

A Call for Commitment: The Lived Experiences of Public Junior High School Teachers in School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) For a Responsible Management Education



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ABSTRACT: Designed with qualitative-transcendental phenomenology, this study aimed at understanding the lived experience in the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), a K to 12 Basic Education Program School-Based Continuing Professional Development Strategy for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning for a Responsible Management Education of selected public junior high school teachers in the division of Santa Rosa City, Laguna, Philippines. The researchers utilized the framework of Moustakas (1994) which consisted of bracketing, horizontalization, theme clustering, textural description, structural description, and essence. The verbatim transcriptions revealed sixteen (16) themes. An in-depth investigation of teachers' lived experiences addressed two specific issues: their experiences in the SLAC and their responses to challenges and demands to improve their performance as teachers. Among the lived experience that surfaced included teacher empowerment through collaboration, transforming impediments into strengths, an instrument for competency enhancement, and the essence of project management. The participating teachers face the challenges and demands of the SLAC through the necessity of monitoring and evaluation, viewing challenges as triggers of change, determination fuels pedagogical enrichment, and commitment as a moral imperative. The findings indicate that collaboration among teachers is critical in executing the SLAC for Responsible Management Education. To reach and actualize the school's goals, teachers should be imbued with dedication, a sustained grasp of policy/program principles, character strength, community participation, and innovation. It requires greater commitment and leadership from teachers as well as school administrators and managers.

KEYWORDS: School Learning Action Cell, Phenomenology, Responsible Management Education, Lived Experience, Call for Commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Professional development and growth have always been the primary goals of teachers as they embark on the journey of self-discovery and self-improvement. In so doing, they place a premium on policies that, in some way or another, assist them in achieving the desired improvement, particularly in the instructional process. Professional learning communities (PLC), a group of teachers that meet regularly to share expertise and promote student learning have become a widely acknowledged approach to school improvement and student achievement. It has become a standard framework for professional learning and development for teachers (Watson, 2014; Turner et al., 2018) as cited in Antinluoma et. al. (2021).

In Eastern European countries, studies have indicated that the presence of PLC practices was perceived more highly by teachers. As the focal point of education, educational leaders can highlight the relevance of teaching and learning through professional learning communities by addressing issues such as a lack of administrative support (Roberts & Pruitt, 2009), the strength of learning communities, students' economic situations, types of learning experiences among teachers (Hargreaves, 2003; Reeves, 2000), school system resources, and a lack of financial support (Aguerreberre, 2008), as cited in Higgins (2016).

In the Philippines, there is a mismatch between school curricula and corporate demands which has been going on for years (IMD World Competitiveness Center, 2019). While the state of education has improved in terms of accessibility, it still has a long way to go in terms of providing quality education for all students. To address this issue, the Department of Education implemented the Learning Action Cell (LAC) policy, which is akin to the professional learning community, as a K-12 Basic Education

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Program School-Based Continuing Professional Development Strategy for Improving Teaching and Learning (DepEd Order # 35 s. 2016).

Considered crucial for teachers' professional growth, the SLAC can also be utilized as a tool for responsible management education. As such, it focuses on building educational frameworks, resources, processes, and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership (United Nations PRME Principle 3, 2007). With it, teachers can develop and achieve their institutional goals, such as acquiring pedagogical knowledge and expertise in the new normal context of education.

Desta (2018) said most teachers define success by student behavior and activities. Correspondingly, recognizing that teaching quality influences student learning, the Department of Education supports teachers' professional development through a Learning Action Cell (LAC), a healthy, caring, and safe school-based community (DepEd Order 35, 2016).

Many scholars have previously underscored the significance of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and according to Antinluoma et. al. (2021), it is a widely acknowledged approach for school improvement and student achievement by using a structured process of analysis to focus on a certain area of their teaching to enhance student outcomes and thereby school standards. Similarly, PLCs bring together educators committed to working collaboratively in a continuous cycle of collective inquiry and action research to improve student outcomes (Eyanagho 2019). Meanwhile, Lawani (2018) emphasized that academic qualifications, relevant professional training, and work experience are the most significant determinants of students' academic performance.

