequate furniture as reported by Yearout Energy (2022). School heads were challenged to make strategic planning to optimize available funds effectively and set clear goals. Advocating wise budget utilization and collaborating with stakeholders and government bodies secure additional funds for upkeep to sustained management of school facilities during the in-person classes (Onyekwere and Ubong, 2019).

Receiving Help from Stakeholders

They helped in the repair of the armchairs. Unlike in my previous station where there were no male teachers that can easily help. I can also compare the help from the parents or people from the school community.IDI-08

There are many individuals, groups who helped the school most especially the Baranggay council they are very helpful and very active in helping our school, assisting our school. Also, the PTA and private company help the school. IDI-07

I am deeply grateful to our community partners, the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), and the LGU Sto. Tomas for their invaluable assistance in addressing the challenges I encountered. Their generous donations of materials have been instrumental in overcoming these difficulties. Additionally, I am inspired by the commitment of LGU Sto. Tomas, who have pledged to provide at least two classrooms, promising further support for our cause. IDI-05

School heads recognize the potential of tapping to stakeholders and community for an extra help. This also emphasized the benefit of their connections with people that have concern to the school and encouraging them for continuous support, especially in the times of need.

This finding relates to the ideas shared by Ramasimu (2022) that external support from stakeholders and community engagement are essential in ensuring optimal functioning and maintenance of school facilities. School heads need to establish comprehensive and inclusive stakeholder engagement,

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especially in identifying and addressing issues on school facilities. However, Khadija (2022) also highlighted that not all school heads have fully engaged with certain stakeholders such as civic groups, businesspeople, non-governmental organizations, and alumnae. He added that holistic approach is necessary to ensure involvement of all relevant stakeholders, regardless of their background or affiliation.

Ongwela (2023), further, explained that external support can also be associated to involving all parties during the planning process of educational facilities to ensure that all their needs are meet. This inclusive approach aligns educational goals to the interest of the community. This is also supported by Firman and Arnyana (2023) saying that by informing stakeholders, and giving them opportunity to engage and help, they can actively collaborate to all the school facility management initiatives. Likewise, engaging local communities can also contribute to grassroots solutions, whether through volunteer efforts, resource contribution, or advocacy for improved facilities. Schools need to actively seek external assistance, engage stakeholders, and involve the community to ensure a sustainable and effective approach to managing their facilities. (Alsayyari et. Al. 2019).

Maintaining School Facilities

It's about both enjoying and effectively utilizing the diverse resources available to us within the school.
FGD-02
The challenge here revolves around maintaining and repairing a range of facilities within the school premises, encompassing classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and recreational areas. This encompasses tasks like addressing plumbing and electrical system issues, among others. FGD-04
As a school head, there are so many concerns about how to improve the physical facilities of the school especially repair and maintenance of the classrooms. FGD-02

School heads need to check on the quality of educational infrastructures and involve students and teachers in the process, since they are the ones occupying and using these facilities.

It is also supported by the ideas of Kingsley (2019) emphasizing the role of school heads in the reinforcement of preventive maintenance practices. These practices were crucial in identifying potential issues in school facilities before they escalate into major problems. Preventive maintenance was also described by Chatwin (2022) as one of the priorities of school heads as it keeps school facilities in good conditions. Scaletta and Hughes (2020) previously echoed this sentiment, highlighting the necessity of effective maintenance strategies and policies to ensure the longevity and efficiency of school facilities.

In the context of preventive and corrective maintenance, Leal et al. (2018) shed light on the challenges posed by a lack of institutional support, hindering sustainable school facility management planning. Moreover, Shaibu et al. (2019) attribute problems in facility management to the lack of effective monitoring and poor maintenance culture among teachers, learners, and staff. The paramount importance of regular and routinary maintenance and checking of school facilities emphasizes the need for proactive facility management strategies to ensure a conducive learning environment.

