

Narrative of Social Actors on School Identity, Structured Practices and Teacher Retention: A Basis for Informed School Management Decision- Making

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(In English)

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to find out the connection and dynamics of school identity and structured practices to teacher retention of a non-sectarian private school in Region IV-A, this is to arrest the increasing rate of teacher attrition by hearing the voice of the school community as to what image they have of the school and its direction and how the implementation of school rules and regulations connect with the school identity, and the latter with the issue on teacher retention.

School Identity Theory by Albert and Whetten (1985) underpinned school identity that refers to three features namely the central, distinct, and sustaining or enduring elements. Theoretical propositions were formulated as a result of the analysis of the interconnections among the three concepts as revealed through the interview of social actors and triangulated with the document review.

This study used a Narrative Qualitative Research Design. The primary data were sourced out by the researcher from the transcripts of semi-structured retrospective interview which dwelt on the background of 11 respondents, the school's attributes, policy implementation, and the issue on teachers leaving the school. The secondary data included the latest faculty and student handbooks, school papers and results of the teachers' exit survey forms.

The study indicated 4 theoretical propositions namely 1) The school identity is enhanced as structured practices are improved; 2) The implementation of structured practices beneficial to students and employees contribute to a positive school identity; 3) Teachers have a partial to an inclusive role in the formation of school identity; and 4) School identity and other factors (pecuniary, security of tenure, superior-teacher relationship, collegial relationship) are accountable for teacher retention.

Keywords: central /core organizational features, enduring organization features, distinct organizational features, school culture, teacher attrition

Introduction

This chapter presents the foundations of the study as to the structure and rationale, research objectives, significance, scope and limitations, as well as the operational definition of terms.

Structure and Rationale of the Study

The school identity is critical to the survival and sustainability of an educational institution. It provides the opportunity for its full potential to grow and thrive in the environment. Starting with its physical representations such as school logo, motto, down to its vision-mission, core values and implemented structured practices, the school must know who it is as a learning institution and what makes it unique and distinct from others. A chronic mistaken school identity is a fatal flaw for organizations, especially for any learning institution prior to its pilot operation. It may not be able to achieve its organizational objectives without a clear school identity (Whetten 2006).

A school identity can be compared to excellence or quality. These two (2) attributes do not happen by chance, but as a choice, a decision, a conscious effort, repeatedly done. The school builds its image, what it stands for, and where it is headed with the school community. In organizational identity literature, when the school identity (who we are) matches the structured practices (what we do), a strong performance of the organization is expected. (Gulati, & Rivkin, 2016). Much like the structured practices, the school identity has to be honed until it reaches its perfect state.

Structured practices in a learning institution are said to be embedded in the school culture which refers to the guiding beliefs and values in the school operation concretized through actions and behavior of the community members (Fullan, 2001). As a result of the implementation of school policies, established practices are observed which become part of the culture and identity of the institution. The normative professional identity of the teachers, for one, is linked to the development of the school identity (Avest & Bakker, 2007). The daily behavior of the teacher becomes a living identity to the students and parents who perceive the school as such (Moran & Gareis, 2015).

As one of the academic heads in a non-sectarian private school in Region IV-A, I am concerned with the future of our school which was founded by entrepreneurs. Having been previously assigned to sectarian schools run by educators, I have seen the developmental growth of the community members, particularly the teachers who have stayed long and have become loyal to the institution. In the present school, however, with the management of the school delegated to the academic heads and teachers, majority of the latter consider the school as a training ground for employment in other schools after having passed the professional licensure examination during the probationary years. As a concerned academic head wanting to prepare the school for accreditation, and to arrest the increasing rate of teacher attrition, I would like to hear the voice of the school community as to what image they have of the school and its

direction, how the implementation of school rules and regulations connect with the school identity, and the latter with the issue on teacher retention.

In my 13 years of service to prestigious large scale private schools, I observed that teacher attrition was never a persistent phenomenon. The school's teacher retention has been very stable. What then could be the difference in my current school? Are there links between and among the school identity, structured practices and teacher retention.

Being a researcher and participant of this study, I have observed that somehow, teachers who contentedly stay in a school for a number of years do so because it is a place where the underlying stream of values and norms (school culture) coincides with their own. The teachers usually identify with the school's organizational goals and objectives. On the other hand, a conflict of cultures or practices may provide the impetus for teachers to leave (Dykyi, 2013). If they cannot identify with the school's direction and structured practices, they leave the institution in search of another that will assist them to become their best. On this light, I explored on the perceptions, and experiences of stakeholders in a private school in Region IV-A to deepen our understanding about the three constructs and their interconnections. Expectedly, a set of theoretical propositions on the three constructs could be made

Research Questions and Objectives

This study probed into the general research question:

What dynamics interlink the school identity, structured practices and teachers' retention in a private school in Region IV-A?

Specifically, this study is aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What do the social actors and school documents reveal about the school identity?
2. What do the social actors and school documents bare about the school's implementation of structured practices?
3. What do the social actors and school documents disclose about teacher retention?
4. How do the social actors perceive the interconnections between and among the school identity, structured practices and teacher retention?
5. What theoretical propositions may be formulated regarding school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention?

Generally, the study intended to discover the dynamics among the school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention as revealed by the social actors of the institution. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. interpret the school identity revealed by social actors and school documents
2. evaluate the school's structured practices bared by the social actors and documents
3. assess what the social actors and documents disclose about teacher retention
4. verify if the social actors consider the interconnections of school identity with the school's structured practices and teacher retention.

5. offer theoretical propositions regarding the constructs of school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention.

Significance of the Study

As a result of this study, theoretical propositions regarding the three constructs namely school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention would serve as my contribution to the body of knowledge in school management. The propositions may lead to a review of the school image, branding and sense of community, an assessment of the structured practices that heighten the school identity, and evaluation of the teachers' motivation to stay in the institution. Policy review or formulation is also expected to align the structured practices with the school identity. This may be further tested in various schools in the country most especially those experiencing difficulties on similar areas of concern. Finding out the dynamics of the three constructs of school identity, structured practices and teacher retention, I would illumine grey areas in school management particularly on forming a strong organizational identity, and implementing school policies, and also shed light to our repeated social phenomena in school which is teacher turnover. The "truth claims" of the social actors would shed light on the three constructs, and which could lead to policy formulation and review, and theoretical propositions regarding the three constructs. Since the school policy implementation is embedded in its structured practices, the policies which bind the social actors to keep alive the school identity are determined. Similarly, those which assist the management to improve as a learning institution with committed teachers and staff are disclosed

The following stakeholders of the school are the immediate beneficiaries of this study:

1. School owners may find from this study the importance of school identity, structured practices and teacher retention. The perceived school climate may pave the way to a review of the organization and its process of innovation or change. Hence, appropriate management policies may be formulated or enhanced to address related concerns.

2. The other social actors of the school namely the academic heads, teachers and non-teaching personnel, parents, and students may have the opportunity to share their experiences, and perceptions to illumine grey areas in management particularly on the formation of a strong organizational identity, shed light on best school practices, and teachers' motivation to stay in the institution. As a result, actions may be undertaken to enhance the school's identity, sustain helpful structured practices, and improve teacher retention.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to the non-sectarian private institution in Region IV-A where I serve as the Academic Head of the Junior and Senior High School. As a participant observer, I took the risk of being an insider and a researcher simultaneously, with my own bias and belief of objectivity. The participants were social actors who have been engaged in the school for at

least four years and who consented to participate in the interview. The document review covered the latest student and faculty handbooks, the school papers and the accomplished teacher exit forms in the academic year 2016-2017.

The structured practices were limited to the implemented policies on class management, teacher and student discipline, assignments, and grading system.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in this study:

Narratives are descriptive accounts of experiences and perceptions of the social actors on the areas of school identity, structured practices and teacher retention as revealed through the interview and school documents.

School Culture is the set of beliefs, traditions and practices that characterize the school and used as themes for structured practices.

School Identity is the essential image or description of the school as perceived by the stakeholders and which has withstood the test of time and that distinguishes it from other schools. When formally documented, it becomes the formal school identity while the actual practices are the informal identity.

School's Structured Practices are the enforced institutional school behavior and activities as a result of the implementation of school policies. In this study, the specific classroom practices evaluated are those related to the policies on attendance, discipline, grading and assignment.

Social Actors are the school's stakeholders who are directly or indirectly immersed in the school's structured practices specifically the Board of Trustees (BOT),

Academic Head (AH), teachers, Human Resource Officer (HRO), Guidance Coordinator (GC), parents, and students who are the selected respondents in this study.

Stakeholders are persons in school who are involved in the delivery and reception of education namely the students, parents, teachers, personnel, including the administrators.

Teacher Retention is a school condition where teachers continue to serve in the institution after each academic year. It is the opposite of teacher attrition.

Theoretical Propositions are statements of the interconnections between and among the constructs of school identity, structured practices and teacher retention.

Review Of Related Literature

This chapter reviewed intercontinental studies on the three constructs namely school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention. This is followed by a synthesis, research gaps, theoretical perspectives, conceptual framework, philosophical underpinnings, and assumptions.

School Identity

For Albert and Whetten (1985), school identity refers to three features namely the central, enduring or sustaining, and distinct (CED) elements. The central or core features are the predominant attributes; the enduring or sustaining elements are perceived to be the cause of the survival or durability of the school in a period of change, hope or loss. The distinct elements, on the other hand, are those which differentiate the school from others. The latter could be considered as “competitive advantage” if the school is aware of its strength and competitors. However, recent literature claims that this advantage can be set aside because the need to be adaptable and flexible in a borderless, unstable and changing environment is more important (Reeves & Deimler, 2011).

The identity of an organization or school is defined by de Wolff in Avest and Bakker (2007) as what makes a school into this school, or what are the outstanding features of this school (both in a characteristic and a distinguishing sense), and what the members of the school have in common, what they share, what is true for them as members of the collective community, and what could be characterized by a certain degree of durability and continuity.

After assessing what the company is great at and for whom, the distinguishing value is looked into because this might be the sustaining attribute in the next years to come, and which could also lead to a stronger company identity. More so, if the employees can visualize themselves as part of the company’s larger objective (Leinwad & Mainardi, 2014).

The clear direction set by the leaders provides a clear and shared focus which is one of the nine qualities of high performing schools (Shannon, Bergeson, & Davidson, 2007). It is also one of the seven common correlates of effective schools namely a clear school mission, (Kirk & Jones, 2004) which may be a central, distinguishing or enduring attribute. This may include lifelong learning in and beyond the school especially with rapid changes in science and technology in a highly information based society (Laal, 2012).

In Double Peak K–8 School in San Marcos Unified School District, an identity manual was in place prior to the first school year of operation. The District’s first step was to designate a branding team which consisted of the principal, PTO president and vice president, and parent representative. Since the core program of the school was music, they included a music director as member of the branding team. This is the ideal start-up for a school: know from the very beginning who one is as a learning institution, what it could offer to the district by a well-defined school branding and identity in congruence to the identity manual which the school may simply comply with and live as well. ([Avest, Bakker & Miedema, 2008](#)). However in our school, the school identity manual was not a prime concern prior to the set up.

Avest and Bakker (2007) explored the concept of school identity building using the principles behind Christian schools. One of the typical characteristics of Christian schools is that they organize their education according to the ideas of ‘the good life’ as conceived under the shared horizon of the Christian religious tradition. The latter is perceived as being at the base of the cherished set of values and regulations. In non-sectarian institutions, there may be some with



strong leadership that sets a prescribed way of student and teacher behavior to be able to reach their set goals.

The school's identity is something fixed and decided upon by school governors and school boards, and written down in 'powerful documents', prescribing in a deductive way the ways in which this formal identity has to be materialized in daily rituals like morning prayer, telling Bible stories and celebrating religious feasts. However, diversity seems to be the standard in the implementation of the academic head and staff in the realization of the school's Christian identity (Avest and Bakker, 2007).

Schools successfully promoting well-being have a clear vision of what they want for their students. Many have specific well-being goals in their strategic plans, with specific targets to work for ("Schools with good well-being practices", 2016). A line up of programs, projects and activities is set up to ensure the attainment of well-being goals.

According to Borrey (2014), an outstanding school provides state-of-the art equipment and facilities to help improve student learning most especially their logical and cognitive skills. The students' potentials are enhanced through a conducive environment that promotes learning in various forms.

Moreover, the Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) which includes indoor air quality, acoustics, day lighting and lighting quality, and thermal comfort, is an integral aspect of high performance school. It could affect the student and teacher absences and performance, as well as reduce distractions and improve the comfort level which may in the long run improve teacher retention rate ("Sustainable schools", 2016).

The basic physical standards are mandated by the government to ensure that effective learning takes place. This does not set aside the fact that a conducive environment goes beyond the physical. It includes a positive climate and atmosphere which promotes the well-being and achievement of students (Lynch, 2016).

The physical location of an organization is also a component of the corporate identity as it facilitates the delivery of service to its consumers, determines the market coverage, and the visibility and opportunities for promotion among others (Rufaidah, Razzaque, & Walpole, 2018). In the process of identity development in an organization, the contribution of every participant is considered to be of pivotal significance. The way in which employees behave in their daily professional activities after all presents to outsiders the organization's atmosphere. It gives them an impression of the climate in the organization (Whetten, 2006).

Through the development of a consistently positive service attitude, a service brand differentiation is created which in the long run may not be duplicated by competitors and may have a key role in sustaining the corporate identity (Mosley, 2007). The customer service of the school staff makes a great difference in the parents' evaluation of the staff competency and responsiveness (Abraham, 2016). This is affirmed by Shannon (2007) who highlighted the relationship factor as one of the characteristics of high performing schools particularly the high level of collaboration and communication, supportive learning environment, and high level of family and community involvement.

Strong narratives characterize schools with a strong identity and these are known and shared, and serve as reference for change and development. The narratives tell the story of how the school began, how it came to be like it is, who the key players were, and its triumphs and adversities. The identity of a school comes, in part, from its story made up of the story of people from the past who shaped the school directly (e.g. teachers, pupils, alumni) or indirectly (founders, community leaders). But those in the school today bring their own stories which should interact with the identity of the school and may possibly change it. In this study, I will bring out how the social actors regard the school from the time they got connected up to the present patronage.

According to Avest and Bakker in 2007, the exploration of teachers' and principal's concerns are building stones in the process of school identity development. The relationship is rooted in the biographies of the teachers and principal(s). In our view, identity development is a process of organizational change and it is in a specific way related to the implementation of innovative educational processes. That is why their exploration results in recommendations for the coaching of school leaders who are involved in reading and writing the identity of the organization as a 'living document'. Hence, in this study, I included the personal background of the AH and teacher respondents to understand the context of their narratives.

Moreover, the second section of Avest and Bakker's (2007) article entitled

"School Identity: A Living Document on the Relationship between the Biography of the Principal relating to School Identity" explored the concept of identity as it is used in organizations, particularly in educational organizations like schools. This concept is elaborated as being rooted in the biography of the persons involved, in this particular case, in the biography of the school's principal, which is considered constitutive for the organization's identity. Part of the exploration of the concept is the individual contribution of each individual employee participating in the organization. The contribution is significant which leads to the introduction of the concept of normative professionalism of teachers. Constructively speaking, the biography of the principal and individual participation of teachers are integral elements in school identity development. So are the environmental factors of administrative support and collaboration structures that sustain the improvement changes in the school (Anrig, 2015).

The ways and means by which the school principal does his / her job truly institutionalize the culture that is evident to the being of the academic head. Principals are charged with providing hands-on leadership to schools. *They are* charged with a wide array of responsibilities, including the development of a shared vision for the school and stewardship of that vision, fostering an environment conducive to student learning, engaging all members of the school community, managing the organization, ensuring the effectiveness of the faculty, and doing these things with integrity and fairness. In enacting these various duties, they have both a direct and an indirect influence on student learning. Although principals are ultimately held accountable for student learning, the most consistent research results have suggested that their impact on student achievement is largely indirect as compared to the teacher's direct contribution (Moran & Gareis, 2015). Nevertheless, the government, through the MRPS and

the Professional Code of Ethics, prescribes the qualifications and responsibilities of the Academic Head as well as the other stakeholders of the school.

The principal's leadership causes us to explore in more detail the life story of the principal, being the school's director, as far as it is related to the process of identity development of the school. Just like the director conducting a multi-voiced choir, so is the director of the teachers managing the multi-voice in the school, encouraging autonomous behavior of the teachers, inviting them in this way to actively participate in the process of knowledge construction (Kessels, 2001).

However, pressures can drive school leaders to impatience and anxiety, resulting in a climate of tension and fear that interferes with the learning of both children and adults alike. These schools are likely to be dreary and discouraging places rather than the joyful learning communities we long for. It is the principal who facilitates the teachers to tell about their actions and re-tell them to each other in a process of retrospective and anticipating reflection. The alertness and sensitivity of the principal opens up the hidden aspects of everyday practice, changing them into overt signs and symbols of the essential aspects of the personal as well as the communal identity.

It is in the biography of the principal that this sensitivity is anchored (Moran & Gareis, 2015). The school identity is constructed with the strong influence of the subjective biographical 'critical incidents' in the life of the principal. His/her management style facilitates a cohesiveness of the stories. The image of the principal is at the center of the school's identity and the teacher's classroom behavior shapes the school identity. (Avest, Bakker & Miedema, 2008).

Normative professionalism constitutes school identity, the distinction between the formal identity of the school as it is written down in documents, and the informal identity as it is practiced by the teachers. This might be called 'practical wisdom on identity', since the daily routines are the boundary markers of the school's identity – shown in daily practice, without structural reflection, and without wording what is practiced'. (Avest & Bakker, 2007).

In recent years, many researchers have focused on the professional identity of the teacher and the relation to his or her biography (Kelchtermans, 2005). The relationship with the way the school's identity is experienced and made concrete in daily practice in the classroom is extensively researched and described by Avest and Bakker (2007). As such, it is contributing to the constructive process of the image of the school as it is understood by children and their parents.

The constitutive role of the normative professional identity of the teacher is one of the key subjects in school identity building. The teacher's behavior in the classroom results from the personal beliefs that penetrate the way(s) a teacher looks at children and their developmental processes. At the same time, the teacher's beliefs become visible as they are expressed in everyday practice. In this respect, concrete actions constitute the school's identity not in the way as it is explicitly written down, like e.g. in formal and official school documents, but as it is perceived by the pupils and their parents, informally, as a living identity (Moran & Gareis, 2015). Hence, the school identity is the formal documented image of the school while the actual practices become the informal identity.

A study on municipalities in Netherlands (Witting, 2006) reveals that the centrality of the organizational identity positively influences the employees' knowledge of the organizational objectives and their attitudinal support for the objectives. The perceived external prestige,



importance and employee behavior contribute to organizational identification, whereas value congruence does not. In this study, however, the focus was on determining the perceived link of school identity to structured practices.

Educational institutions possess their own school identity. In the context of 13 Alberta charter schools, narratives of 73 educational stakeholders reveal a heightening of trust and authenticity as related to school identity. An explicitly articulated vision of school identity may challenge the entrenched norms and practices typical of large bureaucratic organizations. (Thompson, Gereluk & Kowch, 2016).

Lee (1971) in Witting (2006) found that employees with a high organizational identification were generally more productive, better motivated and rewarded, more satisfied, and had less propensity to leave the organization than employees with a low organizational identification. Thus, in a school with strong identification, teachers' resignation is expected to be less experienced or more teachers stay in a school where the school identity is high or strong. Does this imply that our school has a low school identity considering the increasing trend of teacher resignation?

At the heart of school design is campus identity. Various levels of identity and branding can be applied to a school campus and they run the gamut from the development of logo, school colors, and mascot to a complete identity manual which is often used to guide and influence design of both new schools and renovations/modernizations of existing campuses. Branding can also be an effective way for a district to build identities for existing and new school campuses, create opportunities for academic improvement, create a sense of pride for students, teachers, parents, and their communities, and make the school unique from other institutions. Questions such as "Who are we?", "What do we stand for?" and "What is our mission?" reinforce and remind the stakeholders of the immediate and future goals of the school (Krueger & Perez, 2017).

In Small Learning Communities, Los Angeles Unified School District, branding of the school had a positive impact on student retention and student performance which allowed the students to have an emotional connection to the school campus academic life (Krueger & Perez, 2017). This may also be the case of teachers who perform well when emotionally connected or committed to a particular school of quality.