There have been a significant number of studies undertaken on the SLAC and its implication for teachers' performance and students' achievement. LAC sessions, according to Cabral et al. (2019), help teachers improve as well as develop ethics and professionalism. Suarez (2017), noted that after LAC sessions, teachers used less teacher-centered strategies and more group and laboratory activities, videos, PowerPoint presentations, and hands-on activities, all of which benefit the teaching-learning process. Similarly, most implementers agreed that LAC implementation impacted teacher development, student achievement, school leaders' practice, and school climate positively (Binauhan 2019).

Meanwhile, a framework based on responsible management education was presented for creating and deploying CPD, a lifetime learning process that strives to improve a professional's knowledge and abilities through modernization, scientific and technical advancements in the profession. Other factors that can be considered in this framework include learner and teacher characteristics, instructional goals, and resources. As Waddock et al. (2009) and Gadelshina et al. (2021) described, aside from student learning outcomes and school performance, responsible management education asserts the school's most important role in addressing social issues.

METHODS

Research Design

The study specifically utilized Psychological Phenomenology (also termed Transcendental or Empirical Phenomenology) by Moustakas (1994) as cited in Creswell (2017) because SLAC is a phenomenon. This research design involved in-depth interviews and observations with public junior high school teachers to determine their lived experiences in facing the challenges and demands of the aforementioned phenomenon.

Participants of The Study

The researcher selected ten (10) public junior high school teachers in Santa Rosa City, Laguna, the Philippines who utilized the SLAC for Responsible Management Education. This number of participants was recommended by Polkinghorne (1989) as cited in Creswell (2017) suggesting that researchers need to interview 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. Specifically, they were teachers handling different subjects, who were chosen based on the following inclusion criteria: 1) minimum teaching experience of three years; 2) have no negative records as to mishandling responsibilities in their respective learning areas or departments, and 3) those who signed the waiver/consent of participation. Similarly, the researcher utilized purposive or judgmental sampling which intentionally selects the individuals and sites for study because they could purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study thus providing quality assurance (Huberman & Miles) as cited in Creswell (2017).

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the phenomenological framework of Moustakas (1994) as detailed in Creswell (2017). First, the researchers went through bracketing, the first step to consider, in which they set aside all preconceived thoughts and experiences they had to best understand the experiences of the participating public junior high school teachers. After conducting in-depth

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interviews, the researchers performed horizontalization, by which they built data considering the central questions as well as probing questions in the interview guide. This was done by going through the data, i.e., interview transcriptions, highlighting significant statements which are sentences or quotes that provided an understanding of how the participants experienced and faced the challenges and demands of the SLAC for a Responsible Management Education. Then, the researchers developed clusters of meaning from these significant statements into themes which were used to write a textural description of the participants' lived experiences. They also used these significant statements to write a description, called imaginative variation or structural description, of the context or setting that influences how the participants experienced the phenomenon under study. From the structural and textural descriptions, the researchers wrote the composite description that presents the "essence" of facing the challenges and demands of the SLAC for Responsible Management Education. Verification and validation were used to establish the research rigor of this study in terms of its qualitative feature (Meadows & Morse, 2001). The researchers obtained verification by conducting in-depth interviews, adhering to the phenomenological method of inquiry, suspending previous experiences, keeping research notes and journals, utilizing a sufficient sample of participants (Polkinghorne, 1989 as cited by Creswell, 2017), and conducting in-depth interviews until data were refined. Validation was achieved through data collection (in-depth interviews, observation), and data analysis using Moustakas' approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This qualitative phenomenological study examined the lived experience of public junior high school teachers in facing the challenges and demands of the SLAC for Responsible Management Education as an instrument for teachers' acquisition of pedagogical knowledge and expertise being a prerequisite to their professional growth and development.

1) What is the lived experience of selected public junior high school teachers in the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) for Responsible Management Education?

Theme 1: Empowerment through Collaboration. As revealed by the participants, differences, ideas, expertise, and perspectives are harnessed in new ways as they pave the way for the acquisition of teamwork in the workplace. Collaboration has become instrumental in streamlining diversity among teachers. It is integral in addressing school challenges. Also, it does not only promote active involvement but more importantly fosters the establishment of a culture of shared responsibility in the institution. Similarly, it can be a cornerstone for benchmarking and best practices sharing among members of the school community as expressed in the following statement:

It can be a way wherein the needs of the teachers can be addressed when it comes to the teaching-learning process. Through SLAC, we can foster collaboration with stakeholders in improving teachers' pedagogical knowledge and in promoting activities that integrate principles of social responsibility (P1).