Table 2
Major Themes and Core Ideas on Coping Mechanism of School Heads in Managing School Facilities during the In-person Classes

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Building Strong Connections and Partnership	• establishing good and harmonious relationship with stakeholders to gain their support • sending letter for assistance from internal and external stakeholders • partnering with alumni abroad • seeking support from the teachers, PTA and other authorities • delegating teachers in handling the maintenance of school facilities • gaining support from the PTA and barangay council • involving stakeholders in addressing challenges effectively
Planning in Managing the Utilization of School Facilities	• planning in prioritizing facilities that the learners need • scheduling the use of handwashing facilities by grade level to avoid crowding • developing effective strategies to ensure safe and inclusive learning environment for all • prioritizing school facilities that need immediate repair • conducting regular inspection of the school facilities to prevent damages may cause major repair • drafting detailed facility management plan for maintenance and improvement projects
Promoting Shared Responsibility in Facilities	• promoting shared responsibility among stakeholders as part of the school • imposing proper use of handwashing facility as training the kids • reminding teachers to teach students to be responsible in using school facilities • asking teachers to remind students take care of school facilities .
Establishing Open Communication	• presenting school problems to PTA officials for some alternative solutions • consulting teachers to make a right decision • including teachers and stakeholders in planning, assessing, and managing school facilities

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Building Strong Connections and Partnership

I do believe that by establishing a good and harmonious relationship between the school and the stakeholders and it will build strong connection. It really helps a lot of gain support from them. FGD -01

I always seek support from the teachers, co-school heads, PTA and other relevant authorities. IDI-05

The strategy that I employ is that to involve the presence and the help of stakeholders. IDI-02

School heads need to address the issues on managing school facilities during the in-person classes by seeking assistance from key individuals and groups. This is only possible if they build meaningful connections with various stakeholders through collaboration and partnership.

This strategy is also emphasized by Cabigan (2023) on his findings revealing that collaborative culture is important in effective school facility management. Similarly, Sergienko (2022) also noted distributed leadership, collaborating and teamwork, especially on coming up with decisions on school facility management. Lu and Hallinger (2022) also bring attention to the positive impact of collaboration and partnership by emphasizing the importance of open communication and feedback for continuous improvement.

Furthermore, Raman (2019) also emphasized the role of school heads in fostering a democratic, distributed culture, and collaboration among teams within and outside the school for an effective school facility management. For instance, in the context of transitioning back to in-person classes, Spotlight (2021) emphasizes the need for collaborative efforts among educators, administrators, and community stakeholders. Bond, Christakis, and Lach (2022) also underline the importance of collaborative decision-making and problem-solving among school leaders, emphasizing the role of external support and knowledge networks. Brunner & Vincent (2018) draw attention to the impact of partnerships on school facility management, stressing the importance of connections within the school community. Whether it is sharing knowledge, seeking technical assistance, or collaborating with external entities, strong connections and partnerships is a necessity in effective school facility management. The success of managing school facilities lies in fostering robust connections and partnerships that extend beyond the school walls.

Planning in Managing the Utilization of School Facilities

I make a list on the different school facilities that needs a repair, needs the immediate maintenance, need the reproduction and the priority order so that, needed one to be re-fix or repaired. IDI-06

As a school head coping with challenges in managing facilities during the in-person classes can be difficult, but it's important to develop strategies to address these challenges effectively. By implementing strategies, I can effectively manage facilities during in-person classes and ensure a safe and conclusive learning environment for all. IDI-05

It is on having a regular maintenance and inspection of the school facilities. Conducting regular inspections, By having this, It prevent minor damages and repairs becomes major problems. IDI-09

School heads confirmed that this is crucial in fostering effective learning environment as thoughtful plans and decision-making allow them to navigate successfully through the different stages of school facility management and address underlying issues that they encountered.

This is supported Arizqi (2023) sharing that strategic school facility management supports educational activities by carefully planning how school facilities management is carried out for the goal of optimization. Yulius (2020) also previously accentuated the significance of implementing strategies and plans by recognizing the multifaceted aspects of facility management, including planning, procurement, utilization, supervision, and maintenance. This also highlights the need for a holistic approach that considers resource allocation, infrastructure analysis, and educational needs identification. Likewise, according to Ya'cub and Ga'a (2021), responsibilities of school heads in school facility management encompassed planning, organizing, mobilizing, and controlling infrastructure which underscore the complex nature of their role in driving effective facility management practices. This emphasizes the indispensable contribution of strong leadership in ensuring the efficient functioning of educational resources.