By strengthening the school's identity, positive school cultures can be developed. According to Dr. Christopher Wagner, co-director of the [Center for Improving School Culture](#), a healthy school culture is characterized by collaboration, collegiality, and efficacy ("Improving school culture", 2016). This conveys that the heart and soul of school operation is the intentional embedded school identity by the school owners and founders. The structured practices of the school pave the way towards the understanding of the school identity initiated by the school owners and founders. What if the school which the social actors imbibe may be their individual image and not that of the organization identity? This implies that some daily practices in which these social actors continuously engage in, may not conform to the structured practices of the school that are supposedly innate to the school identity and which could have been formulated by the school owners and cascaded to its stakeholders.



A school identity can be compared to excellence or quality. These two (2) attributes do not happen by chance, but as a choice, a decision, a conscious effort, repeatedly done. The school builds its image, what it stands for, and where it is headed with the school community. In organizational identity literature, when the school identity (who we are) matches the structured practices (what we do), a strong performance of the organization is expected. (Gulati, Raffaelli and Rivkin, 2016). Much like the structured practices, the school identity has to be honed until it reaches its perfect state. Structured practices in a learning institution are said to be embedded in the school culture which refers to the guiding beliefs and values in the school operation concretized through actions and behavior of the community members (Fullan, 2001). As a result of the implementation of school policies, established practices are observed which become part of the culture and identity of the institution. The normative professional identity of the teachers, for one, is linked to the development of the school identity (Baker & Rigg, 2004). The daily behavior of the teacher becomes a living identity to the students and parents who perceive the school as such (Moran & Gareis, 2015). Moreover, the competency and skills of the educator may be responsible for the school's reputation since the school cannot be less than the quality of its teachers (Barnwell, 2015).

The school as a community emphasizes activities that improve the quality of its communal life while honoring its culture, traditions, values and relationships. By including activities that shape the students' sense of identity and culture, schools can build a sense of community in each student and teacher that leads to their school identity. The social, emotional, moral, and spiritual development of young people are attended to by schools which engage in capacity building ("Family school partnership framework", 2017). Thus a holistic development goal is achieved.

Recent researches disclose the benefits of parental support for schools especially in the learning engagement of students. Children tend to do better, stay in school longer, and like school more when schools, and community work together to support learning. ("Parental involvement in schools, 2013). Parents' support also contribute to better reputation of schools. The benefits of parental support cannot be discounted in the school's attempt to promote the best environment for the total development of the students and other stakeholders.

Structured Practices

Structured practice in education is repetition so highly structured by the teacher that the likelihood of error is as close to zero as possible. Its role is to build correct performance while avoiding bad habits. The traditional method of "getting it right at the first time" is to slow down students and walk them through performance one step at a time, while watching them closely. If an error is made, now is the time to fix it (Jones, 2016). In this study, however, it is extended to the habits and behavior formed as a result of the implementation of policies and rules in school.

Some factors that may affect the implementation process may be conflicting / intersecting policies, low motivation and commitment, policy formulation vs. implementation, and which may be influenced by different priorities, a lack of incentives, and limited resources among others (Spratt, 2009).

For Geertz (1973), structured practices in the school setting include those stipulated in the faculty and student handbook namely school policies, and curriculum/core programs prescribed by the government agency which recognize the educational institution. They also cover institutional school activities that are academic and extra-curricular in nature, classroom practices/culture, and students' discipline.

School structures such as tracking, disciplinary policies, and “significant speech acts” (what is said or not said by school personnel and other powerful actors) play a critical role on whether students manifest identities in schools that are in opposition to or in harmony with academic engagement.

Planning for well-being is a conscious action. The positive culture and values are embedded in the school, integrated into everything school leaders and teachers do from strategic planning to development of policies, school systems, relationships throughout the community and into the classroom. Schools successfully promoting well-being have a clear vision of what they want for their students. Many have specific well-being goals in their strategic plans, with targets to work for (“Good practices Part II, 2009). The Board of Trustees usually receives regular reports on progress towards well-being goals and actions needed to enhance progress. Some boards set aside one meeting each month with a singular focus on well-being, while others have well-being as a regular agenda item (Good practices, Part II, 2009).

Leaders develop a culture of well-being based on shared values and positive relationships throughout the school community. They manage the change in expectations, taking the school community with them. Their actions are based on the firm foundation of the shared values. Leaders keep students at the center of all decisions. Restorative practices play a powerful part in establishing this culture, empowering students to lead, and taking increasing responsibility for their actions. School leaders recognize the risk of a superficial approach to implementing restorative practices.

Taking time to deeply understand the approach means that restorative practices are effectively implemented and have a significant and enduring impact. Moreover, many schools have a focus on cultural sensitivity to ensure their school culture is inclusive.

Importantly, school leaders who create strong cultures also remove teachers who consistently struggle and teachers appear to agree with this decision. It is the failure to remove ineffective teachers that appears to weaken instructional culture. For this, performance management process must be in place for continuous improvement of every teacher (Moan & Gareis, 2015). The evaluation system has to be in place to serve as a basis for decision of retention or renewal of personnel (Teacher evaluation, 2010).

Principals make appointments carefully, considering how the personal qualities and strengths of applicants will support their culture of well-being. They regularly revisit the culture to strengthen it with existing staff and to make sure that new staff are clear about how they are expected to act in the school. These actions ensure ongoing sustainability and provide



opportunities to refine the culture. In many of these schools, leaders describe the changes as reframing “how do we do things around here” to promote and respond to student well-being. In times of crisis, we go back to what we believe in. Values and restorative practices are well embedded so they are a great support. (Moran & Gareis, 2015).

A school culture results from both conscious and unconscious perspectives, values, interactions and practices, and it is heavily shaped by a school’s particular institutional history. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other staff members all contribute to their school’s culture, as do other influences such as the community in which the school is located, the policies that govern how it operates, or the principles upon which the school was founded (“School culture”, 2013).

All students have access to the academic support and services they may need to succeed. With a positive school culture, many efforts to change how schools operate and improve educational results could be observed. While a school culture is heavily influenced by its institutional history, culture also shapes social patterns, habits and dynamics that influence future behaviors, which could become an obstacle to reform and improvement. For example, if a faculty culture is generally dysfunctional as in having interpersonal tensions and distress among teachers, it is likely that these cultural factors will significantly complicate or hinder any attempt to change how the school operates.

Schools with structured good well-being practices have common themes in their approach to promoting well-being for all students and responding to specific well-being concerns and issues. The motivation to do better is underpinned by the desire for the school to be a good place for students. (“Good practice Part II”, 2009)

The following themes are clearly evident in the talk, actions and approaches to well-being in the schools with effective practice:

- We can do better.
- School focuses on improvement.
- School recognizes the need for a balanced focus on well-being and achievement.
- School provides layers of support.
- Systems, people and initiatives ‘wrap around’ students.
- Implicit school values are made explicit.
- Schools use restorative practices.
- We want the best for all our students.

No school has exact or the same culture; it will most of the time begin with the locality in which the school is part of, followed by the cultural orientation of its founders, until structured practices begin to be in place. Each school develops an agreed set of values to underpin the actions in their school. Most of the schools have worked with their community to do this.

The process takes time but is worthwhile as it means that the community understands, owns and supports the culture of the school. The school does not focus only on the cognitive or intellectual aspect of a learner instead the holistic development of every learner is of paramount concern.



One way to control and modify students' behavior is to provide a comprehensive orientation about school policies. This may guide them about the appropriate behavior that may prevent any sanction for infractions. ("Synergies for better learning...", 2013)

The policies and practices affecting students are those aspects of a school's operation that organize students' experiences in the institution. For younger students, these also structure the parents' relationship with the school such as policies on attendance, homework, discipline among others. ("Synergies for better learning...", 2013). The decisions that a school makes regarding established policies and practices affect students enormously. Teachers' instructional decisions influence students' feelings about the curriculum, but the policies and practices in both classrooms and in the entire school provide the context for teacher-student interactions around instruction. ("Synergies for better learning...", 2013). Decision making relates more to how policies and procedures are derived than to what they are. Students of all ages value the opportunity to shape the rules by which they live. When they help create the rules, students are more likely to understand the rationale behind them and will comply with them more willingly. In addition, the inclusion of student voices in the decision-making process provides educators with access to a valuable perspective. Rules and procedures are therefore likely to be stronger if students help create them than when they would be if mandated by teachers and administrators alone.

The OECD ("Synergies for better learning...", 2013) review of policies improves the effectiveness of resource use in schools. This policy review intends to provide a conducive learning environment that will support the hiring and retention of qualified teacher, give opportunities for students to engage in school evaluation and teacher appraisal to improve teaching and learning, and have a collaborative culture among the school staff.

The quality of a school cannot exceed the quality of its teachers and principals. Governments, like corporations, should know what is required to build an effective workforce: a pool of talented people from which to recruit new employees; a fair and rigorous recruitment process; initial and continuing training; adequate compensation; rewards for the best performers, support for those who need improvement, and ways of encouraging those who cannot or do not improve to leave the profession (Barnwell, P. 2015).

Interestingly, countries that have improved their school performance have established policies to improve the quality of their teaching staff by either adding to the requirements to earn a teaching license, providing incentives for high-achieving students to enter the profession, increasing salaries to make the profession more attractive and to retain more teachers, or by offering incentives for teachers to engage in in-service teacher-training programs. While paying teachers well is only part of the equation, higher salaries can help school systems to attract the best candidates to the teaching profession. ("Policy implications of school management and practices", 2013). School systems also need to ensure that teachers are allocated to schools and students where they can make the most difference. Systems could re-examine teacher hiring/allocation systems to ensure that difficult schools get enough qualified

teachers, develop incentive systems to attract qualified teachers in these difficult schools, and ensure that teachers in difficult schools participate in in-service training.

PISA results show that in higher-performing systems, schools have more autonomy, and with incentives and the capacity to improve. In the school systems of Hong Kong, Japan, the Netherlands and Korea, for example, schools have more responsibility for establishing student disciplinary policies, student assessment policies, approving students for admission to the school, and choosing the textbooks (Policy implications of school management and practices, 2013).

A stand-alone policy to grant schools greater autonomy, however, will not, in itself, result in better outcomes. Schools with more autonomy tend to perform better than schools with less autonomy when the school system, as a whole, uses such accountability arrangements as setting clear objectives of what students are expected to learn and sharing information about outcomes, and/or when principals and teachers work together to manage schools. Some countries, like Colombia, Poland and Korea have given schools and local authorities more autonomy and have recognized that autonomy works only in the context of collaboration and accountability.

Others, like Portugal, have reshaped the organization of schools to facilitate collaboration and economies of scale among individual schools by creating school clusters. These countries' approaches to autonomy suggest that it is the combination of various conditions, rather than a single policy in isolation, that is related to better outcomes (Synergies for better learning..., 2013).

The OECD review on evaluation and assessment in education (Synergies for better learning..., 2013) emphasizes the importance of engaging all staff and students in school self-evaluations and using student feedback to teachers for formative purpose. Some countries engage students in school evaluations by establishing student councils or conducting student surveys in schools. In order to use the feedback from students effectively, school staff may need assistance in interpreting the evaluative information and translating it into action. Trust among school staff and students, and strong commitment from the school community, is key to making this practice work.

Structured practices for students

Schools have multiple policies and practices that affect students. Some of these have been deliberately set in place, and others have evolved with time. Educators are well advised to re-examine the accepted ways of doing things at their schools. These practices become familiar to both students and faculty, and if they contribute to a school's focus on learning, they should be retained. Practices that do not support student learning should be revised to ensure that they *do*, difficult though it may be, to disrupt the status quo.

The major policies and practices affecting students are described below.

1. Attendance policies. These are meant to train students to be responsible and committed to their daily responsibilities for their future work immersion. School attendance is a basic school policy for students to actually experience relevant learning by attending on a daily basis to their school's classroom instruction. Attendance is a strong indicator of students' commitment to the thrusts of the school. If students are consistently late and absent, teachers must be able to address this student behavior ("Policy implications of school management and practices", 2013).

Most schools establish their attendance policies on the assumption that the students can't learn unless they are in school. The goal of such policies is to ensure that students attend school as much as possible. Of course, no school wants to encourage students who are sick to attend school, lest they infect others. Unfortunately, students will occasionally be sick without even knowing it, thereby infecting other students before being sent home. Along this line, attendance and tardiness policies must allow for individual circumstances and for situations outside of a student's control, such as the need to care for younger siblings or take care of sick members of the family. Some students, particularly older students who face challenges at home, may need individual coaching. A counselor or trusted teacher can be of real assistance in these cases.

2. Discipline policies. These are implemented to control and modify students' behavior. Student discipline is a critical factor in maintaining a safe environment for students and staff. While it's important that students be held accountable for their conduct, it is equally important that students and families know of their right to appeal and understand the appeal process in order to be better prepared for it ((Policy implications of school management and practices", 2013).

Improved disciplinary climate can be considered a pre-condition for improved student performance. These inter-relationships highlight how important it is to attract the most talented teachers into the most challenging classrooms, and to ensure that children from all socio-economic backgrounds are learning in a positive disciplinary climate (Synergies for better learning..., 2013).

Studies show that students tend to perform better in schools that provide an environment conducive to learning. Socio-economically disadvantaged students are less likely to be in orderly classrooms than advantaged students. However, even after accounting for the socio-economic status of schools and students, schools with less incidence of student truancy or better disciplinary climate tend to perform better.

Discipline policies are the rules regarding student conduct, both within classrooms and in the school as a whole. These include rules about running in the halls, disrespectful language, willful disregard of teacher requests, and, for older students, public display of affection. Discipline policies might also include student conduct on outside activities, in the playground, or in the school canteen. Some student discipline issues are resolved through one-to-one counseling with a teacher, counselor or school administrator, and may require no more than an

in-school suspension. This means that students are removed from the classroom for a short period of time for the purpose of redirecting or resolving misbehavior.

Other issues may result in out-of-school suspension. This is a more formal discipline approach which prohibits students from attending school, and which requires they have the direct supervision of a parent or other adult. The most serious student discipline approach, an expulsion, requires approval from the Board of Education, and removes the student from his or her school for a period of one or two semesters. Expulsions cannot happen without a recommendation from the school. An expelled student may not participate in any district program or activity, including school dances, athletics, and performing arts events. Individual school sites have special review boards that can make exceptions to this policy. Expelled students are required to attend a community day school or alternative education program as determined by the Board of Education (“Synergies for better learning...”, 2013).

In a sincere attempt to enhance the quality of their school environment, educators in some schools have instituted harsh zero-tolerance policies for students. In some cases, such as weapon possession, a zero-tolerance approach is certainly justified. However, it is important that educators not confuse being tough with being businesslike.

Educators must appreciate the relationship between instruction and student conduct. When students are engaged in meaningful work and experience learning success, they are not much inclined to disrupt a class. But if students are bored, or if they believe that they are about to be embarrassed or humiliated, they may actually prefer being sent to the office than staying in class. A solution, then, for some student infractions may be to make learning experiences more engaging, so that students can be challenged as well as be successful.

Standards of good conduct will reflect certain characteristics; if all students will become law abiding, respectful and obedient, it may lessen negative incidents in a school premise (Synergies for better learning..., 2013).

Discipline policies should reflect a school's belief that everyone in the school community—both adults and students—must be treated with respect (e.g., no bullying or impolite language). Consequences for student infractions should fit the situation, and should not be punitive; students should not be suspended for trivial infractions.

Standards of student conduct should be well publicized and known to everyone: students, teachers, and parents. They need to be, and to be *perceived* to be, reasonable and transparent; any appearance of arbitrariness will undermine their credibility. They should be consistent across a school, rather than dependent on the whim of each teacher. Individual teachers may have their own expectations, of course, but the same general rules should apply across an entire school (“Synergies for better learning...”, 2013).

3. Homework policies. Learning does not only take place within the four corners of the classroom, it may also be an opportunity for parents to be more engaging to their child's learning. Teachers assign homework to students mainly to extend learning time. Students are in school for six hours or so each day; if they complete assignments at home, they can be actively engaged in learning for considerably longer than that.

A school's approach to homework depends on the age of the students. Although it is unreasonable to expect young children to spend long hours doing assignments, a well-conceived homework policy helps students assume more responsibility for their own learning and allows students to continue learning beyond the school day.

Research shows that beyond achievement, proponents of homework argue that other beneficial effects are development of good study habits, recognition of students that learning can occur at home as well as in school, and promotion of independent learning and responsible character traits. On the other hand, assignment could also lead to boredom with schoolwork, no time for leisure activities that also teach important life skills, and parents can get too involved in homework -- pressuring their child and confusing him/her by using different instructional techniques than the teacher (Cooper, 2006).

For homework to be effective, it should support the educational goals, and take into account the students' abilities and needs. Moreover, it must strengthen the school-home link (Cooper, 2006). The teacher must consider the relevance of the assignment to the syllabus and the necessity of having it done outside the classroom. Individualized homework assigned to appropriate grade levels seems to help students develop the disciplined study habits that result in increased scholastic achievement (Eddy, 1984).

4. Grading policies. These must be congruent to the Department of Education where the school is recognized. This is to maintain the standardization of numerical grades that may measure the academic and behavior performance of every learner. Of all the policies and practices affecting students, the school's approach to grading has the greatest potential to affect students' future, both within the school and beyond it. Furthermore, a school's grading policy will often have a lot of "baggage" associated with it, as it is an aspect of school life about which everyone—teachers, students, and parents, feels strongly. (Strategies for better learning..., 2013)

Almost no one believes that conventional approaches to grading are beneficial. There is no consensus as to what grades mean; some teachers appear to believe that their grade distributions reflect their own teaching abilities or the complexity of the content more than they do student achievement. Others maintain that their harsh grading policy reflects their own high standards. Teachers also tend to disagree on the quality of student work. They tend to apply their own standards of quality to student work that are rarely communicated to either students or other teachers. Furthermore, many citizens, educators, and admissions directors in institutions of higher education think that the distribution of grades should follow the bell curve, believing that too many high grades is evidence of grade inflation ("Synergies for better learning...", 2013)

Grading students must be a way of motivating them to work hard, study, and learn the content of a course, especially in high school ("Synergies for better learning...", 2013). It can help students know that learning is important, as well as how well they are doing, in general.

It is also a way of letting parents know how well their children are progressing in school. Most parents are not interested in the details of their children's progress; they are primarily looking for reassurance that their children are “on track.”

Moreover, in some schools, teachers use grades to let one another know how well students are performing. When students move from one school to another, from middle school to high school, for example, grades can be used to communicate between the two faculties.

Within the context of a consistent approach to curriculum and assessment, individual teachers need to consider many different indicators of student mastery of the curriculum when assigning grades. Teachers should consider quizzes, projects, and oral presentations as well. Learning, and the demonstration of that learning, is highly important and not just student performance on a single high-stakes test.

The benefits of effective grading practices are not limited to a reduced failure rate which could be sufficient to justify change. When student failures decrease, student behavior improves, faculty morale is better, resources allocated to remedial courses and course repetitions are reduced, and resources invested in electives and advanced courses increase (Reeves, 2008).

Structured practices for teachers

The teaching profession is rooted to the norms and structured practices in a school setting and the only option for teachers is to follow and comply with whatever policies are being implemented.

The essential role of teachers is to provide quality classroom instruction that is congruent to the curriculum implementation of the educational agency in which the school is being recognized. It has been a common practice that daily curriculum implementation is anchored to the instructional leadership of the academic heads.

The top-down teacher training method seemed to be ineffective. A shift to constructivist curriculum represents one of global education reform's critical challenges. Traditional top-down teacher training methods in new pedagogical approaches have proven ineffective at moving reform from rhetoric to classroom practice (LeCzel, 2006).

Namibia's Ministry of Education has implemented a strategy of decentralized, bottom-up teacher development. Teachers act as the conduits for new policy and reform implementation, rather than being acted upon by training programs. A teacher self-assessment system provides tools for teachers to reflect on their classroom practice and participate in their own professional development within a national reform framework. The experience in Namibia provides lessons that can be applied elsewhere for effective, decentralized teacher development (LeCzel, 2006).

However, classroom practice, classroom management and classroom instruction must be regulated by the school's policy implementation through the faculty handbook. This must be cascaded through comprehensive orientation so that teachers will be familiar to

personal and professional attributes that they need to practice within the premise of the classroom. If teachers do not conform or deviate from the content of the faculty handbook, this may result to students' and parents' dissatisfaction and may even result to legal complaint.

In our local setting, we uphold the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers (1997). Teachers are duly licensed professionals who possess dignity and reputation with high moral values as well as technical and professional competence. In the practice of their noble profession, they strictly adhere to observe, and practice this set of ethical and moral principles, standards and values. Structured practices in the Philippine school setting have its foundation in the Board of Professional Teachers, Resolution No. 435, series of 1997 Article VI entitled "The Teacher and Higher Authorities in the Philippines".