The findings support the viewpoint of Vega (2020) affirming that the SLAC is vital for professional growth as it enhanced teachers' educational philosophy and views on teaching as a profession and vocation. Additionally, De Jong et. al (2016) highlighted the significance of teacher collaboration in implementing educational reform. Teachers' self-efficacy and dedication to the organization and students increase when they share knowledge and resources on social networks.

Theme 2: Transforming Impediments into Strengths. Underscored in this theme is the participants' consistency in their comments that professional development helps employees not only stay competitive but also flourish in their occupations. It should be a lifelong process. It requires overcoming failures and challenges to improve teachers. As stated by the participants:

It was difficult at first, but after the teachers got used to this and they would prefer this type of modality, the same goes well with invited resource speakers from outside the school. We also used Google Classroom as a repository of reflections and outputs of teachers (P3).

It is a challenge and something new to us since we only discuss and participate virtually. But as teachers, we need to adjust and adapt to the new set-up to deliver quality education to the students (P7).

Supporting these statements, to effectively develop teachers, DepEd Order 35, s. 2016 posited that continuing school-based learning is key to effective teacher development. They need direction on professional development and must be willing to learn new concepts and techniques to improve their performance. Despite the obstacles, SLACs allow teachers to collaborate and

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learn while implementing classroom changes. Bantugan (2019) argued that teaching strategy training would be beneficial in the hands of effective teachers who can alter students' lives. Teachers learn and train to optimize students' physical, mental, and moral growth (Miller, 2020). This is vital information for schools to promote teacher development.

Theme 3: An Instrument for Competency Enhancement. Prevailing in this cluster of statements is the participants sharing that teachers need to be aware of the different types of students they teach and how to deal with them. Mentoring and coaching help teachers learn from best practices and analyze and reflect on their teaching. Continuing education, peer support, and job guidance can all help improve teaching skills. Developing the teaching staff's competence and commitment is critical to achieving real change. The quality of learning depends on teachers' competency. Teachers' competency will benefit students' academic growth and help teachers improve their teaching approaches.

School Learning Action Cell opens opportunities for professional growth including reskilling and upskilling of the teachers. (P7).

Utilizing SLAC as a strategy for developing priority improvement areas for teachers is one of the highlights of the program. It is merely focused on what the teachers' development needs and not on other matters (P5).

Consequently, Serviss (2021) concurred, adding that PLCs empower teachers to improve teaching and learning directly. It helps teachers share best practices and develop creative ideas to improve student learning and accomplishment. Weekly meetings improve team member relationships and form a school, cluster, or district leadership team. Along with these findings, Brown et al. (2018) underscored that professional learning communities (PLCs) have been shown to improve student achievement and teacher perception. Teachers can easily implement PLCs with a clear understanding of their principles and influencing variables.

Theme 4: Program Management as an Essential Component. The participants revealed in this theme that program management must balance resources amongst projects since they usually compete for human and financial resources. It directly supports, prioritizes, optimizes resource capacity, and manages interdependencies and conflicts. SLAC helps project managers and strategic planners uncover new difficulties and challenges, leading to stronger strategies, products, and processes.

Some of the challenges I encountered in conducting the sessions are the availability of teachers, sometimes some teachers have prior professional engagement in the given schedule, and others are looking for the best fit learning facilitator for a certain topic which is based on the priority improvement areas of teachers and scheduling (P5).

This echoed the findings of Dehaloo (2018) that strong leadership ensures the school delivers excellent services to its community by providing desired and meaningful policies and programs to boost teachers' competence and performance. Team collaboration improves with reliable program management and well-organized plans. Clear roles and goals promote team effectiveness by eliminating confusion. Binauhan (2019) claims that Learning Action Cells assist school leaders to improve practices. It also helps teachers learn more and overcome instructional challenges.