Furthermore, strategic planning, as highlighted by Chatwin (2022), assist school heads in managing facilities and infrastructure by developing targeted strategies and assigning responsibilities. This strategic approach ensures that facilities are well-maintained and aligned with the educational objectives of the institution, reinforcing the integral role of strategic school facility management in creating an environment conducive to effective learning and educational outcomes.

Promoting Shared Responsibility in Facilities

I consider the most effective is the strategy that I include the stakeholders in strategic planning. It is really best to include them because it promotes collaboration. In that way they can feel that they are part of the school, and they will have their shared responsibility.IDI-01

I always reminded the teachers to remind their students of their responsibilities to take good care of all the facilities they are using in return to the free of charge usage of all school facilities. In short, the teachers should teach responsibility for them to become responsible.IDI-08

I also asked the help of all the teachers in reminding the students to take good care of our school facilities. In that way, our school facilities will long last. IDI-09

One of the many ways to reinforce sustainability and longevity of school facilities is through responsible and proper use. This includes constantly reminding teachers and students on how to take good custody of school properties so that it can be used by the next generation. Teachers must include in their lessons the benefit of functional facilities for the convenience of all, free of

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charge so that students will make it a habit and become disciplined to do it on their own without someone reminding them. Thus, ensuring the maintenance of school facilities and properties is a shared responsibility of every member of school-community.

This idea is also supported by Elyani (2022) expressing that cultivating a culture of responsibility and proper use of school facilities is paramount. The fundamental role of school heads in educating teachers and students on the proper use of school facilities gradually instill a sense of responsibility. By constantly promoting proper usage of school facilities, it can be preserved and contribute for its longevity benefiting the entire school community. The importance of effective classroom management encourages teachers to leverage school facilities to foster discipline among their students to be responsible.

Furthermore, Pakpahan and Hidayati (2021) stressed that cultivating a culture of responsibility in the use and maintenance of facilities directly contributes to the overall well-being of students. Well-maintained physical environment of schools and high-quality educational infrastructure is crucial for supporting the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive health of the students. Thien et al. (2022) highlight how school leaders can cultivate such a culture by practicing value-driven leadership. Through promoting positive discipline, school leaders foster a culture of responsibility and proper use of school facilities. Similarly, collaborative efforts as emphasized by Alsayyari et al. (2019), ensure that responsibility becomes a shared value, fostering a sense of collective ownership. Ezeubor et al. (2018) also recommend fostering awareness among students to instill a sense of responsibility.

Establishing Open Communication

We have these PTA officials in our school and I, tap and coordinated with them. I presented the problem that is why they have also that alternative.IDI-03

For me talk to the parents during meetings, conferences about the problem we encounter to solve the problem. FGD-03

Consultation among teachers, on what is the best to do because not all the time my decision is right, I made consultation among the teachers. IDI-04

Effective communication and problem resolution is a must skill among school heads managing school facilities during the in-person classes. School heads noted that they need to discuss and connect important matters with people within and outside the school, regarding school facilities management. With effective communication they can ensure that problems were well-discussed, and they can agree on what is the best solution for each issue encountered.

This is supported by Firman and Arnyana (2023) that school heads need to develop effective communication for them to gain valuable support and openly address the challenges that their school faced. Harber (2020) also previously explained that effective problem resolution creates a conducive learning environment as matters like, proper allocation of budget is openly discussed by the entire group. Sugiratu and Mazdayani (2022) stress the importance of communication and problem resolution in addressing infrastructure-related challenges for quality education highlighting the role of school administrators in educating teachers and students on the proper use of facilities and encouraging them to take part on managing school facilities.

Furthermore, the work of Alsayyari et al. (2019) also underscores the importance of in-depth analysis and relationship-management skills for effective problem resolution. Involving the team to look closely on the issue allows them the opportunity to openly solicit idea on how to address the problem. School leaders who develop effective communication and sound problem resolution better cope with the challenges on school facility management during the resumption of in-person classes. Fostering clear communication channels and proactive problem resolution strategies ensure the smooth functioning of school facilities and active participation of involve parties.