Article VI. Section 1. A teacher shall make his/her duty to make an honest effort to understand and support the legitimate policies of the school and the administration regardless of professional feeling or private opinion and shall faithfully carry them out.

The guidelines of structured practices among teachers are stipulated in the faculty handbook, the coverage of which are: duties and responsibilities, rights of teachers, teachers' workload and schedule, teachers' development program, teacher attendance, teachers' discipline, rank and merit system, teacher training and attendance to institutional and departmental activities, in-service and outside training seminars / workshops / conferences / meetings and other similar activities and compensation and benefits. The most critical to implement are "teachers' attendance" and "teachers' discipline." Tardiness in reporting for work and in attending to their respective class (starting and ending on time), conduct unbecoming inside the classroom such as uttering foul words, or words of discouragement are some of the most committed infractions by teachers in school. To resolve these unacceptable classroom practices, the faculty handbook becomes handy as a guide.

A cultivation of relevant learning, lifelong skills, discipline and excellence can only thrive in an academic community, where the value of intellectual and moral integrity of teachers whose utmost concern is to constantly respond to the call of their duties, responsibilities and rights, are upheld.

In order to foster mutual and harmonious relationship and understanding of both administration and teacher, the teacher shall respect the management's regular and customary prerogatives. These include, but are not limited to; laying down policies, rules and regulations on hiring, firing, transfer, supervision reward of performance, including discipline of teachers and other relevant administrative actions and all other actions necessary for the smooth operations of the school in accordance with existing laws.

The primary purposes of regulations and discipline in school are to protect the well-being of the community and to advance its educational mission by defining and establishing certain norms of behavior. Disciplinary proceedings are instituted only for violations of the school policies, rules and regulations or for actions that can be reasonably deduced as violation

of the latest School's Teachers' Manual, Manual of Regulations for Privates Schools (MRPS), DepEd Memoranda, Orders, Instructions, and all other pertinent provisions of the existing laws of the land.

The school has the inherent right to discipline its erring teacher. Subject only to requirement of due process, school may promulgate rules and regulations deemed necessary or expedient for the conduct and operation of its business and may impose sanctions or penalties in case of violations.

The manual specifies the procedures to be observed when there are cases of omission or violations of the policies and regulations.

School culture of good well-being practices

The term **school culture** generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how a school functions, but the term also encompasses more concrete issues such as the physical and emotional safety of students, the orderliness of classrooms and public spaces, or the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural diversity (School culture, 2013). In this study, I made use of school culture to describe the themes of implementation of structured practices.

Like the larger social culture, a school culture results from both conscious and unconscious perspectives, values, interactions, and practices, and it is heavily shaped by a school's particular institutional history. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other staff members all contribute to their school's culture, as do other influences such as the community in which the school is located, the policies that govern how it operates, or the principles upon which the school was founded. Generally speaking, school cultures can be divided into two basic forms: *positive cultures* and *negative cultures*. Broadly defined, positive school cultures are conducive to professional satisfaction, morale, and effectiveness, as well as to student learning, fulfillment, and well-being. The following list is a representative selection of a few characteristics commonly associated with positive school cultures: ("School culture", 2013).

- The individual successes of teachers and students are recognized and celebrated.
- Relationships and interactions are characterized by openness, trust, respect, and appreciation.
- Staff relationships are collegial, collaborative, and productive, and all staff members are held to high professional standards.
- Students and staff members feel emotionally and physical safe, and the school's policies and facilities promote student safety.

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- School leaders, teachers, and staff members model positive, healthy behaviors for students.
- Mistakes not punished are failures, but they are seen as opportunities to learn and grow for both students and educators.
- Students are consistently held to [high academic expectations](#), and a majority of students meet or exceed those expectations.
- Important leadership decisions are made collaboratively with input from staff members, students, and parents.
- Criticism, when voiced, is constructive and well-intentioned, not antagonistic or self-serving.
- Educational resources and learning opportunities are [equitably distributed](#), to all students, including minorities and students with disabilities.

All students have [access](#) to the [academic support](#) and services they may need to succeed. With a positive school culture, many efforts to change how schools operate and improve educational results could be observed. While a school culture is heavily influenced by its institutional history, culture also shapes social patterns, habits, and dynamics that influence future behaviors, which could become obstacle to reform and improvement. For example, if a faculty culture is generally dysfunctional as in having interpersonal tensions and distrust among teachers, it is likely that these cultural factors will significantly complicate or hinder any attempt to change how the school operates.

School culture has become the object of so many research studies and reform efforts because without a school culture that is conducive to improvement, reform becomes exponentially more difficult (Moran & Gareis, 2015). The following describe a few representative examples of common ways that schools may attempt to improve their culture (“School culture”, 2013)

- Establishing [professional learning communities](#) that encourages teachers to communicate, share expertise, and work together more collegially and productively.
- Providing presentations, seminars, and learning experiences designed to educate staff and students about bullying and reduce instances of bullying.
- Creating events and educational experiences that honor and celebrate the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the student body, such as hosting cultural events and festivals, exhibiting culturally relevant materials throughout the school, inviting local cultural leaders to present to students, or making explicit connections between the diverse cultural backgrounds of students and what is being taught in history, social studies, and literature courses.

- Establishing an [advisory program](#) that pairs groups of students with adult advisor to strengthen adult-student relationships and ensure that students are well known and supported by at least one adult in the school.
- Surveying students, parents, and teachers about their experiences in the school, and hosting community forums that invite participants to share their opinions about and recommendations for the school and its programs.
- Creating a [leadership team](#) comprising a representative cross-section of school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members that oversees and leads a school-improvement initiative.

A school culture of well-being recognizes the following:

1. **A Culture of Hard Work.** This is an encouragement that excellence is a conscious effort, therefore schools should reiterate the value of hard work. Students derive enormous satisfaction from tackling difficult tasks and succeeding on their own. They experience the pride of success through hard work rather than natural endowment or luck. In addition, homework and grading policies give chances to students to succeed.
2. **A Success Orientation.** In the local setting, this reiterates the heterogeneous sectioning to refrain from labeling or any form of discrimination. The goal of school policies and practices should be student mastery of the curriculum and development of their potential. Policies that are punitive, turn students away, or undermine their confidence do not contribute to a success orientation. Opportunities must be available for all and not for a few.
3. **A Culture of Respect and Responsiveness to Clients.** Basically, the content of any student handbook boils down to respect of school policies, school authorities and co-learners. In many schools, particularly high schools, students feel that they are the least important people in the building when they are kept waiting by teachers or the principal, they are summoned to the office for mysterious reasons, and they feel that no one ever believes
4. their side of the story. Taken together, the policies and practices in these schools do not produce an environment in which students feel respected as human beings and valued as full participants.
5. **Student Leadership and Decision Making.** Involving students to some key responsibilities during daily instruction may hone their leadership skills and may refrain them from any form of discrimination. Opportunities for student leadership can help define the culture of a school. These must not be restricted to a few; there must be broad opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, such as by helping establish the homework guidelines, serving as laboratory assistants in science, or lending a hand with younger students.
6. **Minimal Competition.** Students compete not with other students but with themselves. Despite knowing the corrosive effects of competition, many educators continue, largely because of tradition, to create policies and practices that institutionalize

competitiveness into the fabric of the school. Students should only compete against themselves in the classroom.

7. **A Culture for Learning.** Learning is not just within the premise of the four corners of the classroom; instead students learn more by being law abiding and obedient to school policies and school authorities. Students learn from their homework and discipline policies as well. Consequently, aspects of a school's policies that have an effect on student learning should be designed with *active* learning in mind: The relative values of athletic skill, academic success, and artistic talent, for example, may vary in schools.

Teacher Retention

According to the OECD review (Synergies for better learning...,2013), teacher shortage and disciplinary climate are inter-related. Teachers may avoid schools with more disciplinary problems, or a shortage of qualified teachers can adversely affect disciplinary climate. Whatever the case, public policy needs to break this vicious cycle. The fact that these inter-relationships are far weaker in some countries and economies than in others shows that this can be done. High-poverty schools, according to a Harvard research, also tend to struggle with employee instability. Meanwhile, a widely-cited 2004 study found that high-poverty public schools—especially those in urban areas, on the average, lose a fifth of their faculty annually. Some of the schools serving America's neediest children lose over half of their teaching staff every five years. Although researchers have debated attrition rates, high-poverty schools unequivocally deal with much higher teacher turnover than do more affluent ones. The turnover is expensive, too, costing school districts as much as \$2 billion annually (Johnson et.al, 2005).

Recent studies suggest that it takes many educators a decade or even longer to become truly effective in their craft, to efficiently deal with distractions and disruptions, create and implement engaging curriculum, and provide meaningful feedback to students (Barnwell, 2015). This implies that newly fired or graduates should be placed in classes that are not behaviorally challenged.

There is evidence of strong link between the teachers' personal beliefs, belief in mission, and job satisfaction and retention in parochial Catholic schools after five years of teaching. The findings are relevant to administrators, who are concerned with faculty retention in Catholic schools. It also serves to inform administrators of valuable ways to continue or enhance culture and climate conducive to teacher retention (Przygocki, 2004).

Beginning teachers are leaving education at disproportionately high rates. Many have been arguing for years that teachers deserve higher pay. However, a pay raise for all teachers is not a feasible solution. Combating attrition by salary increase is not the sole solution instead Barnwell (2015) claims that better management, support and mentor program are items that may decrease teacher turnover. Little research supports combat pay as an effective tool. Linking teacher salaries to their students' test scores, whether they have national certification,

and any local leadership duties they take up are also destined to flop. No matter the compensation scheme, these strategies fail to acknowledge the impact of school culture and climate on work satisfaction which often takes precedence over pay for experienced teachers. (Barnwell, 2015).

Popular education initiatives, such as teacher recruitment programs, will not solve the staffing problems of schools if they do not also address the organizational sources of low teacher retention according to Ingersoll and Strong (2011). This was the result of an analysis that investigated the possibility that there are other factors, those tied to the organizational characteristics and conditions of schools that are driving teacher turnover and, in turn, school staffing problems. The data utilized in this investigation were from the Schools and Staffing Survey and its supplement, the Teacher Follow-up Survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics.

National teacher turnover survey in America's public schools show that teachers who leave because of job dissatisfaction do so for a variety of reasons that can be addressed: low salaries, poor support from school administrators, a lack of student motivation, a lack of teacher influence over decision-making, and student discipline problems. However, current policies, including the one framed by the federally sponsored Teacher Incentive Fund, rarely recognize these realities (Berry & Eckert, 2012).

More and more research is indicating that better management of schools and providing extra supports for new teachers are the most cost-effective ways to combat teacher burnout and turnover. One of the most effective means by which schools are combating attrition is via a mentor program. Springfield Public Schools in Missouri received a grant for Supporting Teachers, Examining Practices, Uncovering Potential (STEP UP) in 2004 with a goal of reducing their beginning teacher attrition rate from thirty-five percent to at least ten percent. After implementing the program for three years, they had successfully reduced attrition to nine percent (Moore, 2016).

Teachers in public schools in Chicago adopted a similar program and were able to reduce attrition by twenty percent (Wock, 2014). Mentoring programs that are well organized and have coaches that are thoroughly trained are essential to a program's success.

Teacher retention is a social phenomenon that I would like to link with structured practices of the school. A conflict of cultures may provide the impetus for teachers to leave or stay ("Unraveling the "teacher shortage"... ,2002).

They have an inherent need to experience a sense of belongingness from its immediate community. If they cannot co-exist with the structured practices of the working environment, they usually leave for a new environment.

Recent studies suggest that it takes many educators a decade or even longer to become truly effective in their craft—to efficiently deal with distractions and disruptions, create and implement engaging curriculum, and provide meaningful feedback to students. (Barnwell, 2015). This implies that newly hired or graduates should be placed in classes that are not behaviorally challenged.

Synthesis of Studies

The school identity is the formal documented image of the school as established by the school founders and recognized school leaders and teachers (Bakker & de Jonge, 2007; Moran & Gareis, 2015, Whetten, 2006; Avest & Bakker, 2007) or as indicated in the school identity manual (Krueger & Perez, 2017). It may be the informal school identity observed, experienced and narrated by students, teachers, and other personnel as they carry out the institution's mission. The structured practices that are actually observed become the informal identity of the school. They include the daily classroom activities, implemented policies by students and teachers that set the tone and behavior in school. The Australian Association of teachers noted that sense of school identity may be intentionally or unconsciously shaped by the established structured practices among teachers and students. Studies on structured practices indicate that a climate or environment of well-being contributes to school identity ("Schools with good well-being practices", 2016); a school culture promotes the personal and organizational growth and renewal ("School culture", 2013). Policies and practices affecting students and teachers are powerful levers that help set the tone and direct behavior in a school. Studies on teacher retention, on the other hand, point to the value of a strong identity (Witting, 2006), good school management (Gumuseli & Eryilmaz, 2011), a climate of support and mentoring (Moore, 2016); "The attrition problem", 2018; and not necessarily pay adjustment (Barnwell, 2015) that impact on the statistics of teacher attrition.

Moreover, high poverty schools are likely to experience teacher attrition ("Study finds links"... , 2016).

Research Gaps

During the last 3 decades, corporate identity, the foundation of school identity, received significant contributions from industries including schools but no construct and its measurements have been created (Balmer, 2010). Previously in 1998, there had been a theory-practice divide between corporate identity as espoused by marketing people, and organizational identity by behaviorists. (Giola, Schultz & Corley, 2000). The practitioners' definitions of corporate identity tend to focus on the more tangible aspects of identity, particularly those that are relatively easy to manage such as the visual aspects (Mohammad, Bakar, Halim & Ismael, 2014) and the 'the explicit management of all the ways in which the organization presents itself through experiences and perceptions (Iyamabu, Owolawi, Otubanjo, Olutayo & Balogun, 2013).

Balmer (1998) examined the history of the growing field of corporate identity and outlined an emerging consensus on three distinguishing features of corporate identity. First, corporate identity is fundamentally concerned with reality and what an organization is, that is, its strategy, philosophy, history, business scope, the range and type of products and services

offered, and its communication, both formal and informal (Balmer, 2010; Schmidt, 1995; Van Riel, 1995; Moingeon, 1999). Secondly, corporate identity is a multidisciplinary field. Thirdly, corporate identity is based on the corporate personality. The four major approaches to organizational identity are functionalist, social constructionist, psychodynamic, and postmodern. (Hongwei & Brown, 2013). The formation of the school identity is very much fueled by the role of culture which is the foundation of the former (“Difference between culture and identity”, 2014). Moreover, part of the school culture are established structured practices which could consciously or unconsciously shape the school identity (“Schools with good well-being practices”, 2016). As to how this is so has not yet been explored extensively in different kinds of schools with different cultures created by the members of the school community particularly, the school leaders.

Formal school identity is written in the school documents and as professed as norms by the authority in the institution, particularly the teachers who are in direct contact with students. However, not all of these are translated to the structured practices observed among students and the rest of the school community. Moreover, teacher retention is related to the strength of school identification of teachers (“Study finds links...”, 2016) and good school management which is constitutive of school identity (Gumuseli & Eryilmaz, 2011).

Methodologies used in the exploration of school identity ranged from quantitative (descriptive, experimental) to qualitative (i.e. narrative inquiry, ethnography, phenomenological) research design.

Considering the limitations of the existing studies, this research attempted to probe further into the dynamics and interconnections of the school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention in a non-sectarian institution in Region IV-A. Using the narrative inquiry through interviews and supported by the document review, propositions were formulated to connect the three constructs.

This is now the very purpose of this study, to probe further the dynamics and interconnections of the structured practices, school identity and how it may address to stabilize teacher retention in both local and global perspectives using the narrative inquiry through interview of social actors of the school, and document review that may lead to theoretical propositions.

Theoretical Perspective/s of the Study

To reinforce the groundwork of this study, the Organizational Identity Theory (Albert and Whetten, 1985) and the Structuration Theory by Anthony Giddens (1991) were used. The school identity is traced to Albert and Whetten (1985) who introduced organizational identity as a defined construct and who characterized the CED features of an organization. The concept of organizational identity is specified as the central and enduring attribute of an organization that distinguishes it from other organizations. These referents signify an organization’s self-determined unique social space and are reflected in its unique pattern of

binding commitments. In practice, CED attributes function as organizational identity referents for members when they are acting or speaking on behalf of an organization.

Organizational identity is the employees' view of the organization, following Albert and Whetten's (1985) notion of "How do we see ourselves?". It is a) what is taken by employees to be the central attributes of the organization, b) what makes the organization distinctive and therefore unique from other organizations in the eyes of the employees, and c) what is perceived by employees to be enduring or continuing, regardless of the objective changes in the organizational environment. The three attributes described above suggest that organizations with a strong identity have central attributes, are distinctive from other organizations, and remain the same for longer periods. In the context of the school, its identity is the perspective not only of the teachers, non-teaching personnel and administrators, but also of the students and their parents of what is essential, enduring and distinctive features of the organization.

In the industry, corporate identity refers to the way the corporate actors or those who perceive themselves as representing the corporation (i.e. Board of Directors) make sense of their company in their interactions with others in a specific context. Hence even the relevant others with whom the corporate actors get to interact with are equally important in their shared perceptions about the company. The visual statement of the corporation to the public becomes the corporate identity; this includes the company name, logo, slogan, buildings, company colours among others (Morris, 2015). The unified message is the alignment of all messages of the people that make the corporation become the corporate identity (Laurie & Mortimer, 2011; Kelsey, 2015). When there is consistency and clarity in the message, the corporate identity becomes stronger.

Identity is influenced by the cultural attributes. Culture encompasses everything in a school community and makes a profound impact on the school's identity. The formation of the school identity is very much fueled by the role of culture in the school. Culture is the foundation on which identity is created. In addition, teachers with strong identification with the school are likely to stay in the school (Difference between culture and identity, 2014).

The Theory of Structuration notes that social life is more than random individual acts, but is not merely determined by social forces. It is not *merely* a mass of 'micro'-level activity but Giddens (1991) suggests that human agency (social actors) and social structure are in a relationship with each other. It is the repetition of the acts of individual agents which reproduces the structure. This means that there is a social structure - traditions, institutions, moral codes, and established ways of doing things; but it also implies that these can be changed when people start to ignore them, replace them, or reproduce them differently for one reason or another.

Some 'rules' of social order may only be imprinted in our heads and they are not usually written down. Often, they have no formal force to back them up; nevertheless, people get shocked when seemingly minor social expectations are not adhered to. Social actors may have two (2) types of perception. First, if the policy is within their personal interest, social actors will



definitely conform and be compliant about it. If it is not of their personal interest, they will deviate from it and have their own interpretation and sense making which may lead to critical outcome of having various meanings to the structure.

Each structure involves different combinations of rules and resources. Together, they form structured practices when a corresponding conduct is observed. In the context of school setting, policy implementation is under the umbrella of structured practices. The **systems** are a “pattern of relations in groupings of all kinds, from small, intimate groups, to social networks, to large organizations” (Giddens, 1991). The social and cultural systems and structures include class structures, educational institutions, etc.

The patterns of enacted conduct, the repeated forms of social action and interaction, or the “enduring cycles of reproduced relations” form social systems. The systems could be families, peer groups, communities, or cities, either at a face-to-face level or existing via networks over space and time. Both the structures and systems are linked to **human agency** where the social actor is a rational actor who has the ability to make decisions and express his/her individual power.

For Giddens (1991), rules and resources are the two primary features of structured practices which could comprise the following:

- **Procedural rules** that pertain to how the practice is performed. They are documented in the faculty and student handbook, school policies, curriculum / core programs prescribed by the government, the institutional school activities that are academic and extra-curricular in nature, classroom practices, and students’ discipline. Basically, these are the main concerns of this study as they relate to the school identity and teacher retention.
- **Moral rules** that are appropriate ways of enacting social action in the form of permissible laws or not. These do not refer to ultimate values (eg. spiritual or sacred values), but refer to appropriate ways of carrying out social action and interaction. Durkheim and Parsons (2006) emphasized the importance of these in terms of norms, mores, customs, or laws. In this study, I examined how the school implemented its policies mostly on classroom concerns such as attendance, grading, assignment, and discipline against the standards set by the government and the school.
- **Material resources** are allocations among activities and members of society which are usually unequal in nature. They may refer to differences in production, commodities, income, consumer and capital goods. This however was not a concern of this study.
- **Resources of authority** point to how time and space are organized by formal organization. The exercise of power may be gleaned in the production, reproduction, social mobility, legitimacy, and authority issues (Vanagunas, 2006). In this study, I explored on the authority of the academic heads and other administrators in implementing the policies for teachers and students and the effect of such implementation to the persons concerned.