Theme 5: Pursuit in Navigating Online Technology for Quality Engagement amongst Teachers. Peers, supervisors, LAC leaders, and coaches must help teachers navigate online technology or platforms to give a quality education that supports professional development. This is crucial for motivating and empowering change in a school. Similarly, the involvement of stakeholders is fundamental to the school community's dedication and advocacy for development, such as the provision of ICT-related training that improves teachers' online technology abilities to boost the school's overall performance.

SLAC as conducted online has its pros and cons. It is accessible in place and time and provides opportunities for us to explore online apps, in contrast, it has technical issues in terms of connection and navigation. Moreover, it is more fun to conduct face-to-face sessions for we can direct the questions to the learning facilitator and can interact live with our colleagues (P5).

This theme contends that schools must optimize student results due to strict accountability policies. De Jong et al. (2016) emphasized the value of teacher collaboration in implementing educational reforms. Despite new hurdles, technology is a crucial tool for efficient training. According to Paul et al. (2019) online and traditional learning both have advantages. Despite these fundamental similarities, online learning is often student-centered and involves active learning. Students expect technology integration and see it as an important part of their learning experience because it makes learning more enjoyable and engaging

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(Alipour, 2020). Similarly, DepEd Order 35, s. 2016 highlighted the utilization of 21st Century Skills and ICT Integration in Instruction and Assessment.

2. How do the selected public junior high school teachers face the challenges and demands in the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) for Responsible Management Education?

Theme 6: Means to Bolster Professional Growth. As revealed by the participants, education never ends. Career-minded people can constantly improve their skills and job proficiency by continuing their education. To ensure the best learning outcomes for students, school administrators must encourage teacher professional development to improve student learning. Technology, school policies, and curriculum requirements are always changing, making it hard for instructors to keep up. Professional development helps teachers design relevant, student-centered lessons.

The SLAC is one of DepEd's professional development programs for all public-school teachers. This will assist teachers in improving their weaknesses with the assistance of a resource person. A well-improved teaching and learning process will be possible through SLAC to give students a quality education (P6).

The study of Cabral et al. (2019) indicated that LAC sessions helped teachers modify and improve their teaching practices. It helped teachers develop ethics and professionalism. Furthermore, Suarez (2017) asserted that following LAC sessions, the number of teachers using the teacher-centered approach decreased while teachers using other teaching approaches such as group and laboratory activities, films, PowerPoint, and hands-on activities increased.

Theme 7: Instructional Expertise in Retrospect. The participants revealed in this theme that instructional expertise encompasses all of the teacher dispositions and skills. It is significant in that it fosters a passion for learning. This means that having good instructional skills will make the student enjoy what they are learning, understand it, love the subject, and always want to learn more about it.

The key indicators for the effectiveness of the SLAC are that there are clear pieces of evidence of critical reflection among teachers leading to changes in classroom practice, and an increased understanding and knowledge of the curriculum (P4).

The findings presented above are consistent with Rincón-Gallardo et al. (2016), a teacher community or network can enhance student and adult learning and engagement. It also improves the system as a whole and strengthens teachers' and leaders' capital. Professional Learning Networks and Communities believe educator networks are key to increasing teachers' knowledge and abilities and impacting the classroom. The quality of dialogue among teachers involved in the process of building a good environment is important to its effectiveness (Jones, 2018).

Theme 8: The Necessity of Monitoring and Evaluation. As disclosed by the participants, monitoring and evaluation assess how well a program or intervention meets its objectives. They collect data on a project's progress. It is necessary because it allows the school to monitor a project and identify issues. A school's PPA's (Programs, Projects, and Activities) monitoring, and evaluation help plan and craft interventions.

I had realized that SLAC as a policy for the promotion of a responsible management education approach amplifies the central role of teachers which is to establish learning environments that are responsive to learner diversity. However, there must be standardized guidelines to determine its efficiency (P4).

Gadelshina et al. (2021) supported these findings by emphasizing that if the school administrator is consistent and behaves logically, s/he will gain the trust and commitment of school staff, and as a result, the decisions s/he makes will radiate credibility and integrity. With the implementation of the SLAC, it is critical that the school's monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are defined, organized, and functional. Following that, Glanz (2018) emphasized the importance of effective leadership in the organizational structure of schools. Superiors must be mindful of legislated values such as democracy, transparency, accountability, and mutual respect when dealing with subordinates to ensure a shared culture of excellence and competence in carrying out school policies.