Table 3
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Insights of School Heads in Managing School Facilities during the In-person Classes

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Collaboration with Stakeholders	• collaborating with various stakeholders for successful facility management • fostering collaboration with school community to get financial support from the community • engaging school community to gather valuable feedback for a collaborative approach to facility management • coordinating with stakeholders to get help in solving problems in facility management
Collection of Best Practices in Managing School Facilities	• asking potential leaders who can surely help for excellent output • benchmarking good practices for improvement • seeking advice from school head with best practices in managing school facilities
Provision of Training on Facility Management	• providing regular training and professional development for school heads in facility management • conducting trainings on maintaining school facilities during in-person classes • sending school heads to more trainings and workshop
Allocation of Budget for Repair and Maintenance of School Facilities	• allocating financial resources for school facilities • increasing life span of school facilities by allocating funds for repair and maintenance • needing to allocate funds to address diverse needs of the school facilities

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Collaboration with Stakeholders

Managing school facilities requires collaboration with various stakeholders, including teachers, parents and other stakeholders. Thus, building effective communication channels and team works is essential for successful facility management. IDI-05

School Head must establish and foster collaboration with the school community especially the parents, the Baranngay Council and other stakeholders. The school cannot stand alone. It needs financial support in the community. IDI-09

They have to coordinate also with their stakeholders in order that… whenever they have, they will be encountering problems… it can be solve by the stakeholders. IDI-03

By facilitating cooperation among stakeholders, school leaders can effectively navigate challenges and ensure the sustained advancement of the educational mission of the institution. Their commitment to gain support from stakeholders emphasize that they need to have adequate knowledge and competence in addressing issues within educational facilities as much as foster an inclusive atmosphere, that acknowledges the valuable support of stakeholders.

This finding is supported by the study of Aquino (2023) revealing that fostering a collaboration within educational institutions is key to effective school facility management. School heads need to employ strategies that promote group decision-making, effective teacher collaboration, and strong school-community partnerships to create an inclusive and collaborative environment that supports effective school facility management. Likewise, Khan (2023) also added that soliciting feedback in assessing the needs of the school and community, creates a democratic and distributed culture that promotes collaboration within the school. By fostering a culture of collaboration, school leaders can create an inclusive and collaborative environment that supports effective school facility management. Holistic and collaborative approach to school facility management is fundamental to ensuring the effective and sustainable management of school facilities. This collaborative environment not only enhances the management of school facilities but also contributes to positive educational outcomes and overall school performance.

Collection of Best Practices in Managing School Facilities

Strategize, do not just try to ask those, leaders whom you think are insignificant. Try to ask those potential leaders; surely you will see a good output and strive for excellence. FGD-04

I always benchmarked to other school especially with their best practices or good practices. I'd like to suggest that they do the same. we have so much to know, we have so much to improve. learning in progress is a continuous process we cannot drawn to what we have now, we cannot say it on.IDI-07
Ask advices to other school heads on what. to do, what are their best practices in managing school facilities.IDI-09

School heads can adopt effective strategies and implement successful approaches to enhance the quality and functionality of school facilities. This approach not only allows for the transfer of knowledge and skills but also promotes a culture of continuous learning, improvement, and excellence within the school community.

This theme is supported by Mu'is (2023) sharing that the insights of experienced leaders, benchmarking successful approaches, and embracing exemplary practices stand as invaluable strategies for school heads to refine their facility management strategies. Emulating best practices not only cultivates innovation but also drives efficiency (Februannisa & Anggraini, 2022). Additionally, benchmarking initiatives contribute substantially to the holistic enhancement of facility management practices within educational institutions, as evidenced by research. Therefore, by leveraging these approaches, school leaders can foster continuous improvement and elevate the standards of infrastructure management in their respective institutions (Abdelmohsen et al., 2019).