Overall, I examined the theories in the context of the school in Region IV-A to explore further the connections among school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention.

Conceptual Framework

The concept of school identity is based on the organization's identity of Allbert and Whetten (1985) who espoused the central, enduring and distinctive (CED) attributes that are revered in the organization. The central attribute pertains to what members consider to be essential knowledge about the organization. Enduring attributes are elements that have withstood the test of time. Distinguishing attributes, on the other hand, are the features that differentiate the organization from others.

The "central" and "enduring" attributes may be gleaned from the enforcement of core programs and policies that passed the test of time. The attribute that positively distinguishes the organization from others based on what is required and what is ideal for a particular kind of organization is said to be "distinguishing" and in some instances become the marketing advantage. In this study, I extracted the CED attributes from the transcribed interview and validated with secondary documents. This does not preclude the influence of culture on the changing programs and policies.

The concept of "structured practices" came from the construct of Giddens (1991). The former refers to human behavior or conduct that maintains and reproduces structures which are rules and resources organized as properties of social systems.

The forms of conduct may change because of personal decisions or unconscious adjustments that can result to structural change as well. The social actors may have tendencies to make their own interpretation of the policies, and if these policies do not conform to their personal interest, they may deviate from the policies and create change.

In this study, the school's structured practices refer to enforced institutional school activities or practices specifically on attendance, grading, giving student assignments, and policies implemented regarding student and faculty discipline which are indicated in the faculty and students handbook, and valued in the school papers. The overall school culture that promotes the structured practices is of paramount concern and the latter may be related to the perceived identity of the school as experienced by the stakeholders and the current concern on teacher retention.

Teacher retention is a school condition where teachers continue to serve in the institution after an academic year or so. Some teachers may resign for one reason or another and the resignation may be due to the school's structured practices and the perceived school identity which this study explored (Fig. 1).

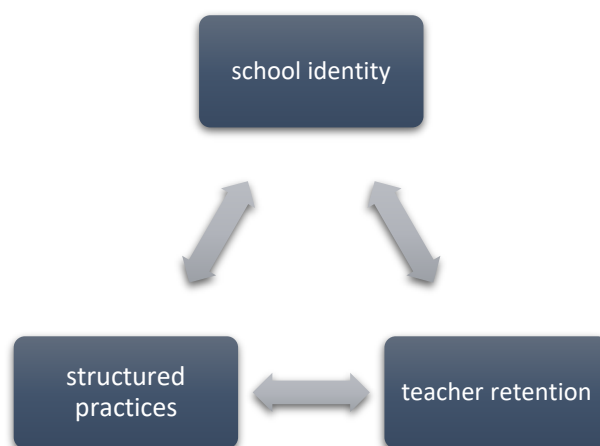


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

The links between and among the three constructs were the areas of exploration and analysis, mostly from the structured interview, and validated with the secondary documents.

Philosophical Underpinnings

Since this is a narrative inquiry research, I used the social constructivism in treating the recorded and transcribed interview manuscripts of the participants of the study. Social Constructivism embraces the principle that “meaning is something that an individual may freely construct”; (Creswell & Miller, 2018; Creswell & Plano, 2007). Realities are shaped through our experiences and our interactions with others; therefore reality is unique to everyone. (Lynch, 2016). This is aligned with the identity development process which considers the contribution of every participant as important (Whetten, 2006).

In this study, the interview manuscripts were recreated using the constructionist principle, following the CED Model for the school identity, namely the central/core attributes, distinguishing or unique features, and the sustaining or enduring features. Themes were made for the content and contextual analysis of school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention with the help of the review of literature for the initial coding. Through this philosophical lens, the researcher mined from the interview manuscripts and documents how the school identity is linked to structured practices or vice versa, and also how they, singly or collectively are connected with the current concern on teacher retention.

Assumptions of the Study

In this interpretive research, I took cognizance of four philosophical assumptions of Creswell (Carnaghan, 2013):



1. Ontological or nature of reality. There are multiple realities from different respondents' perspectives and experiences taken from various sources. Hence, each respondent and document are equally important as the others.
2. Epistemological or how I as a researcher know what I know. I strived to get as close as possible to the participants' point of view considering my role as an academic head and a researcher in this study, notwithstanding my limitations.
3. Axiological or the role of values in research. My biases and values are revealed through the analysis, at the same time that I objectively tried to see the value-laden nature of information that I gathered.
4. Methodology or the methods used in the process of research. My experience and exposure as a researcher influenced the manner of collecting and analyzing the data. In this study, I incorporated other observations that may give light to the interview manuscripts and reviewed documents.

Social actors were expected to be open and honest in their disclosure to the interview questions that could give light to the issue of structured practices being related to the school identity and the concern on teachers' turnover.

Moreover, the semi-structured retrospective interview contextually affirmed the secondary data of exit survey instruments as part of the teacher's clearance for those who resigned, and the existing school policies stipulated in the faculty handbook, student handbook and school paper.

Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the research design, ethical considerations, locale, respondents, instruments, data gathering procedure, and data analysis plan on the study on school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention.

Research Design

The narrative inquiry research design in qualitative research is grounded on the premise that, as human beings, we come to understand and give meaning to our lives through our story (Andrews, Squire & Tambokou, 2008). Narratives that focus on the meanings that people ascribe to their experiences provide insight on the complexity of human lives (Trahar, 2009). As a researcher, I focused on the ways in which a story is constructed, for whom and why, as well as the context it drew upon. The stories became the reconstruction of the respondents' experiences. The narrative inquiry uses the "process" of asking the respondents their experiences through the interview; it also uses the "product" of the stories told by the participants. The meanings ascribed by selected social actors to the issue on structured practices, school identity and teacher retention were deduced.

Interpretive research is a framework in social science research that invests on philosophical and methodological ways of understanding social reality (Given, 2008). The hermeneutical character of reading and interpreting the messages in the context of the participants and/or the practitioners, and observing the plurivocality or multiple story interpretation of reading is essential in understanding the data. Moreover, interpreting their experiences and observations was complimented by a depth hermeneutics to uncover what has been hidden, covered or disguised. Insights on the underlying reasons, opinions and motivations of interviewees regarding the problem on hand were uncovered as part of the inquiry shaped by situational constraints in a qualitative research (Creswell, 2007). Through the technique of triangulation of data (“Data triangulation”, 2018) from interviews and document analysis, cross verification was done to arrive at a rich and comprehensive account that may contribute to further research on the issue.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical principles stress the need to a) do good (known as beneficence) and b) do no harm (known as non-maleficence). In practice, these ethical principles mean that as a researcher, I need to a) obtain informed consent from potential research participants, b) minimize the risk of harm to participants c) protect their anonymity and confidentiality, d) avoid using deceptive practices, and e) give participants the right to withdraw from the research (“Principles of research”, 2018). At the outset, I sought approval from the top management of the school to conduct the study among selected members of the Board of Trustees, administrators, teachers, non-teaching administrative staff, parents and students on the school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention. After getting the approval to conduct the study, informed consent was secured from potential respondents to ensure their full participation.

I respected their right to withdraw from the research if they couldn't cooperate during the course of the interview. Strict and utmost sense of anonymity and confidentiality was observed in the data that were gathered. In the course of the interview process, critical issues, perceptions, observations and other experiences brought by structured practices surfaced. I took full accountability in managing the data gathered. As a researcher, I reported the data, methods, procedures, and results objectively. Being a participant observer, I strived to avoid bias in the analysis and interpretation of data, and valued the integrity of my action. Being open to criticism and new ideas in the course of completing the study was likewise observed.

Research Locale

This study was conducted in School A, a non-sectarian private school in Region IV-A. It offers basic education programs in early childhood, elementary, and secondary education. It is registered as a non-stock and non-profit organization, duly registered at the

Securities Exchange Commission, and recognized by the DepEd to operate nursery, kindergarten, elementary and secondary programs. The average enrolment of the elementary and secondary education in the past years has been 800+ pupils and students, mostly coming from the subdivision where the school is located.

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were selected administrators, non-teaching administrative staff, teachers, parents, and students who have been connected with the school for at least the last 4 years. Only those who were willing to participate in the research as affirmed by the participants' consent form were the final respondents. There are five (5) members of the Board of Trustees. Only one (1) member of the board whose background is in education, and who is a pioneer of the school, agreed to participate in the interview. Moreover, an Academic Head (AH) in the position of Elementary Principal has also been with the school for eight years. For the non-teaching administrative staff, the researcher interviewed the HR Officer who is directly involved with the policy implementation to teachers and has been in school for eight (8) years; and the other one was the Guidance Coordinator who is responsible for policy implementation to pupils and students and who has been in school for five (5) years. They are two representatives among the eight staff. Currently, there are only 14 regular teachers in the school for the past 8 years of school operation. The majority (25) are probationary faculty members. For the study, at least one representative per level (NKP and Grades 1-4, Grades 5-6, and Grades 7-10) was assigned. No one qualified in the grades 11 and 12 since the teachers are part-timers.

Among the 20 interested parents whose children have been in the school for at least the last 4 years, only 2 participated in the interview. The parent of the student participant did not join the research. Initially, I asked the selected parents who have sent their child/children for at least 4 years in school to be part of the interview. Most of them declined, only 5 parents among the initial 20 parents expressed willingness to be part of the interview. The 20 parents whom I initially considered have been in school for more than 5 years. However, only 2 parents finally made it. As to student participants, the researcher interviewed one student who expressed willingness to participate although the parent was not interested.

Overall, there were ten (10) interview participants who joined this study representing the stakeholders of the school. They were asked to share their thoughts based from their experiences, observations and perceptions on the school identity, structured practices and teacher retention of the said school.

Research Instruments

I sourced out the primary data from the transcripts of semi-structured retrospective interview. The interview questions were about the participants' background, the school's



attributes, the policy implementation, and the issue on teachers leaving the school. In Table 1, the item specifications of the various interview guides are laid. Some of the interview questions were revised or enhanced as the interview happened as regards to related concerns with other respondents. Other communication used by the participants as in the case of non-verbal signs or gestures or similar observations were part of the data gathered. Validation of the interview guide was made with non-respondents from the school and other institutions. The evaluation of the guide questions dwelt on the language and the content aligned with the research problems. The secondary data included the latest faculty and student handbooks, school paper and results of the resigning teacher's exit forms.

Table 1. Interview Guide Questions:

Item No. Of Interview Guide Questions:							
Content	BOT	AH	HRO	GC	Teachers	Parents	Students
Personal Data	7-8	1,7,8	1	1,7,8	1,7,8	8,9	1
School Identity	1-6	1-6	1,7,8	1-6	1-6	1-7	1-6
Structured/ School Practices	9-16	9-16	9-13	9-16	9-14,15	10-19	9-16
Student Policy Implementation	None	None	None	None	14	None	None
Faculty Policy Implementation	None	None	14-17	None	14	None	None
Teacher Retention	17-22	17-20	18-19	17-20	17-20	20-22	None

“None” means not observed nor stipulated in the document. Specifically, the following contents of the documents were perused (Table 2).

Table 2. Document Specifications

Content Inclusions				
	Faculty Handbook	Student handbook	School Paper (2014-2017)	Teacher's Exit Form (2016-2017)
VMGO	Not included	Included	Not included in 2014-2017 issues	Not included
School Logo & Motto	Included in cover page	Included	Not included in 2014 – 2017 issues except for logo	
School Identity	Not indicated	Not indicated	Not indicated	Not indicated
School Practices – Student Policy Implementation	Not indicated	p. 1-5 school policies on admission, enrolment and retention p. 5-7 standards of conduct and discipline p.10 disciplinary probation p. 12 disciplinary sanctions	2014 – 2017 p. 1-7 institutional activities for academic and non-academic programs are observed and evident	None
School Practices – Faculty Policy Implementation	p. 1 duties, responsibilities and rights of teachers p. 2-5 teacher;s workload and schedule p. 7-9 teachers' attendance	None	None	None



p. 10-19 teachers' discipline
p. 24 teacher training and attendance to institutional and departmental institutional activities
p. ranking and merit system (performance evaluation)

In research, establishing the validity of the data collected using various techniques is essential. This process is called triangulation through which the data collected usually come from at least three perspectives – observations, interviews and document analysis (Avila, 2016). In this study, all sources of data were availed (Fig. 2).

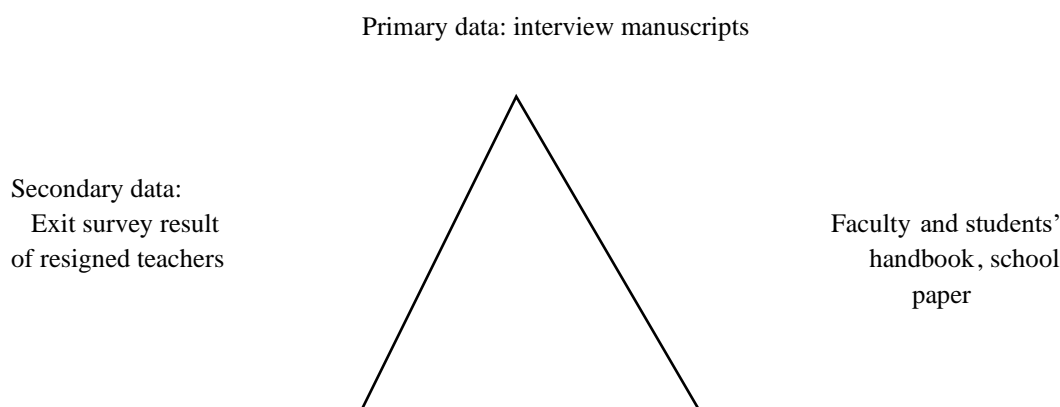


Figure 2. Triangulation approach to research

The institutional academic and non-academic activities that are highly valued by our school are evident in our school paper. They included engagement in Metrobank and Division MTAP Math Challenge, Division odeporhy, oratorical stand, entrepreneurship in science and technology, robotics seminar workshop, and lego NXT robotics. However, the robotics program was not sustained because the point person to facilitate this program resigned already to move to a government school. For the annual intramurals and sports activities, the following are manifested in our school paper: mini sportsfest, cheer dance competition, basketball, karatedo, gymnastics, and dance sports. Moreover, recognition is given to outstanding athletes. Teachers are expected to be guided by the faculty manual, the provisions of which must be carried out in professional manner with utmost essence of commitment to the teaching profession. Similarly, all pupils and students are obliged to follow the school policies upon admission and enrolment by signing the contract of agreement, stipulated in the student handbook. Among the policies for review in this study are on attendance, assignment, grading and discipline. The teacher retention policy of the school is based on the performance

evaluation as indicated in the faculty handbook. The evaluation aims to recognize and reinforce the accomplishments of teachers as they contribute to the mission of the school simultaneous with their personal and professional growth and development in instruction, research and extension.

In research, establishing the validity of the data collected using various techniques is essential. This process is called triangulation through which the data collected usually come from at least three perspectives- observation, interviews, and document analysis (“Data triangulation;”, 2018). In this study, all sources of data were availed.

Data Gathering Procedure

I initially sought the approval from the Office of the Top Management in a non-sectarian private school in Region IV-A to conduct the study in the school. A consent form was provided to all interview participants. Only those participants who conformed to the terms and conditions stipulated in the consent form were interviewed. However for the students as interview participants, the parents were the ones who signed and conformed that they would allow their son/ daughter to be part of the interview process. The schedule of semi-structured retrospective interview with the respondents in the months of February and March was prepared and observed.

Once the interview participants agreed to be interviewed, I discussed the background of the study, the issues explored, and why the research was worth doing. I conducted the semi-structured retrospective interview in the school boardroom. The participants were informed of the schedule of actual interview. Audio recording of interview was done both during the interview itself and afterwards. During the interview, I focused on listening, probing, following up, and maintaining eye contact with the interviewee and written observations. The longest duration of interview was 48 minutes while the shortest was six (6) minutes. The transcripts were done after the scheduled interview.

The results of the teacher exit interview forms in 2016-2107 were secured from the HRO. Moreover, the latest faculty handbook, student handbook, and school paper in AY 2014-2017 were gathered for document review.

Data Analysis

The three sources of data namely interview manuscripts, survey exit forms administered to resigned teachers, and document review such as faculty handbook, student handbook and school paper were prepared for analysis. The raw data were the actual verbatim phrases and statements from the interview manuscripts, which were given preliminary codes to support the possible themes. A theme is the outcome of coding, categorization, and analytic reflection



(Saldana, 2008). I noted the patterns of responses to draw out the preliminary codes consistently observed. Later these codes were finalized.

The patterns were compared to the themes found in the literature on effective schools but categorized according to the CED of Albert and Whetten (1985). Most of the 8 themes were similar but the theme on reasonable school fees stood out from the marketing aspect.

Thematic analysis was conducted for all interview manuscripts. For the school identity, the researcher used those from the Organizational Identity attributes by Albert and Whetten (1985) namely (a) what is taken by employees to be the central attributes of the organization; (b) what makes the organization distinctive and therefore unique from other organizations in the eyes of the employees; and (c) what is perceived by employees to be enduring or continuing. Initially themes were taken from literature but revised accordingly as the analysis of the transcripts progressed.

The three characteristics described above suggest that organizations with a strong identity have central attributes, are distinctive from other organizations and remain the same for longer periods. The organizational identity attributes as espoused by Albert and Whetten are applicable in all types of organization which include learning institutions.

Similarly, the themes on culture of structured practices were initially based on the literature of culture of good school practices. Later, the peculiarities were observed and four themes stood out. These were later contextualized according to the culture of policy implementation in the school.

On the other hand, the teacher retention themes were based on classifications made by researchers on teacher attrition. The themes were based on the various reasons for leaving.

Job satisfaction is the main concern in the exit form for resigning teachers. Content analysis was made on the survey exit form which consists of a checklist for reasons for leaving, and qualitative remarks for leaving the school. The numerical value of job satisfaction was prepared against the qualitative remarks for further analysis.

Moreover, content analysis was made on the survey exit form which consists of a checklist for reasons for leaving and qualitative remarks for leaving the school. The numerical value of job satisfaction was used with the qualitative remarks for further analysis.

The contents of the faculty handbook, student handbook, and school paper were analyzed according to the espoused school identity, established structured practices of the school, and policy on teacher resignation. Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun (2010) defined content analysis as a technique to study human behavior indirectly by analyzing documents. In this study, it helped us to understand the stakeholders' beliefs, attitudes, ideas and values by making categories to obtain common themes or constructs for analysis.

To be able to inter-contextualize the three sources of data, I applied data triangulation accounts on the perceived dynamics of structured practices, school identity and teacher retention. The secondary data were results of exit survey forms administered to teachers who resigned last school year 2016-2017 and the document review using the school manuals and school paper.

Data triangulation allowed me to further establish the validity of data on hand. As a validity procedure, I followed the following steps:

1. Uncover the multiple realities of the interview participants using the lens of social constructivism;
2. Sort through the data to find common themes or categories by eliminating overlapping areas
3. Make use of multiple methods such as observations, interviews and documents to locate major and minor themes
- 4.

From the presentation of the analysis of the three constructs on the school's identity, structured practices, and the issue on teacher retention, theoretical propositions were created to link the three. Recommendations were made as suggested by the participants and as deduced from the analysis.

Theoretical Proposition Construction Process

I used the inductive approach, also known as inductive reasoning, to generate theoretical propositions from the participants' observations. ("Deduction and induction", 2006). The study analyzed indication of a pattern. This is so in exploratory research which generates patterns and regularities from specific observations and measures. Interconnections among the three (3) constructs of study namely school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention were done based on the perspective of the respondents and as gleaned from the document review. These were used to come up with theoretical propositions which would be subject for further research ("Research approach", 2018).

It is important to stress that inductive approach does not imply disregarding theories when formulating research questions and objectives. Inductive reasoning begins with detailed observations of the world, which moves towards more abstract generalizations and ideas. When following an inductive approach, beginning with a topic, I develop empirical generalizations and identify preliminary relationships. No hypotheses are found at the initial stages of the research considering this is a qualitative research.

As illustrated in the figure below, "inductive reasoning is often referred to as a "bottom-up" approach to knowing, in which the researcher uses observations to build an abstraction or to describe a picture of the phenomenon that is being studied ("Research approach", 2018).