Theme 9: Commitment as Moral Imperative. In this theme, the participants revealed that an organization's commitment to its goals and vision is one of the most important factors for improving school performance. Commitment is defined as the non-financial values of employment. That is, the psychosocial value of paid work determines a person's level of employee commitment.

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Committed employees add value to the organization through determination, proactive support, high productivity, and quality awareness.

LAC sessions can be a way to encourage teachers to write project proposals and mobilize school resources with the help of school partners and stakeholders in advancing the aims of the institution not only in terms of their teaching pedagogy but to encourage them to be actively involved in endeavors that tackle issues in the society (P3).

Employees that feel linked to the organization are more productive and dedicated to their work. According to McDougale (2018), it is generally expected that leaders meet many of the prototypical and idealized expectations of those they represent. Effective and ethical leadership influences and directs the performance of others in the direction of achieving collective goals. Correspondingly, Schminke (2018) presented that the educational leader's moral and ethical development influenced employee commitment to the institution's mission. Moral leadership encourages commitment among subordinates, peers, and fellow educational leaders.

Theme 10: Determination Fuels Pedagogical Enhancement. Basically, as to the context of the participant's responses on how they face the challenges and demands related to the SLAC for a Responsible Management Education, they viewed determination as fundamental to enhancing their pedagogical knowledge. They considered SLAC as an instrument and opportunity for self-empowerment in terms of developing their pedagogical skills.

My understanding of the SLAC is that this is a school-based continuing professional development strategy for teachers. Its implementation made me determined to adopt novel techniques that improved how I execute the teaching and learning process for my students (P4).

This is evident in the literature as it showed that Guskey as cited in Desta (2018) argued that regardless of teaching level, most teachers define their success in terms of their student's behavior and activities. This entails the utmost significance they placed on their endeavors exerted in improving themselves for the benefit of their students. Vega (2020) affirmed that Learning Action Cell is essential for professional growth. Similarly, the LAC policy enhanced teachers' educational philosophy and views on teaching as a profession and vocation.

Theme 11: Sustained Understanding Strengthens Pedagogical Prowess. Another theme disclosed is the participants' ability to foster long-term understanding, which strengthens their resolve in dealing with the SLAC for Responsible Management Education's challenges and demands. A better understanding of the policy and guidelines of the programs leads to more effective implementation. It paves the way for teachers' pedagogical knowledge to be strengthened, which is critical in the classroom because teachers need pedagogical content knowledge to teach conceptual understanding, relational understanding, and adaptive reasoning. SLAC helps teachers understand the instructional process while also promoting their professional growth.

As an educator, SLAC helps me to have a deeper understanding of the curriculum and learning pedagogies. It serves as a strategy for learning new skills and creating a thinking community in school and provides a venue for us teachers to share best practices to be able to solve challenges in the teaching-learning process (P5).

Affirming these results Rotherham and Willingham (2017) asserted that students will need to develop certain skills and knowledge to work and contribute to a globalized information society. Thus, teachers' understanding of SLAC's core principles is critical to their personal and professional growth, as well as their students' achievement. Such understanding and awareness will determine how teachers can integrate 21st-century competencies into the classroom context so that the knowledge students learn will be relevant to their future (Lobo, 2016).

Theme 12: Securing Technical Assistance as an Anchor of Development. The participants revealed in this theme how they underscored the importance of technical assistance, mentorship, and coaching for teachers' professional growth. Effective educators are guided by relevant strategies and approaches. Teachers and students engage in teaching-learning through effective mentoring and coaching. Colleagues believed it was vital to seek assistance as they embarked on their educational journey to better engage students.

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I addressed the challenges of SLAC by requesting technical assistance from my headteacher and school head. Dealing with challenges in SLAC can be also addressed through seeking advice from my colleagues and sometimes through professional readings on the internet (Participant 5).

Effective teacher development requires continuing school-based learning (DepEd Order 35, s. 2016). Teachers should try different methods. This helps them reflect and learn. LACs help teachers learn and collaborate while making classroom changes. Along with this policy, the provision of technical assistance fosters a crucial role in nurturing teachers' performance. Teaching and learning are the focus of effective coaching. This focus promotes leadership, professional development, and teacher support aimed at improving student outcomes.