Provision of Training on Facility Management

DepEd officials should conduct a training that focus on the maintaining on managing school facilities during in the in-person classes. IDI-06

DepEd Officials should conduct trainings and activities that helps school head in addressing the struggles they have encountered in managing the school facilities. IDI-07
"Trainings, more trainings, workshop to the school heads. FGD-03

This finding is supported by the Silva & Andal (2023) stressing developmental programs equip school heads with competencies in financial management, school facilities, and equipment. Through this, they can be able to come up with informed decision-making and efficient resource oversight. Furthermore, Omusula & Imbuka (2019) also emphasize the role of institutionalized professional development programs ensuring capacity building for teachers to contribute to the school facility management planning and practices. Similarly, Sergienko and Sokolova (2022) also cited these learning opportunities support the development of fully functional managers adhering to professional standards. In the rapidly evolving landscape of education, these initiatives become indispensable for school leaders, preparing them to navigate unprecedented challenges, particularly evident in the unique demands of the pandemic-induced lockdowns (Spotlight, 2021).

Furthermore, training programs not only address knowledge gaps but also contribute to enhancing the competitiveness of educational institutions by providing leaders with strategic planning skills. Institutionalized professional development and training programs for school leaders are crucial for equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and mindset needed to lead with excellence, resilience, and foresight. These initiatives play a vital role in shaping the trajectory of education in institutions, fostering a culture of informed decision-making, proactive leadership, and collaborative approaches to address the challenges in school facility management (Kim & Kim, 2020).

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Allocation of Budget for Repair and Maintenance of School Facilities

Resource allocation support. Third, create technical assistance teams that can offer on-site support to school heads facing complex facility management challenges. IDI-05

Give proper or scheduled for the maintenance of your school facilities. Have a yearly budget for the repair and maintenance to all the school facilities in order to maximize its life span, assign the field expert teacher or personnel to maintain supervise operation of every school facility. IDI-06

Detailed facility management plan that outlines short-term and long-term goals, budget allocation, and a timeline for addressing maintenance and improvement projects. IDI-10

Budget for repair and maintenance of school facilities, is necessary for strategic oversight and informed decision-making. Without a comprehensive understanding of the available resources and the prudent allocation of budget, school heads may continuously struggle to managing resources to ensure a conducive environment for teaching and learning.

This is supported by Filardo et al. (2019) also explained that budget planning and preventive maintenance is part of a strategic approach in mitigating financial challenges, as it employs cost-effective preventive maintenance strategies. School leaders need to develop a well-thought-out strategic school facility management plan to adapt to the challenges pose by the resumption of in-person classes (Yearout Energy, 2022). Likewise, financial considerations also play a crucial role in proactive planning, with schools needing to allocate funds wisely, plan for upgrades, and engage in preventive maintenance to ensure the longevity of facilities, aligning with the findings of Krysiak (2022).

CONCLUSION

The experiences of school heads in managing the school facilities during the in-person classes has been incredibly enlightening for me. By delving into the varied and insightful narratives provided by the school heads, I've gained significant understanding of the challenges they encountered, how they dealt with them, and the beneficial results they achieved through this distinctive educational journey.

Managing school facilities during in-person classes is a multifaceted responsibility that requires effective resource management, community engagement, adaptability, regular maintenance, and environmental consideration. School heads who successfully navigate these challenges contribute significantly to creating a safe, effective, and welcoming learning environment for students and staff.

School heads often face the challenge of balancing limited resources with the need to maintain and upgrade facilities. Effective budgeting and resource allocation are critical to ensuring that all necessary repairs, upgrades, and maintenance are performed timely.

In summary of the above, this study has served as a profound revelation, illuminating the myriad experiences of school heads in managing the school facilities.The insights emphasized the importance of learning from successful models, investing in professional development, securing financial resources, and engaging with stakeholders to enhance infrastructure sustainability and optimize facility management practices. Furthermore, the narratives of the participants also not only reflect the innovative and strategic approaches employed by school leaders but also emphasize the importance of continuous learning, resource allocation, and partnership development in ensuring the long-term sustainability and functionality of school facilities.

The coping mechanisms employed by school heads are proactive and collaborative approaches adopted by school leaders to address infrastructure challenges and enhance facility management practices. Moreover, by building partnerships, prioritizing facility management planning, promoting accountability, and enhancing communication channels, school heads can effectively navigate infrastructure challenges, optimize resource utilization, and create a supportive and inclusive environment for all stakeholders

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