[Some patterns on the interconnections between and among school identity, structured practices and teacher retention were identified and posed as theoretical propositions \(Figure 3\).](#)

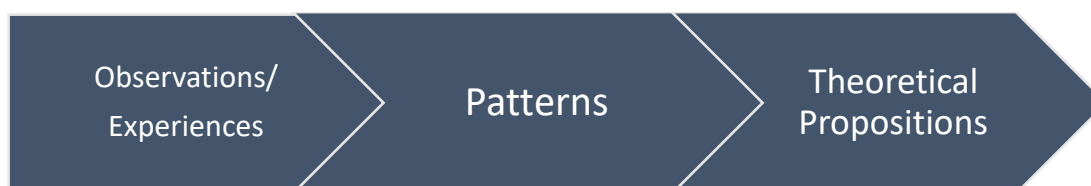


Figure 3. Inductive Approach to Theoretical Propositions

The theoretical propositions were derived from the direct experiences, observations and perceptions of the social actors on the linkages of school identity, structured practices and teacher retention. Each social actor gave his/her perspective based on experiences as to how the school identity may be linked to the implementation of structured practices and the issue of teacher retention. These were then analyzed in the light of literature review.

Results And Discussions

This study interpreted and assessed what the social actors and documents reveal about the school identity, the school's structured practices, and teacher retention in a private school in Region IV-A. The final output of this research is a set of theoretical propositions regarding the three constructs.

There were ten (10) interview participants or social actors who joined this study representing the stakeholders of the school. They were asked to share their thoughts based from their experiences, observations and perceptions on the school identity, structured practices and teacher retention of the said school. They have been connected with the school for the past 4-8 years. The pioneers are the member of the Board of Trustees (BOT), Academic Head (AH), Human Resource Officer (HRO), student and Parent 1 and 2. Teacher 1 has 7 years of service while the rest have a term of 4 years (Teacher 3) and 5 years (Teacher 2, Guidance Coordinator (GC)).

The first encounters or experiences of the respondents with the school were mostly positive because of previous external and internal experiences. Hence, they continue to be with the school. One respondent rose from the rank of a teacher to a GC because of her educational attainment and her dedication to assist students with behavioral concerns, especially those with absentee parent/s. I also started as a pre-school teacher, promoted to Assistant Principal, and after few years, as the Principal of the junior and senior high school. It is interesting to note that the best teacher or teacher with leadership ability is usually promoted to an administrator's post in school.

Teacher 1 made use of her experience as a patient mother to the students assigned to her as a first time teacher:

Ahh, I think being a mother already helped me a lot to deal with them especially with the lower levels in high school- grade 7. Now, their behavior, I think..., maybe being a mother has helped me a lot in dealing with them. My patience - it helped me a lot.

Moreover, the student interviewee narrated her successful adjustment as a shy kid due to the welcoming atmosphere of the school and teachers with great passion:

Ahm, well ah first of all, I was a bit shy since the atmosphere was quite new for me and I wasn't accustomed. But after a few adjustments, I came to learn that this isn't bad thing after all. Well, it's because of the welcoming atmosphere I see when I enter the school grounds and also the teachers who passionately deliver their messages to us students who came here for learning.

Teacher 2 narrated how she came to be part of the school after getting enthralled by the school building:

First encounter ko mam, bumisita lang ako sa tita ko dyan sa Ph1 mam. Then nakita ko yung school mam and nagandahan ako. Totoo yan. Sinabi ko talaga mam na magtuturo ako dito; nagpasa ako ng resume.(When I visited my aunt in Phase 1, I saw the school and got charmed by its beauty. That's true. I told myself that I would teach here so I submitted my resume).

The teacher added how she would relate differently with students:

Well actually, nakatulong ng malaki mam kasi mas madali kong nadidisciplina ang mga bata mam kahit pa sabihin nila ako yung mataray, masungit, eh ganon talaga ako mam. I guess naman mam effective naman sya sa mga students. (Well actually, I was able to discipline the students although I was told that I was grumpy and peevish. That's what I am and it works effectively among students).

Moreover, the AH in the elementary grades who had 30 years of teaching experience and 15 years of being a school administrator in a public school, shared her positive experience with the accommodating BOT, the hyperactive and attention seeking elementary pupils, and the parents who would question about the class size.

However, Teacher 3 claims that her first encounter was “traumatic” and a “nightmare” because:

I was working with my co-teachers who were meddling (with) my teaching method; everything that I had to do, they would criticize it. Like for example, structuring the classroom, oh you are not allowed to do this and that but you know I'm kinda stubborn, when I believe it's good for the children, I'll do it; I have the desire.

Despite her stubborn attitude of doing contrary things which she deemed were good for the children, Teacher 3 continues to be a part of the school due to her love for the school. The incongruence of her value does not affect the school or organizational identification. (Witting, 2006).

Similarly, during my first year of supervisory role, I was not accepted and respected by teachers who were formerly my co-teachers because of the “new broom syndrome” which refers to sweeping out old practices or methods and even old staff without having fully learned the ropes (“How to avoid new broom syndrome as a new leader”, n.d.). Previous exposure to other schools prior to my supervisory role prompted me to introduce new ways of doing things like having the school manuals to guide their behavior. I was promoted among the ranks as an assistant principal, I almost declined the position because I did not have any interest in any administrative position then, but somehow the VP for Academics saw the potential in me. It took me weeks of contemplating whether to accept or not because I was fully aware of the weight of the responsibility and accountability that went with it. Through discernment, I came

to realize that it was God who appointed me to the position and inspired me to accept this new challenge until I gave my intention to the Top Management that I would accept this new role. I acted as the Assistant Principal and after two years, I was promoted as a full-fledged Principal in Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) Department.

Likewise, the company experience of the HRO urged her to make the school personnel policies with the aid of a committee which was initiated by one AH.

As the Human Resources Officer of _____, my first encounter was dealing with teacher/employee concerns and because it was the first year of operation, I needed to make a start somehow. No company policy and procedure was provided. However, because of my background as Human Resources Assistant from my previous employer handling company benefits, I was able to make a simple start. Also by doing research, reading and asking questions to our sister company, I was able to handle simple and minor concerns. Over the years, the institution is growing, the demand to officially appoint a committee to help the management create policy was started and this was made possible thru the initiative of our school Principal. With this, the obstacle of being the HR Officer of this institution has made me realize that I can do more for this school. Problems have been handled and settled, and I learned from it and because of this, I continue to be part of this institution.

It is interesting to note that most of the participants are committed to their assigned role in school. Varied responses were elicited from the participants as to their reason for staying with the institution, ranging from personal to social concern. The BOT, AH, and GC have related personal and professional concern of serving and accomplishing their mission. Parent 1 and 2, Teacher 1 and Teacher 3, and the HRO continue because of the children's/student's enjoyment and improvement, as well as enrolment benefit. Moreover, the student remains in school because of teachers who are "cool and learned" while Teacher 2 stays due to being happy in the place. Again the respondents exhibit very positive attitude towards school. They represent what's the institution, what it stands for, how it does its role, and how do teachers fit into the picture.

The sources of data used in this study were the recorded and transcribed interview manuscripts, exit survey form by resigned teachers in AY 2015-2017, and document review of school manuals namely the latest Student Handbook (AY 2017-2018) and Faculty Handbook (AY 2015-2016), and school papers in AY 2014-2017.

School Identity

SOP 1.) What do the social actors and school documents reveal about the school identity?

From the interview and document review, themes were identified to determine a) what the social actors consider as the central or core attributes of the school, b) what are the enduring or continuing features of the school and c) what makes the school unique or distinctive from others. Each of the contributions of the interviewees was considered important in the overall formal and informal school identity which signifies the school's "self-determined unique social space" (Albert and Whetten, 1985). Among the themes prepared based on related literature, the following were finally drawn to align with the interview transcripts, arranged according to the number of proponents (Table 3):

The school in which this study was conducted is duly recognized by the Department of Education, and the Security Exchange Commission as a non-stock and non-sectarian private school permitted to offer complete Basic Education Program under the enhanced Philippine Education K to 12 Curriculum. It was established in 2010 by a group of entrepreneurs.

Table 3. CED themes from interview manuscripts

Central / Core Features of the School	Enduring / Sustaining Features of the School	Distinguishing / Unique Features of the School
Well-Designed Buildings and state of the art facilities	High Qualified and Seasoned School Administrators	Well-Designed Buildings and state of the art facilities
High Qualified and Seasoned School Administrators	Development Oriented School	High Qualified and Seasoned School Administrators
Development Oriented School	School Program Offering	Development Oriented School
School's Strategic Location	Well-Designed Buildings and state of the art facilities	School Program Offering
School Program Offering	School's Strategic Location	School Reasonable Fees
School Reasonable Fees	Parents' and Student Support	School's Strategic Location
Reputable Education	Reputable Education	

Common CED attributes of the school

To draw out the central/core, enduring, and distinct (CED) attributes of the school, the interviewees were asked to describe the school, its special or best features as well as the features they didn't like. The enduring features that make the school survive in any period, and the participants' thought on whether the school will continue to operate in the future, were examined. Moreover, the respondents were asked to distinguish their school from others by citing the particular school features that stand out. Some might refer to this as "competitive advantage" if the school is aware of its strengths and its competitors, and how it compares better than other schools. However, recent literature claims that competitive advantage is relegated to the background with the need to be flexible and adaptable in a borderless, unstable and changing environment (Reeves & Deimler, 2011).

At the end of the presentation and discussion of each theme is additional information gathered from the review of manuals and school papers that may be related to the themes culled out from the interview, if ever there are. The following five (5) attributes were noted as central/core, enduring/sustaining, as well as distinct qualities of the school, comprised of the visual/tangible as well as the intangible or behavioral (Table 3):

Theme 1. Well-designed school building and state of the art facilities.

Most of the participants cited the well-designed building, state of the art laboratory facilities, and air-conditioned classrooms which provide comfortable and conducive learning atmosphere.

The member of the BOT declared that the school boasts of its “state of the art facilities and equipment (which) are competitive with other big schools in the area.” He narrated that the school started with much investment on the school facilities. Compared to other schools, our school “started with innovative school facility to attract all the stakeholders and be inspired to sustain the school”, boasted further by the BOT.

Appended by the HRO:

The top management invested on the best building design and structure which I believe is one of the best features of the school. From building maintenance and improvements, the top management made sure that every part of this school is designed conducive for learning. Furthermore, she said that “The school building was structured with confidence”.

I agree that our school has the most beautiful building design and has the most top of the line facilities and laboratories catering to small and medium class size. Basically it’s the physical structure and architectural design of the building that distinguishes it from others. The seemingly “state of the art facilities especially the laboratory rooms” which were not shortchanged, as perceived by Teacher 2, is one of the school’s best features. Parent 1 also claims that the facilities are one of the best features of the school. Added Teacher 1 when comparing the school to the other schools of her children:

Special features when it comes to its facilities nya ah I think di naman sya malayo don sa previous schools nung mga elder siblings nya in a way competitive sya. Pwede syang, hindi sya yung parang nagsisimula pa lang na school, kasi kumpleto yung facilities nya.” (The school compares very well with the schools of the siblings of my child due to the special features of its facilities. It is not like a new school with incomplete facilities.)

Moreover, AH claims that the school has “the most beautiful building design” and it offers “the top of the line facilities and laboratories.” Teacher 2 agrees that the school is the most beautiful and largest in the community. The big and spacious school, according to the GC, makes it “attractive”. It is the largest in the municipality in Region IV-A as highlighted by Teacher 1. It has complete facilities even when it was starting yet to operate. Affirmed by Teacher 3, “Aside from its beautiful building, _____ is, I think, the only private school in _____ that is considered advanced technologically”,

Generally, all the stakeholders acknowledge the physical features of the school as core, enduring and distinctive. The school has library, computer laboratories, Home Economics, Technology and Livelihood Education, and Science laboratories.

It has provisions for bigger enrolment in the future, asserted by AH. The class size is not more than 35 students.

For the student, the following is her observation:

The special features it has are aircon in every room that can create a comfortable atmosphere; monitors and projectors used when it comes to presentations created by teachers to educate students, and for students to use it when it comes to reports and projects. The student included the “clean surroundings it possesses and the comfortable aura that lingers”. What is peculiar about the student’s point of view is the focus on comfort, and conducive environment due to available learning facilities.

Moreover, for Parent 2, the school structure and facilities are quite impressive, and “really nice and good” as commented by the GC who described it as “a good school and conducive to learning”. The school has “better facilities compared to other schools offering elementary and high school education.”

The physical structure and design of the school buildings are compliant with the standard requirements and provisions stipulated in the Manual of Regulations for Private Schools (MRPS, 2011) which led to its recognition from the Department of Education in 2010 for the elementary, in 2011 for the high school, in 2016 for the Senior High School, and in 2017 for the TESDA program.

The building requirements cover the Building Code provisions and the number and dimensions of rooms, plumbing and sanitary arrangements, and facilities for the proper lighting and ventilation. (MRPS, 2011).

Specifically, the following government regulation on school buildings is set for private Basic Education schools based on the MRPS (2011):

Section 163. School Buildings. The school buildings should be adequate and suitable for the purposes and activities of the school as required under the existing laws, rules and standards.

The general provisions of the building standards include the following:

- 1- General site plan showing the gross area of the land
- 2- Horizontal view plan for the ground floor showing the areas and dimensions of the rooms (architectural plan)
- 3- Horizontal view plan for the first floor showing the areas and dimensions of the rooms (architectural plan)
- 4- A table indicating how laboratories are used
- 5- The school building to be used only to serve the purposes of the educational phase specified in the license application, and not to be used for any other purpose except education
- 6- The educational facility equipped with the appropriate furniture and equipment such as: chairs and tables appropriate for the age of the students, white boards, teaching aids, laboratories, etc.
- 7- The minimum classroom size of 2 square meters per student
- 8- The minimum space per student for playing purposes as follows:
 - a. 5 square meters per Kindergarten student.
 - b. 7 square meters per elementary school student.
 - c. 10 square meters per preparatory and secondary school student

In terms of laboratory standards, MRPS (2011) set up the following requirements:

Section 164. Laboratory Facilities. Private schools offering laboratory-oriented courses shall have such appropriate and suitable laboratory rooms and equipment and supplies as may be necessary for each level of instruction in according rules and standards prescribed by the Secretary.

For schools offering K to 12 curriculum and TESDA programs, the laboratories refer to the Science laboratory, library, Technology and Livelihood Entrepreneurship, Computer laboratory, and Home Economics. The school facilities as required by the government are (MRPS, 2011): Section 165: Other Facilities and Supplies. Each private school shall provide such other facilities and supplies, including teachers' cabinets, tables and chairs, blackboards, library equipment and supplies, laboratory furniture and fixtures, office equipment, modern instructional aids, athletic equipment and supplies, personnel services equipment and supplies, forms and office supplies, and such other essential requirements as may be necessary for effective instruction and efficiency in school operations.

On the other hand, some interviewees expressed dislike for the use of building facilities for TESDA and basic education programs which may seem "useful and innovative" for others but not for the parent interviewee. On careful study of the government policies, however, I found out that no law upholds the separation of the TESDA building from the K to 12 Building.

Basically, the physical facilities of the school sustain the education it offers according to the GC. Its clean surrounding as noted by a student, its beautiful or aesthetic appeal as described by a teacher and parents including the conducive and comfortable environment for learning and development are features that could go a long way in making the school live in the future. This of course includes the Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) which could affect the student and teacher absences and performance, as well as reduce distractions and improve the comfort level which may in the long run improve teacher retention rates (Sustainable schools indoor environment quality", 2016).

Facility expansion will assist the school in accommodating bigger enrolment especially considering that it has no competition with nearby schools due to its current facilities. At present, the maximum class size for the preschool is 20, for the elementary and high school - 35. Its continuous improvement of school facilities will likewise sustain it, added one teacher. The BOT and one AH alluded to the high investment made by the management to have well designed building, and innovative and state of the art facilities as something distinct in the school. The complete physical facilities from NKP to Senior High School, as cited by the AH, GC, and Teacher 1, make the school unique, and capable of providing a conducive place for learning to bring out the best among the students. In fact, one student noted that the room design is perfect in fulfilling its role.

In addition, the school's facilities prepare the students well for the bigger school or university according to Teacher 1. Nevertheless, the school can still accommodate a bigger population as noted by AH and parent.

It is interesting to note that some negative concerns came out from the interview. The BOT claimed that no feasibility study was made on the state of the art facilities; hence the return of investment has not yet been realized as accounted by AH.

On the other hand, the smelly comfort room, the heat in the gymnasium, and the need to improve the canteen services and play area for the pupils similar to that of the annex were also



disclosed by the interviewees. Again all these indicate a high priority for physical features or the tangibles.

As an AH, I have observed that the outsourced maintenance services of diligent and hardworking staff seem inadequate in sustaining the cleanliness of the school. The learners have yet to be disciplined in order to observe cleanliness in the school campus which is one of the core values advocated for safe environment (_____ Student Handbook, 2017, p.8).

The heat in the school gymnasium as verbalized by the student is due to overcrowding during long institutional activities. Having a centralized air-conditioning system in the gymnasium will be very expensive considering the financial condition of the school. However, the school management's move to provide additional heavy duty exhaust fans is already a positive move cognizant of the welfare of the community.

On the other hand, a spacious Annex Building is available to respond to the decongestion of students and pupils in the old canteen and play area. Notwithstanding the proper scheduling of recess and Physical Education time, eventually, the pupils will transfer to the Annex Building as needed. Indeed, a high priority is given by the management to the physical needs of the students. Perhaps a clear communication to the parties concerned can help on this regard to dispel any negative assumptions on the part of the stakeholders.

In the exit interview form of resigning teachers, two teachers claimed that the school has a conducive learning environment which also comprises a convenient, and comfortable physical environment.

This is similar to the first theme on having well designed school building and state of the art facilities. Truly, a conducive environment is one characterized by a favorable physical and socio-cultural environment that promotes the well-being and achievement of students (Lynch, 2016).

Theme 2. Highly qualified and seasoned school administrators and personnel.

The BOT representative specifically mentioned “highly qualified administrators, competent personnel and obedient teachers” as the best school feature, an enduring attribute, as well as one that can sustain the institution over the years.

According to the HRO, the Principals are:

fully equipped and knowledgeable, and the teachers are properly trained. I am proud to say that the best and quality education that the pupils and students deserve are properly being addressed. This also includes the services provided by the school administration such as the guidance office, health services, sports, academic competition etc.

The human resources, specifically the administrators, are the best features of the school, as asserted by Teacher 2, and also the features that will make it survive. The continuous support from the top management and collective efforts of teachers, administrative staff are necessary to sustain the school.

Furthermore, Parent 1 noted the welcoming and very accommodating stance of the staff, administrators, teachers and even the helpers. It is also one feature that distinguishes it from other schools: “the way they treat and accommodate parents whether it is simple inquiry down to a much more complicated matter”.

The parent added:

The school admin, teachers and other staff go beyond or should I say the extra-mile in providing solutions that would fit the best for their students especially when the health of their student is at stake.



They provide solution and not just an option. I have experienced it with them with the case of my daughter, the way they help is to get through tumultuous time of our life when my daughter unexpectedly got sick from unknown source. It seems that everything is black at that time not knowing what will happen at the middle of the year. The school then gave us a ray of hope and light beyond what you can imagine. I can sincerely feel the concern and care from all of them.

The foregoing is a sign of a genuine concern for the learners and other stakeholders which could very well be the customer service of the school. As perceived by the parents, this positive customer service becomes informally, as a living school identity (Moran & Gareis, 2015).

What is required of a school head? The following summarizes the government's standard: Section 55. Qualification of the School Head. The school head, including his assistants, if any, shall possess such appropriate educational qualifications as may be prescribed by the Secretary and shall have adequate experience in school administration or management, or equivalent, at the time of his appointment (MRPS, 2011).

The school is run by a President who specializes in Business Administration and Management. The school is just one of his business ventures. The Vice President for Academic and External Affairs is a Hotel and Restaurant Management connoisseur with Master's Degree on the same specialization and a Doctorate in Education.

The Principal of the Elementary Department is a retired public teacher and principal, and a Bachelor of Science in Education graduate, a PBET passer with Master's Degree. On the other hand, I, as the Principal of the Secondary Department, am an education graduate, with major in Music Education. I earned my Licensure Examination for Teachers in 1997, and have taught for 13 years in Basic Education in big private schools in Metro Manila. To sum it all, I have been in the academe for 20 years. I earned my Master's Degree in School Management and am currently in pursuit of a Doctorate of Philosophy in School Management.

The background of the two principals have an indirect influence on the school identity (Avest and Bakker, 2007; Moran & Gareis, 2015). Their academic journey could be like the developmental journey of the school towards its goal of transforming the children to their best qualities.

The HRO is a registered nurse by profession, and who simultaneously holds the school nurse position. Since there is no Human Resource graduate in our school, the school nurse acts as the HRO who directly reports to the VP for Academic and External Affairs. However, the school principals are part of the screening committee in the hiring of school teachers.