Theme 13: Viewing Challenges as Mobilizers of Change. As revealed in this theme, confronting challenges and demands is an important facet of one's personal growth and development. The more we can put our limits and capabilities to the test, the more we will discover about ourselves. New challenges present us with new opportunities. As teachers face work-related challenges and demands, they grow better. Challenges and demands provide an excellent opportunity for development. As teachers see challenges as opportunities, they begin to think creatively, breaking down the barriers of limited thinking.

I think the challenges affect my teaching competencies and pedagogy in terms of readiness to adopt the new challenges of the New Normal brought by the pandemic, SLAC helps me become more adaptive and flexible in my teaching pedagogy and competencies. (P10).

Reflecting on the findings of Canterino et al. (2020) concluded that leading change is an ongoing managerial challenge requiring individual and collective efforts. Mobilizing activities is important for educational managers who want to promote change because they permit leaders to activate the resources and processes needed for change to occur. Teachers perceived challenges as opportunities to grow and learn in the SLAC. It taught them that overcoming hurdles required adaptability and learning new instructional practices to benefit the organization and students.

Theme 14: Strength of Character is an Empowering Asset. This theme encompasses teachers' strength of character as an instrument of empowerment in an organizational setting. It teaches them the habits of thought and deed that help people live and work collaboratively in a particular community such as in school. The means available to teachers empower them to provide the educational tools required by all students. This allows them to be creative and adaptable in their classrooms. Teachers extend this mindset in their classroom if they are given the freedom to express their thoughts and ideas in a safe and positive environment.

There are hesitations at first when it comes to incorporating the learnings gained from SLAC, but I always try its application in my class. I apply, evaluate its effectiveness, and modify it if needed (P5).

Teachers are entrusted with educating students, so they must be supportive and accommodating of their needs while nurturing their intra and interpersonal skills (Majid, et al. 2014). Positive psychological factors that influence how people think, feel, and act are referred to as character strengths. Teaching is only part of education. Teachers' character strengths influence students' thinking, feeling, and behavior, and are critical elements in modelling positive or negative behavior. Students identified teachers' knowledge, humanity, and transcendence as common character strengths that had a positive impact on them.

Theme 15: School Community Engagement as a Tool of Progress. The participants revealed in this theme that stakeholders' participation in school engagement manifested increased accountability for both learning outcomes and school resources; participation in curriculum development leads to a broader embrace of the educational process. With school community engagement, stakeholders have access to valued social settings and activities, feel that they can contribute meaningfully to those activities, and develop functional capabilities that enable them to participate entirely. Likewise, it galvanizes connections within the school community and promotes shared learning goals and collaboration. It also increases learning opportunities for students and supports personalized student learning journeys. As a result, an inclusive learning community is established that leads to a culture of shared responsibility.

I think SLAC utilization helps in raising awareness concerning the sustainable development goals in advancing the principles of responsible management education. It paves the way for the realization of the significant impact of stakeholders' participation in every school's endeavor (P4.)

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Well-implemented school community engagement according to Maier et. al. (2017) leads to the improvement in student and school outcomes and contributes to meeting the educational needs of low-achieving students. It encouraged stakeholders, both internal and external, to become actively involved in the delivery of equitable and high-quality education to the young people in the community. Further, their participation in the operation of schools has helped increase access, retention, and attendance rates of children at school (UNESCO Institute for Educational Planning 2021). Education is a social activity in which society helps facilitate and takes part. Schools should understand the value of good community relations.

Theme 16: Strategic Innovation of the Learning Process. As disclosed by the participants, educational innovation encourages teachers and students to explore, research and use all the tools available to uncover novel things or ideas. It involves a different way of looking at problems and solving them. It improves education because it compels students to use a higher level of thinking to solve complex problems. Successful instructional innovation allows teachers to add value to their instructional expertise to augment students' performance. It helps teachers stay ahead of the competition and create interventions to address the difficulties they are facing. With globalization and a rapidly changing educational landscape, it is imperative that teachers must innovate when it comes to the teaching-learning process.