The GC is currently pursuing her Master's Degree in Psychology specializing in Guidance and Counseling. To become a Registered Guidance Counselor, she has to earn first the Master's Degree and eventually pass the Professional Regulatory Commission examination in Guidance and Counseling.

Seasoned administrators are the core foundation in the management of school issues, concerns and complaints which may escalate to a substantial legal complaint, be it teacher or student concern. Through the leadership and management style of the AH, together with the GC, and the HRO, the concerns, issues and complaints in the school are duly addressed and resolved

accordingly. Hence, a positive feedback is evident among the satisfied pupils, students and parents.

Due to the manner in which potential and substantial complaints have been managed, which adheres to the protection of rights of all stakeholders and strict observance of due process in accordance to the legal references of school operations in the past eight (8) years of operation, the school has had a clean slate of legal issues. This is the consequence of having highly qualified and seasoned administrators.

The personnel are said to be competent, and teachers are characterized as obedient as professed by the BOT. Teachers were noted to be technological advanced according to Teacher. Our teachers are creative in preparing for classroom instruction with the aid of technology. They incorporate power point presentation where they present visuals, graphs, lectures, video presentation, illustrations and the like.

How do these measure up to the government? The following qualifications give light on what is expected from the teaching personnel (MRPS, 2011):

Section 70. Minimum Qualifications of a Teaching Personnel. The school teaching personnel in pre-school, elementary, and secondary level of basic education in all private schools shall possess appropriate educational qualifications and must pass the Licensure for Teachers (LET):

- a. The minimum educational qualification for school teaching personnel in the kindergarten and elementary levels shall be a bachelor's degree in education.
- b. The school teaching personnel in the secondary level of instruction shall have the following minimum educational qualifications:
 - 1.) For academic subject – a bachelor's degree in education, or equivalent or a bachelor of arts, with such additional number of professional education subjects as may be required, to teach largely in their major fields of concentration.

In the past years, the school hired 39 licensed teachers and 12 non-licensed teachers. The non-licensed teachers were asked to take the board exams during the first year of probation to qualify them for renewal of employment.

Some respondents, particularly the BOT and AH, noted the kind of teachers that they dislike in the school, particularly the disloyal, and demanding teachers. There are some teachers who are disrespectful to school administrators as noted by one Principal, and this attribute could be evident in the form of a “buddy system” between a subordinate and superior.

Teachers who resigned in my department did not conform to their daily class program. They were always late in coming to their class and they dismissed the class early. Some did not submit their lesson plans and would always be late in their submission of other paper works. They didn't accept any form of reprimand and they would take it against me and the management if we brought these infractions to their attention. Moreover, there was this teacher who came to her class under the influence of alcohol, and during lunch break, she came to me asking permission to go home for lunch. I answered her “bahala kana di naman kayo sumusunod” (You don't obey so it's all up to you). She then uttered foul words and banged the door. It was very stressful because in the course of doing my job, I was most of the time disrespected by teachers. I kept this to myself but somehow it was communicated to our VP for Academics and he wanted to

terminate the probationary teacher, I told him not to, but to let her finish the school year. It was difficult for me to address tardiness, absences and other concerns because during that time, there was no faculty handbook to refer to. Hence, my office initiated the formulation of the faculty handbook until it reached its prototype implementation at present.

The second role that I needed to resolve were the parents' complaints brought to their attention by their sons/daughters. Based from investigation and root cause analysis, they were all teacher factors. Thirdly, the students' concerns were all resolved and prevented from further escalation to legal complaints.

The role of the academic head is instructional leadership for effective and efficient K 12 Curriculum Implementation and supervision of the teachers in providing quality instruction through daily teaching – learning process.

Seasoned administrators are the core foundation in the management of school issues, concerns and complaints which may escalate to any form of substantial legal complaint, be it teacher or student concern. Through the leadership and management style of the AH with the office of the GC, concerns, issues and complaints are addressed and resolved accordingly; hence a positive feedback is given by satisfied clientele namely the teachers, pupils/students and parents.

I was also the acting GC during my first two years as an assistant principal because the GC during that time was not doing her job, I had to fill in on her behalf or else the complaints, concerns and issues would end up to legal complaints, customer dissatisfaction, and would put our school in a very critical position that may decrease the student retention. In short, I was doing multiple roles which truly became very challenging and made me resilient as an administrator. However, the clients were satisfied for the extra help extended.

Being the AH of the secondary department, I noticed that the common attitude of those who resigned was being disrespectful to school administrators. As classroom leaders, teachers cannot be effective if they cannot follow or be submissive to the implemented rules and regulations set by the school management.

In the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers Article VI. Section:

A teacher shall make it his/her duty to make an honest effort to understand and support the legitimate policies of the school and the administration regardless of professional feeling or private opinion and shall faithfully carry them out.

Negative school incidents were most of the time brought by teachers who did things their own way which likely resulted to complaints from parents, pupils/ students, and other stakeholders' dissatisfaction and frustration. In the course of their defiance to the structured practices of the school, the teachers became disrespectful in their manner of addressing their questions especially if the school policy does not conform to their personal interest, principles or agenda. They became critical and rude in the manner of directing their issues.

The BOT, AH and HRO do not like the culture of teachers who only work in school for a period of time in order to gain experience, earn their LET, and eventually transfer to public schools for financial reasons. However, our school cannot afford to have no teachers so we take the risk of hiring new graduates on the condition that they pass their LET within the school year. The school then becomes a stepping stone to public school employment. This may not be a positive consequence to some but the school does contribute to the enhancement of the teaching profession, at least benefitting the public school. Whereas in the past, teachers were observed

to move to the private school for better pay, now it's the other way around. Hopefully, teachers find the right place for them be it in the public or private school.

Despite the effort of the school administration to improve the socio-economic welfare of the teachers according to the BOT, the teachers are not committed to their vocation or noble profession, but rather they consider teaching as an occupation. This culture of working in the school as a training ground for subsequent admission to public school may be indicative of a materialistic attitude among teachers who work for money although for their family's welfare, as surmised by the HRO.

Generally, the AH pointed to the presence of accommodating personnel as a feature that sustains the school.

For the HRO, the school will survive: because the administration believes and trusts in the capability of its employees. Each problem was handled with the aim to help bridge the gap between employees and management and that the same time student problem and concerns are also being channeled properly by the principal and guidance office so that the best intervention will be done...

For Teacher 2,

the school will survive because of the people—"the continuous support from the top management and collective efforts of teachers, administrative staff".

Furthermore, the interventions provided by the GC and AH to students' concerns are acknowledged to impact on the survival of the school as noted by the HRO.

The administration's belief and trust in the capability of its employees is of paramount concern. Each problem is handled with the aim to help bridge the gap between employees and management, and that at the same time, the student problems and concerns are also being channeled properly by the principals and guidance office so that the best intervention will be done.

Parent 1 noted the way the school treats and accommodates parents "from simple inquiry to much more complicated matter." The understanding accorded by the administrators and teachers mean a lot to parents who may have complaints that are valid or not. The "extra mile" of sincere concern and care provided by the school administrators, teachers and other staff to students and parents make a lot of difference. Such was the case of a daughter who had a medical condition and whose doctor recommended bed rest in order to recuperate from her heart ailment.

She was a graduating grade 6 pupil and an academic achiever. For her, our school became flexible with the attendance policy prescribed by the DepEd. Our school provided a home based individual instruction to her daughter, facilitated by one of our elementary teachers until she satisfactorily met the requirements of a graduating pupil. Surely, the extra support accorded to the student and parents did not miss the gratitude of the parents. In fact, one article noted that the customer service of the school staff makes a great difference in the parent's evaluation of the staff competency and responsiveness (Abraham, 2016).

Moreover, all forms of complaints, concerns and issues were handled well by the GC and by the Office of the Principal. Due process is highly observed for both teacher and student issues. Decisions that are made protect the rights of concerned stakeholders. This is what distinguishes this school from others. The genuine concern for the learners and other stakeholders is evident which could very well be the customer service of the school. This somehow gives an impression of the school climate which Mosley (2007) refers to as the positive service attitude which if done consistently, will differentiate the school identity.

The competent administrators, teachers, and personnel were also highlighted by the BOT as contributory to a sustainable school. Appointing "the right and knowledgeable persons to specific job" will definitely aid in sustaining the school, said one AH. The personnel include

the highly qualified and seasoned administrators, as declared by the BOT, the leadership and management attributes of AH, and the presence of effective and efficient administrators according to the AH. All these help make the school survive, notwithstanding the continuous support from the BOT and management.

Moreover, the personnel's open-mindedness to different perspectives, and the cooperative and supportive teachers make the GC continue with her post. Teacher 2 added the kind understanding of principals, and teachers as they respond positively to parents who can become unreasonable and irrational at times.

Four respondents mentioned the teachers as features that sustain the school. The teachers' characteristics cited are being loyal according to an AH, being competent and skilled as noted by Parent 2, having good rapport with parents as claimed by the GC, and the way they deliver the lessons is satisfactory to a student interviewee. Teacher 3 claims that good teachers make the school different from other schools. The respect of teachers and students for one another was noted by the student interviewee. Although the relationship is not perfect, with the occurrence of "some mishaps or misunderstanding", both of them know their boundary or limitations.

I have experienced critical school incidents and situations brought about by resigned teachers, separated students from the school, whining and toxic parents but overcoming these challenges made me realize the reasons why the BOT, the regular teachers and loyal parents, personnel staff, pupils and students and myself are still members of the school. We still believe in the goodness and noble cause of the school. The core of my being as the AH transcends the curriculum implementation and supervision of teachers. It's more on touching the lives of these children and molding them to be the kind of persons that God intends them to be. The teachers and I are not just here to impart knowledge and prepare them for future industry immersion.

We basically operate by loving these children, but it is God's job to fix them. I can never fix a broken child, we can only love him/her through daily teaching – learning process anchored on the culture of quality and excellent classroom practices, classroom management and relevant pedagogy.

The foregoing comprise the environmental factors of administrative support, and collaborative structures among those features that perpetuate reform in schools (Kilbane, 2010). Truly, good human resources are a key role in sustaining the corporate identity (Mosley, 2007)

In the exit interview of 10 teachers who resigned in AY 2016-2017, one of the central or core attributes of the school which was retrieved from the survey part on what they liked most in their job was a positive relationship with school community members (administrators, teachers, students, staff, parents). This also includes a supportive environment provided by the school. This attribute was disclosed by six (6) teacher respondents who resigned. The observed positive relationship between and among the members of the school community is included in the second theme on highly qualified and seasoned school administrators.

From the point of view of teachers who resigned, the ones that matter most which may have something to do with their stay in the school are mostly on management concerns and relationship with their co-teachers. These include the physical, and psychological working conditions. Again, these reinforce the relationship factors mentioned earlier on what could sustain people in the workplace.

The foregoing attribute could also be related to the characteristics of high performing schools mentioned by G. Sue Shannon (2007) in Washington particularly on high level of

collaboration and communication, a supportive learning environment, and a high level of family and community involvement. Yet despite these positive attributes, some teachers are not meant to stay.

In the exit form, two teachers mentioned policy implementation as a feature that could sustain the school. This implies that structured practices have something to do also with the formation of school identity.

As to the areas that greatly satisfied the teachers who resigned, the following were noted: 1) Opportunity to talk with supervisor and 2) Supervisor's management method. This indicates a noted strength in the academic head but it could also mean that there are other factors that made the teachers leave in spite of good management.

Moreover, in the printed exit interview instrument among teachers who eventually resigned, what the teachers indicated as to what they liked least were interpreted to be also a part of the sustaining features in the negative manner:

1. Inconsistency in policy implementation
2. Imbalanced teacher schedule
3. Subject assigned not related to specialization
4. Teacher's inferiority due to peers

The last three features are relationship issues, involving teacher-supervisor and teacher-teacher.

Theme 3. Development oriented school.

The BOT explained the basis of the school's identity:

The identity of the school should emanate from its vision, mission, institutional objectives and core values. All stakeholders should take part and live the vision-mission, objectives and core values of the school. ___ is geared towards progressive pedagogy, and this can be attained by instruction, research and community involvement in the context of progressivism philosophy with emphasis on life skills and lifelong learning.

Indeed the vision, mission, institutional objectives, and core values (VMIOCV) form part of the formal school identity (Avest & Bakker, 2007). The school's Vision Statement as reflected in the Student and Faculty Manuals is: "In the service of children who have great love for God, country, family, community, and lifelong learning."

The formulated school vision seems to be more like a mission rather than a particular future picture of what the school wants to be. However, the service orientation of the school is very prominent as it leads the children, its clientele, towards a good relationship with the Creator, the family up to the largest community which is the country. Love for lifelong learning indicates a school priority for continuous learning of children even perhaps outside or beyond school. There is a need for students to continue learning in and beyond the school especially with rapid changes of science and technology in information society. (Demiel, 2009). Nevertheless, a need to reexamine the school's vision is imperative if a definite direction is intended by the management.

The School Mission as indicated in the school manuals states that: It is committed to serve as center of development advocating effective and efficient academic and non-academic programs



in the transformation of community of persons towards the enhancement of the quality of life of the Filipinos while adapting the global perspective of the times.

The development orientation of the school conveys its commitment to align the school activities with the goal of transforming not only the community but the country and the world as well. This is a sign of a progressive direction that the school pledges to undertake.

The Institutional Objectives, again as printed in the school manual, are:

1. To provide students with quality educational programs for its municipality and its neighboring communities;
2. To lead children for knowledge and experience the love of God through active worship and life;
3. To provide supportive environment, challenging curriculum, and meaningful activities that will enable each child to maximize his / her academic and non-academic potentials;
4. To enhance physical development of children by promoting balance and good nutrition; and by developing the large, fine and sensory motor skills;
5. To enhance intellectual development of children by encouraging a desire to learn, by fostering thinking processes; and by helping them acquire and use verbal skills;
6. To enhance emotional development of children by helping them manage their feelings and express them in a constructive way;
7. To nurture creative skills and enjoyment through experiences with art materials, music, building and play;
8. To enhance the social development by developing and encouraging positive, loving relationships; and good manners;
9. To enhance parental skills in the education of their children by increasing their knowledge of child development and ways to interact with their child; and
10. To *****, as a community of people which includes the students, parents, faculty, and staff, who have great love for God, love for country, love for family, love for neighbor, and love for learning.

The above institutional objectives need to be reviewed and revised to simplify the message of a holistic student development, remove duplication of ideas, and recognize the achievable targets, considering the role of the school and its resources. The school has to clarify its intention of providing the best environment for the total development to take place not only for the children but for the stakeholders, particularly enhancing the parents' skills as co-educators of their children. The benefits of parental support for the schools cannot be discarded (Van Reekel, 2008). Nevertheless, a review of the institutional objectives has to be made to shed light on the outcomes and remove the duplication with the vision statement.

Moreover, the core values as written in the school manuals are:

1. Student-centeredness
2. Aptitude for life skills
3. Citizenship

4. Advocacy for safe environment
5. Innovation and responsible technology

Student centeredness means the focus of programs, projects and activities for the students' welfare particularly for the development of their aptitude for life skills. The rest of the values are not clear as to what kind of citizenship is wanted, whereas the advocacy for safe environment and innovation and responsible technology refers to the role of the school as a leader or the aspiration for the personnel and cascaded down to the students. The need to clarify this becomes imperative especially if the set direction is a concern. Are the core values for all the stakeholders or for the students only?

Part of being development oriented is conducting mission aligned academic & non-academic institutional activities. As noted by one AH, the school has survived because it provides "the academic and non-academic institutional activities that lead to total holistic development of learners facilitated by teachers." The strict compliance to the provisions of the Department of Education sustain the legality of school operations and its compliance as a DepEd recognized private school. We have improved our K to 12 curriculum implementation, provided relevant and effective daily classroom instruction, and continuously improved our daily work processes according to government standards.

The school according to the BOT seeks for sustainable education. It caters to the needs of the students and the society where they will be in the future, added the HRO.

As an institution, *** is one of the best schools here in _____, that can provide educational needs of the pupils / students, and because our principals both from the Elementary and High School Department are fully equipped and knowledgeable and the teachers are properly trained, I am proud to say that the best and quality education that the pupils and students deserve are properly being addressed.**

This also includes the services provided by the school administration such as the guidance office, health services, sports, academic competition and etc. Though still new in the academe, *** is fast growing and coping not only for the needs of the students but also the society where these students will someday be a part of.**

However, as claimed by the GC, our school has not yet established its direction and its identity:

Ahh Mam, our school has not yet established its direction and its identity so basically the teachers, staff and students have no clear idea what the school wants to achieve as an institution. Most of the time, the principal or the teachers set the direction of the school by implementing their own ideas of program /activities. However, the program /activity will no longer continue once the teacher-in-charge resigns. There is no consistency because in the first place, there is no clear vision of the school's direction. This is one of the implications of having no school identity manual to follow which the school founders were not ready when they started the school. Even with documented school vision, mission, institutional objectives, and core values, if they are not clarified to the stakeholders, the school will not be able to reach its target. This is where communication contributes greatly to the seeming confusion or misinterpretation of the school's VMIOCV.

The school identity is expected to be embedded in the school's vision-mission statements, institutional objectives, core values, curriculum implementation, academic and non-academic institutional activities, school logo and symbols, school practices and policy implementation. But these were not evident in the first years of operation and an inconsistent policy implementation was observed by the AH, HRO, Teacher 1, 2, and 3, and Parent 1.



There was no faculty handbook in place during the first three years of school operation which somehow affected the policy implementation. The AH was quite lenient on teachers' attendance (tardiness and absences).

Hence when I assumed the position of an AH, most of the issues that I resolved were about teachers' failure to regularly come to their class on time. The teachers resented this and eventually resigned. However, development was noted when the deficiencies were attended to by the management.

Furthermore, the HRO believes that the school will continue with its mission of building "lives for lifelong learning." Students need to continue learning in and beyond the school especially with rapid changes of science and technology in information society. (Laal, 2012).

The implementation of rules to continue the development thrusts as shared by Teacher 1 has also been noted. Some policies and practices that affect students have been deliberately set in place, and others have evolved with time. Practices that do not support student learning are revised to ensure that they *do*, difficult though it may be to disrupt the status quo.

With discipline and proper education to students, the school will continue to operate in the future, declared one student. That is, if the developmental thrusts of the institution are maintained or sustained, meaning the social, emotional, moral, and spiritual development of young people are attended to by schools which engage in capacity building.

In a term of 8 years, the school has developed fast in producing quality students according to the HRO. The top management visualized and believed in the bright future of the school, taking great risks to move forward with its educational mission. The school is able to produce quality students as noted by the HRO; graduates who are able to pass the college entrance examinations.

Parent 2 noted the overall appeal of the school, that of having a community of educators and learners who share the same goals. This is also one of the school's objectives.

Moreover, according to the BOT, the school "progressively improves the benefits and privileges of the stakeholders". Competitive benefits such as the health services provider (Maxicare), free education of employees' children, faculty and staff and Sun Life insurance are meant to keep the good personnel in order to pursue their developmental goals.

Different types of students from regular to those with special needs are accommodated in the school. The teachers who come from different places are able to attend to their needs as accounted by the GC. This is an open school policy of admitting students of different needs as long as they are able to partner with the school in its developmental goals.

On the other hand, Teacher 2 claims that the implementation of school policies has yet to be desired. School manuals were not yet in place during the its first three years of operation. It was in SY 2014 – 2015 that the Faculty Handbook was made and implemented whereas the Student Handbook is continuously revisited. Basically, the school identity is directly connected to the structured practices of the school which are evident in the policy implementation. In the school's Faculty Handbook, stipulated are the duties, responsibilities and rights of teachers, their workload and schedule, development program, attendance, discipline, ranking and merit system, compensation and benefits (Faculty Handbook 2014).

Table 4 below illustrates the school activities highly valued and implemented as indicated in the school paper, excluding the parents' orientation and the educational trips of students which were inadvertently omitted. The sustainable quality of institutional academic and non-academic school activities as claimed by the BOT, AH, and HRO were all evident in the school paper reviewed by the researcher. The school activities were indicated in the school paper and



the institutional activities that are highly valued by the school are aligned with the Vision, Mission, Institutional Objectives, and Core Values are listed in Table. These comprise mostly of students' engagement in co-curricular activities related to the monthly themes as prescribed by the DepEd (i.e. Nutrition Month, Linggo ng Wika, SocSci Week), intramurals, Junior-Senior Prom, as well as involvement in internal and external contests and competitions. Furthermore, the school contributes to outreach program through the students' involvement. The educational tour and graduation, moving-up and recognition ceremonies are highly valued by the school, however for some reason these were not evident in the school paper editions as reviewed by the researcher.

Table 4

Document review of school activities' alignment to Vision, Mission, Institutional Objectives and Core Values (VMIOCV)

School Activities	Objectives	School paper edition and alignment to VMIOCV
Feeding program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) to instill awareness among JHS-SHS students the essence of charitable deeds towards less fortunate members of their immediate community 2) to give importance to the health of children through daily proper nutrition 3) to express concretely ____'s corporate social responsibility to the indigent members of the community 	Aligned with V.M, IO, #4.8 & CV # 1,2,3 ***** initiates outreach program p. 2 June – February 2016 edition
Annual Founding Anniversary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) to strengthen the participants' self-confidence 2) enhance their talents 3) appreciate the inner and outer beauty of the participants 4) provide a venue for friendly entrepreneurship activities among students 5) provide opportunities for social interactions among students 	Aligned with V.M, IO, # 3,5,8,10, and CV #1,3,4,5 ***** celebrates 2nd founding anniversary p. 1 June – October 2011 edition Search for Mr. And Ms. Foundation 2013 succeeded, June – October 2013 edition Mr. and Ms. ***** 2014, p.1 Jne – October 2014 edition ***** 5th Founding Anniversary Gained Praises ***** Celebrates its 6th year Mr. and Ms. ***** crowned 2015 7th founding anniversary Ipinagdiwang ng ***** , p. 4, 2016 – 2017
Nutrition Month	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) harmonize programs to ensure that students have access to adequate, nutritious and safe food 2) improve the delivery and services of well-balanced meal catered to the children 3) become aware of teh advantages / benefits of nutritious meals 4) promote social responsibility through feeding program to indigent children 	Aligned V, M, IO # 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and CV # 1,2,3,4 Nutrition Day Celebration, p. 3 June – October 2013 edition

Table 4.1

Document review of school activities' alignment to Vision, Mission, Institutional Objectives and Core Values (VMIOCV)

School Activities	Objectives	School paper edition and alignment to VMIOCV
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BSP – GSP Investiture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) participate in activities that promote responsible citizenship and leadership. 2) practice desirable social, cultural, moral and spiritual values 3) make wise choices and good decisions 4) show love and respect for the family and person of authority in the community. 5) participate in various activities to promote internalization in values 6) engage in hobbies and practical skills that lead to profitable sources of livelihood 7) join outdoor activities that develop physical fitness, skills for self reliance, and resourcefulness 8) communicate with others scouts to promote world brotherhood 	<p>Aligned with V.M, IO, # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and CV # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5</p> <p>Ikatlong COED Encampment Idinaos, Nobyembre – Marso, 2013 edisyon</p> <p>BSP – GSP Encampment Ginanap Nobyembre – Marso, 2014 edisyon</p> <p>***** on its 5th COED Encampment Imagine More, Take action p. 1, November – March 2015 edition</p> <p>JHS Day Camp, held 6th Annual Investiture successfully held, p. 1, June – February 2016</p> <p>BSP -GSP Outdoor Encampment, Isinakatuparan, p. 2. 2016 – 2017 edition</p>
UN Celebration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) maintain international peace and security 2) foster cooperation in solving international economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian problems 3) promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; to develop friendly relations among nations 	<p>Aligned with V.M, IO, # 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10 and CV # 1,2,3,4,5</p> <p>HAT parade Highlights United Nations Day, June – October 2011 edition</p> <p>UN in ***** Aflame, June – October, 2013 edition</p> <p>Araw ng mga Nagkakaisang Bansa, Ipinagdiriwang, p. 2, 2016 – 2017 edition</p>
Junior – Senior Promenade	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) develops social grace 	<p>Aligned V, M, IO # 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and CV # 1,2,3,4</p> <p>JS Promenade inaabangan Nobyembre 2013 – Marso 2014</p> <p>Junior – Senior Promenade, p. 1 November – March 2015 edition</p>

Table 4.2

Document review of school activities' alignment to Vision, Mission, Institutional Objectives and Core Values (VMIOCV)

School Activities	Objectives	School paper edition and alignment to VMIOCV
SocSciMath (Quiz Bee, MTAP, and others) division contest	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) exudes mastery the different topics taught in Social Studies, Science and Mathematics subjects 2) amass ample knowledge and wisdom 3) learn about being resourceful and efficient with the resources he/she has 4) appreciate the values of reading books and researching 5) know how to make decisions and face dilemmas 6) know how to handle pressure and nervousness 7) develop well-rounded and plausible habits on studying 8) learn the value of patience, determination, hardwork and self-discipline 	<p>Aligned with V, M, IO # 1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and CV# 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Science Inventions Showcase, June – October, 2011 edition</p> <p>Pandibisyong MTAP Math Challenge, Pinagwagian, Nobyembre 2013 – Marso 2014 Blg. 6</p> <p>Battle of the Brains Held, p.4, June – October 2013 edition Pagsasanay sa MTAP Dinaluhanp. 3, Hunyo – Oktubre 2014 edisyon***** Bagged Medals in the Division Odeporhy Contest, p. 1, November – March, 2015 edition</p> <p>MTAP Metrobank Challenge *****Humakot ng Parangal, p.1, Nobyembre – Marso 2015 Robotics Summer Workshop Gaganapin, p.1, Nobyembre-Marso 2015***** made an oratorical stand, p.1 June – February, 2016*****Math Wizards land a spot First entrepreneurship in Science and Technology held in ***** , p.3 June – February, 2016</p>
Intramurals / sports	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) enhance camaraderie through friendly athletic activities among pupils and students 	<p>How to make a Lego NXT Robot (p.3 June – February, 2016)</p>



<p>2)experience opportunities for social interactions among pupils and students 3)discover and enhance the potentials of pupils and students who are gifted and talented in sports 4)strengthen the character of students through sports 5) develop self-discipline, team building and sportmanship among pupils and students 6) value the victory and imbibe a lasting insight from defeat 7)market to nearby communities</p>	<p>Aligned V, M, IO # 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and CV# 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Mini Sport Fest, Isinagawa Nobyembre-Marso, 2013 edisyon; Cheer Dance Competition, Applauded; List of Champions in particular event , p.4, June – October 2013 edition</p>
	<p>**** namayani sa Basketball, Wagì sa Karatedo, Talaan ng mga Nagwagi sa Unang Puwesto sa ginanap na Intramurals, p.4, Agosto 17 – 19 Cheer Dance ruled over the Dance Sports, p.4, November – March 2015 Sports Feature: Batang Karatedo Mga Natatanging Pilipinong Atleta p.4, Nobyembre – Marso 2015 Seniors outshine competitors in cheerdance competition 2015 Seniors dominate basketball Junior Titans outwit Sophomore wolves ***** Intramurals 2015 held triumph, p.8, June – February 2016) edition ***** Namayaning muli sa Basketball ***** Gymnasts, humakot ng medalya sa Provincial Meet Piling Manlalaro ng ***** Nakibaka sa Regional Sports Competition (RSC) p.8, 2016 – 2017</p>

In the exit form, one teacher stated that the school focuses on improvement. This is aligned with the seventh theme of development oriented school. This may not only pertain to focused professional development of teachers but also to clear and shared focus (Shannon, 2007).

As indicated in the vision of the school, it aims for lifelong learning of the children, and it intends to create a center of development for the transformation of its clientele.

Theme 4. School’s strategic location.

The BOT noted the advantage of the school’s strategic location to basic education because “... more and more people are coming into place for a living that requires their families to send their children to school”.

The GC has much to say about the school’s strategic location: It is far from any amusement centers that can be distracting to students in their studies and ahh the school is very accessible and convenient for nearby homes and ahh, in general, the school is really nice and good. Ahh its strategic location helps it survive in the last years. Ahh the community around the school is growing and ahhh, more families are occupying the vacant houses and ahh, this will continue in the years to come. The school has the best location for basic education compared to other schools here in Carmona. Aahh it has all the facilities required to operate.

Parent 2 added the location as a plus factor of the school: “the close proximity to their neighborhood. It is situated in area which is generally safe.”

The school's accessibility was also the consideration of Teacher 1 who was formerly a parent of a pupil enrolled in the school. The school is located within a private and residential subdivision. Majority of the learners reside in the subdivision situated in Region IV-A. The area is flood free, traffic free, and learners can come to school with no money due to the school's proximity to their residences.

The school is also able to market outside the subdivision. These characteristics are in consonance with the requirements of the government (MRPS, 2011):

Section 161. Standards on School Site. The standards on school site of private schools shall be considered, among others, on the other factors of total floor in square meters. Occupancy at any one time, school developmental plan, and traffic situation in school vicinity, and such other requirements as the Secretary may deem valid and reasonable to issue.

It is interesting to note that the school location is indeed a part of school identity because it establishes the market coverage, the delivery of services, and its visibility and opportunities for marketing ([Rufaidah](#), et.al, 2018).

Since the school is the only private school inside a subdivision, the BOT, GC, and Teacher 3 claim that it will survive the test of time. More people are observed to migrate to the place which could be translated into additional enrolment. Besides, the place is conveniently accessible to parties concerned according to the GC. With the proximity of the school to the pupils' and students' residences, the school becomes very convenient for them. The learners may come to school with no transportation fare since they can walk to school, or ride a bicycle. This unique location attribute is indeed a distinguishing feature of the school for the clients. In the exit forms of resigned teachers, one teacher noted the "convenience" accorded by the physical environment. This supports the earlier discussion of strategic school location as a core feature.

Theme 5. School program offering.

According to Teacher 1 and Teacher 2, the school's best feature is the TESDA or the offering of the Technical Vocational Track, Home Economics strand in Senior High School. Retorted Teacher 1:

Yes, of course, I think it will continue to operate in the years to come. In fact we already have senior high school and TESDA in which the school serves basic education for the youth and TESDA for the out of school youth.

However, it did not spell out in student numbers in AY 2016-2017 and it did not match the survey results on the preferred track. Hence, to have a return of investment for the said top of the line facilities they prepared for TESDA in our school, the management decided to establish a training and assessment center for bread and pastry, and food and beverage services that will be equivalent to National Certification 2.

The school's compliance to the K to 12 curriculum of the Department of Education is one of the features that sustain the school based on the AH perspective. The offering of the Senior High School and TESDA, and probably higher education in the future will help the school continue to operate according to the BOT. The TESDA for the out-of- school youth will be the school's additional way of serving the community.

The school is able to offer the complete K to 12 curriculum according to Teacher 1 and AH. The standards set by the Department of Education are fully complied by the school which in effect distinguishes it from others. The TESDA program stands out as a distinguishing feature unlike those offered in other schools.

Actually, the TESDA offering is a result of the BOT's decision which was not aligned with the survey results on which Senior High School Track to offer. The chosen Technical Vocational Track Home Economic Strand necessitated facilities which cost our school millions of pesos. Unfortunately, most of our grade 11 pursued the Academic Track STEM strand, ABM strand, and Tech-Voc. Track Computer Programming strand.

In order to have a gradual return of investment to the Home Economics state of the art facilities, the higher authority prepared for TESDA accreditation, which could mean accommodating scholars who will earn National Certification in Home Economics strand and which could support our school as a training center. Sadly, the budget for each scholar subsidized by the government is not sufficient as compared to the school fees charged in Basic Education. However, the program stands out in the community for its additional service of preparing the students with professional skills.

The movement of pupils to other schools from preschool seems to be disturbing according to one teacher. The management has yet to attend to it. Based from my observation, however, some pre-schoolers left the school because they were not yet ready for classroom set-up. For others, it was the teacher factor, and transfer to public school for free education. Notwithstanding this transfer, the preschool population continues to grow.

Other school attributes

The other 3 themes did not have the CED features. Some had two features (either C and D as in the case of reasonable school fees, or C and E as in the case of reputable education;) and one feature (E) only as in the sustaining feature of parents and students' support.

Theme 6. Reasonable school fees.

The core and distinct features of the school are reasonable school fees. The BOT claims that:

The tuition on pre -elementary is not very much as compared to other schools. Others have very high tuition and miscellaneous for pre-elementary because of the very detailed foundation of education of the very young kids and the management of these students are different. However, _____ intends to attract more parents to send their children at very affordable tuition and miscellaneous, for them to avail the early \ education and value the role of ____; and in the long run, their loyalty to the school will be established. The school is geared towards the value for money, satisfaction of stakeholders, and responsible democratic educational institution. The life skills and lifelong education should not be compromised.

The BOT added: "On tuition and miscellaneous, these are reasonable and the school has not yet increased them yet since it started." Moreover, the "affordable and justifiable tuition fee "is the feature noted by Parent 1 that distinguishes the school from others. This was also perceived by Parent 2 who cited the affordability of school fees as one of the advantages of the school.

Affordable and reasonable school fees with no tuition hike in the past 8 years is a positive observation from stakeholders but also a reason why the school management cannot afford



to have significant increase in the salary of its school personnel. Despite the no-school fee increase, the school continues to struggle in collecting the payment of fees from delinquent parents. Nevertheless, some parents assert that they are entitled to express themselves even in unacceptable and inappropriate manner of addressing their concerns because they pay the school fees.

The latest provision for tuition fee increase is embodied in RA 6728 MRPS, (2011) on School Finance:

Section 180. Tuition and other Student Fees. Each private school shall determine its rate of tuition and other school fees or charges. The rates and charges adopted by schools pursuant to this provision shall be collectible as promulgated by the Department.

Generally, the tuition and other fees should consider the following:

Educational Policies and Programs. The state shall take into account regional and sectoral needs and conditions and shall encourage local planning in the development of educational policies and programs. (MRPS, 2011).

Parent 2 mentioned that an affordable and justifiable tuition fee makes the school different from others. The fees are cheaper than those in other schools. The BOT also compared the pre-elementary tuition and miscellaneous fees to other schools. He believes that maintaining an affordable education in general leads to the formation of school loyalty. Besides, he believes in the value of life skills and lifelong education which should not be compromised by monetary concerns.

Having been established for quite some time, surpassing the first 5 years in service, is also reassuring as asserted by Teacher 3. Teacher 3 added that the school will not go bankrupt but will endure beyond expectations.

Theme 7. Reputable education.

A central/core and enduring attribute is reputable education. The HRO claims that:

As an institution, *** is one of the best schools here in _____, that can provide educational needs of the pupils / students, and because our principals both from the Elementary and High School Department are fully equipped and knowledgeable and the teachers are properly trained, I am proud to say that the best and quality education that the pupils and students deserve are properly being addressed. This also includes the services provided by the school administration such as the guidance office, health services, sports, academic competition and etc. Though still new from the academe, ***** is fast growing and coping not only for the needs of the students but also the society where these students will someday be a part of. The school provides the best and quality education by addressing the particular educational needs of its students. This is complemented by guidance, health, sports, and academic services. It is the only “prestigious” school in the neighborhood, as claimed by Teacher 3.**

Parent 1 asserts that the school, on its 8th year, has proven its worth:

The school is already known for consistently winning different competitions within and outside the region which is a good marketing for the school. Thus, with the word of mouth coming from other parents, the school will continue to thrive in the years to come. The relationship that they have built with the parents is a strong plus in staying competitive with other schools. In addition, they have or offer top of the line facilities that will surely help in enhancing the skills and capabilities of their students.



Hence from the perspective of parents, reputable education takes the form of student achievement, and enhanced student skills and capabilities. The school will continue to be prestigious with student honors in varied fields. Furthermore, Parent 2 claims that it is a reputable school considering that it employs competent and skilled educators. It provides a quality of education that parents cannot ignore. This is consistent with the contention that a quality school cannot be better than the quality of its teachers (Barnwell, 2015).

Students winning in competitions in and out of the region speaks of quality students and is a good marketing scheme according to the parent interviewees. The performance image will generate more enrollees according to Parent 1. Moreover, the students reveal a passion for studying according to a student.

Theme 8. Parents' and students' support.

Finally, the school feature mentioned that could sustain without it being considered as a core nor distinct feature is the parents' and students' support. The parents and students' trust and confidence in the school as asserted by the BOT may pave the way to sustain the school:

After 8 years, somehow the parents and students have already established their trust and confidence for the school. Definitely, because of the growing trust and confidence for the school, continued school facility expansion, competent administrators, teachers and personnel. In addition, more academic programs like senior high school and TESDA and maybe in the future, the higher education degrees...

Retorted by Parent 1:"

Mainly because I still believe in this institution. I enrolled them here not just because of who the teachers are. There are so many other factors that my husband and I consider in choosing a school.

Furthermore, Parent 2 resolved:

I will continue to be a member of this institution. As a parent, I would say I'm not very much involved in the school's activities. I'm not always present in my daughter's school events, and whenever I do, I notice how parents would show much support in activities and events.

Schools with parents' support tend to establish better reputation in the community. In a way, they become marketers of the institution. Schools experience better community support, and they usually do better and have higher quality programs than those without parents' involvement (Olsen & Fuller, 2010). Moreover, with recent researches revealing the benefits of parental support for schools in terms of student achievement, the school can continue longer with happier children engaged in learning.

School's Structured Practices

SOP 2.) What do the social actors and school documents bare about the school's implementation of structured practices?

Perceptions and observations regarding the school's structured practices, particularly on the implementation of various school policies were elicited from the interview. The implementation of school policies involves a "dynamic and evolving change process owing to a confluence of factors, including networked implementation structures, socio-political conflict, and administrative reforms that shape how policy ideas are translated into social

betterment programs” (Degroff & Cargo, 2009). Some factors that can facilitate the implementation process are personal, organizational, or institutional motivation and commitment which may be influenced by different priorities, a lack of incentives, and limited resources among others. The analysis of the factors can clarify the environment of policy implementation (Spratt, 2009).

In this study, policy implementation is presented using the following themes of school culture extrapolated from the interview transcript:

1. Culture for learning and development
2. Culture of compliance to government standards
3. Culture of communication
4. Culture of policy support

When the interviewees were asked to describe and narrate the school implementation of policies, varied perspectives came out from the factual to evaluative, from the normative to recommendatory, and from experiential to theoretical.

The following themes were drawn from the analysis of the transcripts on structured practices:

Theme 1. Culture for learning and development

The development of policies is important to address the needs of a growing institution and to sustain its operation according to the BOT:

It is normal to have some concerns and issues. These are part of a growing institution with growing individuals from diverse perspectives and culture. The school handles all of these concerns and issues with sound democratic practices and decisions are guided by the existing institutional policies, educational laws and manuals of regulations. The common good of all is the general principle to handle such like these concerns and issues.

Added the GC, “The school needs to be ready for change if necessary and to be innovative”. Further reflections include:

I believe there is always an opportunity to grow and improve as long as an institution is willing to learn and accept the fact that they need to keep on improving the system. In the case of our school, there is a lot to do to improve the dissemination of information; implementation and if there is a need for modification, then the school should welcome it. First, I think they have to evaluate the capabilities of those staff in-charge in implementing the school policies. Are they fit/qualified to their job? Do they have enough training and knowledge to do their job? So if there is a problem in the consistency, perhaps the people in-charge do not have enough knowledge or they are not fit to the position. A system or any policy will only work if the people who are implementing are qualified and fit to that position or function, success of any system or policy depends on the people executing it.

The people who implement or execute the policies need to be qualified to ensure the success of the implementation. Generally, they need to have a high sense of discretion to relate well with the clients in order to secure the street level influence of policy processes that would greatly influence the success of implementation. Moreover, they need to reinterpret and reshape the policy to avoid confusion after engaging in participatory approaches in policy design to greatly benefit its implementation. (Brynard, 2009).

Amendments to policies can be done on a yearly basis but documented report should be the basis for improvement and revisions of policies every three (3) years. Overall, good school practices must be retained as asserted by the BOT:

Policies are subject to change for improvement, I only question the existing policies which are not anymore applicable for our school or perhaps amendments to existing ones to cater to the common good of all stakeholders. The rights of the employers and the rights of the employees should be manifested for mutual relationship in order for the school to survive and deliver/sustain its purpose.

The rationale of policy implementation was raised by Parent 2 who believes that peace and order, discipline, and character formation are the consequences of a good policy implementation. The student interviewee agrees that good moral conduct of students is a consequence of good policy implementation. Harmony among the school members and protection of stakeholders are also assured when the policies are followed, added the AH. Avoidance of greater conflict is seen by one teacher as contributory to better policy implementation. Likewise, a “very nice environment conducive for learning” is a consequence of following the policies according to a parent.

A culture of discipline and excellence is indicated by a culture for learning and development as understood by the AH. The commitment of every stakeholder is important to ensure good school practice.

In the course of policy implementation, challenges were faced by the respondents. These included admission policies for pre-elementary children with special needs, code of conduct for high school students, and issues on faculty attendance, tardiness and retention as noted by the BOT.