It challenges me how to apply the significant learnings taken from the SLAC because of time constraints brought about by other ancillary works. The newness of the strategies or approaches hinders us from fully applying them to the educational process since we have to get familiar with and master them first (P1).

Innovation in learning occurs in a specific teaching and learning context, improving upon the implementation of the standard practice, or introducing a new practice, thus achieving greater learning outcomes (Vesisenaho 2017). It implies that teachers need to consider the personal learning paths of students and contextualize and sustain them for local contexts. Online technologies that allow individual or collaborative processes to occur across many contexts provide opportunities for supporting localization, contextualization, and personalization of learning. Additionally, creatively improvised, collaboratively elaborated, learning processes are a challenge, but they offer great opportunities for unexpected new beginnings for the enhancement of the instructional process.

Essence. Taken collectively, the narratives of the participants' experiences reveal their struggles to bring out the best in themselves and their students. Teachers learned the importance of teamwork for self-improvement and professional growth as they faced SLAC for Responsible Management Education issues and challenges. Correspondingly, they recognized these obstacles and problems as opportunities to improve their teaching to the students. They used adversity for motivation and strength. These experiences show how SLAC promotes teaching and reflection. As long as teachers delivered quality instruction to students, they could make the most of any SLAC situation. Participants show determination, sustained policy/program comprehension, character strength, community participation, and ingenuity in coping with problems and expectations. Leaders and administrators must inspire and motivate teachers. School development requires consistent technical assistance. Teachers need to be inspired and motivated by school leaders. To entirely implement the SLACs policies in the context of responsible management education, consistency, and dedication must be at the forefront. Finally, stakeholders' involvement and engagement are critical to upholding the goals of the school community, which is to realize the potential of teachers in the fullest sense of the word and have them radiate this knowledge to students, the end-users, and the society that will benefit the most.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) served as powerful tools that help educators improve themselves and at the same time were used to reassess their students' learning needs and rethink their practice (Eyanagho (2019). Similarly, the participating public junior high school teachers lived experience in the SLAC for Responsible Management Education consisted of teacher empowerment through collaboration, overcoming setbacks and challenges, ensuring policy implementation to improve teacher competence, program management effectiveness, and functionality, and difficulty navigating online technology to establish quality engagement. The participating public junior high school teachers deal with the challenges and demands through determination, introspection, unwavering commitment, a sense of continued pursuit for excellence, sustained understanding of the policy, securing mentoring and coaching sessions, monitoring, and evaluation, viewing challenges as agents of change, acquiring character strength, increased school community engagement, and innovation. The findings suggest that teachers always bring out the best in themselves and remain steadfast when implementing SLAC despite seemingly insurmountable problems.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers are reminded to foster a collaborative culture to empower learning communities through benchmarking and sharing best practices among school community members. Likewise, they must remain competitive and utilize the knowledge obtained from the SLAC to improve their pedagogical practice. In terms of strategic planning, school leaders and administrators must establish a functional project management team and consistently provide technical assistance to manage online technology, such as digital literacy training. To motivate students to learn new skills, teachers must assess, and redesign instruction based on students' learning progress while putting in place an effective monitoring and evaluation system when implementing a policy or program. Moreover, teachers must commit to promoting workplace principles of integrity, responsibility, and accountability and demonstrate determination and dedication as drivers of pedagogical enhancement. Similarly, teachers should ensure that they foster sustained comprehension of the policy's primary components to align their activities and successfully enforce its standards and principles. The importance of mentoring and coaching should be emphasized by school leaders and managers as well to improve teachers' pedagogical knowledge in engaging students effectively in the instructional process. On one hand, teachers should view problems as opportunities to test their limits and talents and as a form of self-discovery and must integrate character strength to be adaptable in their respective classroom contexts. More significantly, school leaders and administrators must prioritize school community engagement as it promotes the school's integrity and reputation and encourages stakeholders to know and see that it provides great service to the community. And finally, place high regard on teachers' ability to innovate in the teaching-learning process because it allows them to help students employ higher-level thinking to tackle complicated problems and eventually become holistically well-developed members of society. Future researchers may conduct another inquiry on the topic considering the profile of participants. They may undertake a follow-up study using different research methods or elements to explore deeper into the challenging life situations of educators.

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