The AH and the GC added that students’ wearing of school uniform, tardiness and bringing of gadgets were also puzzling. For Teachers 2 and 3, the enforcement of the prescribed and complete school uniform and the tardiness of students are a concern. Moreover, a change of sanction from the use of fear or threat to dismissal of erring students from the school was challenging inasmuch as it served as a lesson to the rest of the students according to Teacher 2.

As to the uniform issue, the school supplies the students’ uniform. There are times when there is no available uniform; hence the imposition cannot be strictly imposed. This will have to be attended to by the management as part of their customer service.

The AH and the GC mentioned again teachers’ tardiness and absences; dismissing the class not on time was also a concern for the GC. The meeting of deadlines by teachers was also perplexing to the AH and so with the delinquent payment of tuition fees as stated by another AH.

For the HRO, “removing an erring or immoral teacher from the institution” poses a challenge. In a school that espouses excellent or quality education, having the best teachers who are critical on the students’ development and success, processes must be in place to ensure that only competent and qualified teachers are retained.

These processes include evaluation systems that become the basis for employment decisions of personnel (“Teacher Evaluation”, 2010). The systems assist in making programs to enhance the professional development of teachers.

In our school, performance evaluation is conducted every quarter for probationary teachers and every semester for regular teachers. The results become a basis for renewal of contract of

probationary teachers, and/or the rationalization for the continued tenure of a permanent faculty member. Periodic training of teachers is provided to ensure their professional updating. In the field of management, a continuous learning curve characterizes a real culture of learning and development. Leaders are constantly challenged to try new things and to question existing assumptions and practices. What may worked in the past may not work today given the many changes happening in the environment, the latest technology, the mode of communication, and the attitude of people in the modern times. Empowerment of employees which ranks high in the seven factors affecting high impact learning culture has to be promoted in order to make the employees listen to their customers, speak the truth, make decisions and create their environment. (Bersin, 2010). The same can be applicable in the school setting. In summary, a culture of learning and development is necessary for structured practices to be set up and to continue. Challenges will have to be faced with an open attitude towards learning and transformation for the better welfare of the school community.

Theme 2. Culture of compliance to government standards.

The AH said that the student manual and the prototype faculty manual are utilized as basis for implementation of policies. This is supported by the BOT who claims that:

The school should implement the policies according to existing institutional manuals governed by the legal bases on education, Memorandum Orders, and prevailing institutional /organizational structure. These policies should be guided, by the vision, mission, institutional objectives, and core values.

Teachers 1 and 2 also fathomed that the policies are based on Deped regulations which must be carried out considering that more parents know the need to protect their children's rights.

Hence Teacher 1 maintained that:

School policy po...according yung implementation...according sa DepEd talagang sumusunod kasi ang hirap din talaga na ahh may magulang...kasi especially now yung mga parents alam rin nila yung mga karapatan ng mga bata so kailangan yung school is really following or conforming to the DepEd. Standards, when it comes to policies.”(Nowadays that parents know their children's rights, it is important for the school to follow the government regulations).

Furthermore, the Deped standards are anchored on the international standards for education, as presumed by the AH. The basis for making the school manuals is the following MRPS (2011) provision:

Section 3. Minimum Standards and or Criteria. The standards or criteria provided in this manual are the minimum required for government recognition, and schools may adopt higher standards or criteria consistent with laws, rules and regulations.

The participants espouse the policies for the general welfare or for the protection of the stakeholders considering that the school policies are guided by institutional policies, manuals of regulations, and educational laws. Although the administration is doing its best, it must also take into consideration the Child Protection Policy CPP as noted by Teacher 1 especially when deciding on the options of sanctions. Ethical conduct is still part of policy compliance that has

something to do with minimized risks of socio-emotional consequences as well as legal implications (“Corporate culture...” 2015).

However, there was a case of a teacher who had illegal collection from the students. This could mean automatic termination from service. Notwithstanding the recommendation of the Grievance Committee for the termination of the erring teacher, the management decided to set aside the recommendation. The teacher is still with the school. This decision impressed upon the faculty members that the school’s higher authority does not apply nor implement policies to all but to a selected few. Somehow, the moral integrity of the school’s Top Management has been stained without the clarification made on the case.

Overall, the school is assessed by Parent 1 as compliant to the regulations:

What’s good about *** is that they adhere to the rules and regulations deemed by the Department of Education wherein they strictly follow the guidelines set forth in computing the grades and assignments. Teachers are transparent with how they compute the grades; questions are answered in a professional way with the guidance of the principal.**

Such adherence to the law speaks of order and discipline, and a positive culture of integrity which, when properly embedded into an organization, can create a competitive advantage and serve as a valuable organizational asset (“Corporate culture: The second ingredient in a world-class ethics and compliance program” 2015).

Revision of the student and faculty handbook must happen periodically to serve their purpose of being a reference to pupils, students and teachers. After the manuals were first used in 2010 for students and 2014 for faculty handbook, there had been three (3) revisions made. The people involved in the revision included the member of the BOT, AH, HRO, GC and representative from each grade level.

The area on student discipline is supported by the MRPS Section 131:

Responsibility on Student Discipline; Limitation. The administration of each private school shall be responsible for the maintenance of good discipline among students inside the school campus, as well as outside the school premises whenever they are engaged in authorized school activities. No physical harmful punishment shall be applied. No disciplinary sanction shall be imposed upon student except for valid causes as defined in the school rules and regulations, and in accordance with due process as provided for in the Manual of Regulations for Private Schools.

On grading system, students rely greatly on performance tasks or practical tests which may be assessed individually or in group. The teacher respondent claims that changes in the grading system may have its consequences on the students’ attitude and achievement. Another teacher upheld the grading system which covers the intellectual and practical aspects of related work or career, seemingly an immersion in future tasks or job functions. In addition, a parent commended the transparency in grade computation, and the teacher’s professional way of answering the parent in the presence of the principal.

The giving of assignment could stress out the student, says Teacher 1, so she limits it to simple tasks that may take at least 2 days of research and not on week-end. Teacher 2 says that performance tasks are already sufficient so the students deserve rest on week-end. The school

follows Deped rules and regulations in the giving of assignments. This was confirmed by Parent 2 who also thinks that week-end should be spent on non-academic activities like hobbies, bonding with family and friends, and external clubs and organizations. However, the student respondent noted that assignments tend to be “too long and hard for a student to handle.” Moreover, the AH noted that there are some teachers who have yet to follow the “no week-end assignment” policy of Deped.

The rationale for strict compliance to policies which are based on the government’s standards is clearly stated in the Faculty Manual. However, the implementation of the policy on teachers’ attendance and tardiness was noted by the HRO as necessitating attention. Its failure reflects on the teachers’ discipline. Similarly, the BOT and AH pointed to attendance and tardiness of teachers among others (retention and meeting of deadlines) as a challenging policy to implement. Attendance is a sign of the teacher’s commitment to serve the institution and carry on with his/her professional/career assignment. This is also applicable to early dismissal of students by teachers which in one case, led to a student hitting another student and subsequent reporting of the parents to the barangay. Fortunately, the parents listened to the AH’s decision that the proper forum is in school.

According to Teacher 1, notices are given to erring teachers. However, appropriate sanction was not given to an erring teacher. For Teacher 2, the implementation of faculty attendance seems to be alright. These varied reactions that come from the faculty indicate different perceptions on policy implementation.

The AH shared her experience in the initial three (3) years of being an Administrator. She observed that there was no faculty manual and there was lenient implementation of sanctions to teacher’s tardiness and absences. She further observed that her teachers did not appreciate the calling of their attention about their shortcomings in the daily school attendance. Most of the issues resolved then were about the teachers’ failure to regularly come to their class on time.

Recommendations for a good school practice were expected from the interviewees who were asked on their perceptions, observations and experiences in school. The assumption is that a good school practice sustains the school operation and contributes to its good image or identity. The following were raised:

1. **Good Documentation.** The BOT believes that good practices must be documented after gathering the feedback from stakeholders. Continuous improvement is expected from the school administrators and staff by proper implementation of rules and regulations. This improved school image has to be part of the school promotion to the community in order to build the trust and confidence for a sustainable education.
2. **Consistent Excellent and Quality Performance.** – I consider the practice of consistently doing one’s best to build a culture of discipline and excellence which eventually could lead to the choice of building one’s commitment to the school. As Aristotle said “We are what we repeatedly do”.
3. **Teachers as Good Leaders.** This is what the AH deems to be a good school practice. This will eventually lead to having students as good followers if teachers are servant leaders.

4. Committee on Policy Implementation. The HRO suggests that a committee comprised of the HRO, AH and teachers be formed to bridge the teachers gap with management and establish proper channel of communication and intervention regarding policy implementation issues and concerns.
5. Appointment of qualified personnel. The GC trusts that the appointment of qualified personnel with the right kind of training and experience to disseminate appropriate information and implement the policies could make a difference. As long as the institution is open to changes and continuous improvement, there could be good school practices.
6. Strict and firm implementation of policy. The teachers and parent believe in the consistent implementation of policies to be fair to all employees. A strict implementation could lead to positive discipline, and non-repetition of mistakes when the community understands the consequences. This also ensures harmony among co-workers.
7. Appropriate sanctions for non-compliance. Parent 2 proposes that students be given appropriate sanctions related to the kind and severity of offense. The parent believes in the assignment of additional work and participation in school activities, and or community work in the campus. This requires a review of the sanctions as stated in the handbook which I also advocate.
8. School's implementation of no bullying policy- A student particularly referred to the implementation of "no bullying in the campus" as a good school practice although she mentioned that all the polices are favorable.

Looking into the student's perspective can balance the concerns of the students with that of the parents and teachers. On the other hand, no good practice was recommended by Teacher 3

Theme 3. Culture of communication

There is a yearly parent orientation as narrated by AH.

Ventured Parent 1:

The school always sees to it that parents are properly informed about the school policy. They even conduct a dialogue with the parents to clearly inform them or ask us about the school policies. If there are some changes whether a major or a minor change, they see to it that a letter or communication is sent parents for proper information.

Noted by the HRO is the need to improve policy implementation from top to bottom. Specifically, she says:

I believe that everybody should work as a team in order to do this and not create division by always contesting or provoking the decision of the administrators. Proper channeling and communication is the best way to do this.

The faculty manual, according to one AH, is provided to all teachers. The contents, for the most part, are self-explanatory. The AH, being the author of the manual is open to questions or clarifications. Unfortunately, instead of directly going to her or the HRO, they share their thoughts with their peers until conflict, misunderstanding, and miscommunication happen.

On the other hand, Teacher 3 claims that he/she is not oriented with the school policy. Oral traditions are apparent but sometimes the author of the policies is not also compliant to the rules. How the management handles this kind of a feedback conveys the kind of horizontal or vertical communication and community allowed to exist.

Sound democratic practices and decisions guide in handling concerns and issue, said the BOT. The general welfare is the foremost concern; hence good communication is needed between and among the stakeholders.

Questions on the policies are made when policies are not anymore applicable to the times or when they do not serve anymore their purpose. It is but normal for parents and students to question the policies if they are not clear, not convenient, or not deemed beneficial to them. However, there was a case when the recommendation of sanction of the Committee on Grievance based on the government regulation was not upheld by the top management according to one AH and Teacher 1. No communication however, was made regarding the basis for such decision which led to assumption of favoritism.

Questions regarding the policies are likely to be made by teacher implementers as well as the ones affected by them. The HRO, however, observed that at times, the “manner of questioning is offensive” like in the case of removing an erring or immoral teacher. Hence, she tries to understand the situation and give a satisfactory answer. When matters pertain to higher ups, the issue is elevated to the proper authority for referral or consultation.

If good communication exists when explaining the rationale of the policies to the parties concerned, the GC believes that proper orientation will clarify issues and ultimately lead to better decision as to retaining or amending the policy, and addressing the subsequent consequence of people accepting it or not. If the ideas or comments regarding the policies are not raised to the proper forum, most likely conflict, misunderstanding, and miscommunication can happen, said one AH.

The AH remarked that sometimes, some parents would also question the teacher’s implementation of the policy as stipulated in the handbook. Teacher 1 narrated how her communication to a parent failed when she was following up the status of a student in her advisory class.

Teacher 3 added that questions on the implementation of policies on sending home a sick child and the promotion or retention of student were also raised. However, for the parent and student respondents, no record of questioning of policy was raised.

According to the BOT, policy evaluation should be made through feedback from stakeholders as to the outcomes and the “effectiveness and efficiency of the administrators and offices concerned when it comes to its reinforcement.” Furthermore he said that changes have to be documented to trace the status of the original policy.

The school, being young, was observed to have inconsistency in policy implementation as stated by the GC, teachers and parents. Hence, most teachers and staff are not serious in implementing or following the policies.

Added one teacher, policy implementation is weak among the members of the school community, taking the enforcement of school ID, as an example. In the exit form of teachers

who resigned, one teacher commented that “student discipline is not evident because the students are not punished for their wrong doings.” This may be traced to the enforcement of alternate sanction to expulsion - a two day suspension with community service, and counseling, and non-acceptance of the student the following school year. I think that it is important that the student not be deprived for the rest of his/her life the chance to continue his/her studies. In my 21 years with the education sector, I observed that unruly and misbehaving learners are broken young individuals due to family problems such as having separated parents, conflict with parents, not being loved or abused by family members, and other negative situations that these learners have no control of. Hence a rationalization of the severe sanctions has to be made but this has to be communicated with the parties concerned.

A teacher from the survey exit form results recommended to “improve on vague policies and be consistent in its implementation, and improve the Student Handbook, and be consistent in its implementation.”

The AH says that reprimand is given to those who do not comply with the policies. Moreover, one parent warns that “suspension is not an immediate option” because it will deprive the student of his/her right to education.

Improvement of policy implementation was mentioned by the HRO. The need to work as a team from the top management to the faculty and staff, with proper channeling and communication were noted.

The GC suggested the following: the bulletin board must be utilized to provide information, regular orientation to be conducted, signing of teachers’ contract to acknowledge their orientation and agreement to follow the policies, distribution of student handbook on the orientation day for parents, and the parents’ signing of contract immediately after the policy orientation. These are good suggestions that might work for the effective implementation of policies.

There was a case of one teacher who was not satisfied with the ruling on tardiness. What she did was not to accept students who were late by locking the classroom. This unofficial practice led to the issuance of a memorandum reminding the teachers of the acceptable practice as indicated in the Students’ Handbook. The timeliness of such memorandum and the personal conference between the teacher and the AH is important to settle the issue of misinterpretation of policy.

Parents need to be present when their children’s attention on attendance is called as demanded by one teacher because the students seem to be impervious even if they repeatedly commit the same violation. Moreover, the student discipline to attend their classes regularly on time, and not cut classes must be enforced also by the parents. It is not only the teachers’ responsibility to enforce the policy. Added one teacher, the administrators likewise, have to support the teachers in strictly enforcing the policy.

When information is not offered as in the case of a teacher involved in improper and unauthorized collection of money for hardbound copy of yearbook and green card holder, a

demoralized teaching staff might be a consequence. This is when the community would tend to believe that selective justice exists.

One teacher noted that the HRO intervenes in faculty conflict to assist them in their relationship concerns. A case in point is when two teachers were in conflict and the HRO mediated which led to a resolution of the issue.

The giving of special tasks or assignment to teachers without receiving complaint was raised by the HRO. This means that some teachers can be depended upon to perform beyond their teaching assignments without complaining. If this is clear in the functions of teachers, no problem is expected.

Overall, the policy implementation has been evaluated as weak, inconsistent and requires more improvement and support by means of proper and timely communication. An open line of interaction with respect and trust will help. Without communication, a great barrier or pitfall to successful implementation is to happen.

Theme 4. Culture of support

When I asked the participants if they support all the policies, all of them affirmed. The BOTs set the condition that the policies should be guided by “institutional policies, manuals of regulations, educational laws” and they must be “for the general welfare”. The AH stated that “all policies are mandated to be followed in sole protection of the school’s stakeholders”. She added that it is meant to create harmony. Full support is given by the HRO in implementing the policies because she is “more confident to handle certain situations especially when it comes to handling erring employees.” For the GC, execution of policies is a way of supporting the school. However, she sees the need to evaluate the policies for further improvement.

Policy support also comes from the teachers who believe that it is necessary to support the policies to avoid or lessen conflicts. However, Teacher 3 claims that he/she hasn’t read all the policies yet. This could mean that there’s a need for the management to make sure that the policy implementers do know what policies to implement. Perhaps a short assessment of their policy knowledge will be needed and a written document of knowledge of the policies will be imperative.

Parent 2 divulged her full support for the policies, as part of her children’s admission. Another retorted that full support is due as long as the policies are beneficial for both students and parents. For the student, exclusion is made on “using and bringing gadgets when needed and by following the policies in a proper manner.” Perhaps the need to communicate the students’ concerns has to be facilitated so that clarifications may be made in a dialogue.

The common root cause of student habitual absences and tardiness may be traced to non-caring parents/guardians at home. The parents are the first formators of children. The positive and negative behavior of children is a reflection of the kind of home environment they have that could be supportive or indifferent to what the school espouses. Hence, the need to make the parents partners of education especially in value formation is important.

The home visitation is one way of getting to the source of problem according to Teacher 1. Thus in habitual tardiness, a teacher gets to know the kind of home environment of the student

as well as propose an alternative way to lessen tardiness in a dialogue with parents and students. On the other hand, Teacher 2 sees no problem in attendance policy implementation.

A lenient policy implementation is observed in enforcing disciplinary measures to students. The latter nowadays seem to project their being “untouchable” because they know their rights and they are safeguarded by the Child Protection Policy. Hence, Teacher 1 insists on requiring the parent to be present on instances when disciplinary sanction is to be carried out. Teacher 2 claims that teachers must be role model of discipline to enforce correctly among students the proper behavior. Moreover, extra attention must be given on disciplining students whose stay in the school is longer than their stay at home. Overall, Parent 2 commented that the school faculty and administrators still have a long way to go in enforcing discipline.

The HRO attests that he is “100 percent supportive of the policy”. Because of this, he is “more confident to handle certain situations especially when it comes to handling erring employees.” For the BOT, “as long as these policies are guided by institutional policies, manuals of regulations, educational laws and for the general welfare”, he is fully supportive of the policies. For the GC, support for the policy is in terms of executing it properly.

Aaah as part of the school, I need to initiate the execution of school policies as a way in supporting the school. I am also concerned of the improvement of the policies evaluation is important to know if it’s effective or not.

Teacher 3 also deems it important to support the policy: ”Honestly, I haven’t read all the policies but as a teacher, it is just right to follow and support the policies implemented for the good and benefit of every stakeholder.”

Teacher 2 affirms her policy support: “Of course maam, kasi maam kya nga tayo may policies para maging maayos ang lahat. Wala namang policy na inilagay sa faculty at student handbook na ikakasama nating lahat.” (Of course Mam. The reason we have policies is to put all things in order. There is no policy in the Faculty and Student Handbook that will harm us.)

Parent 1 also believes in the importance of supporting the policies: “When we enrolled our kids in this learning institution, it is but clear that we agree to follow the set rules and regulations set forth by the school.”

Although there was a policy requiring Saturday work which the HRO questioned and which was eventually removed, the HRO is fully supportive of the school policies; feeling more confident about handling erring employees.

Likewise, the GC sees the need to execute the school policies as a way of supporting the school. Similarly, the teachers indicated their support for the policies although one claimed that she has not read all the policies and not really oriented on the school policy.

Teacher Retention

SOP 3.) **What do the social actors and school documents disclose about teacher retention?**

In the current school year of 2017-2018, the HRO of the school issued out the data on teachers' status. The numbers mean that teacher attrition is significantly high and a repeated social phenomenon except in AY 2015-2016 when the percentage dropped to a difference of 45%. Below is the yearly record of teachers' resignation from the teaching post (Table 5).

Table 5.
Annual Data of Teachers' Resignation

School Year	Total no. of teachers	No. of teacher resignees	Percentage
2010-2011	13	2	15%
2011-2012	17	5	29%
2012-2013	22	8	36%
2014-2015	22	13	59%
2015-2016	27	4	14.81%
2016-2017	31	13	41.93%
Total	132	45	15%
Note			
Average			
34.09%			

When the participants were asked why teachers leave the school, majority of the interviewees cite personal, specifically economic reason as the prime concern. The teachers would like to transfer to the public school where the salary and benefits are better and more attractive than those of the private school, that is after passing the board exam.

More opportunities for professional growth were also raised. Moreover, a question on policy implementation was raised by Parent 2 and AH. Related to this is the problem with one's superior as claimed by Teacher 3 and the GC.

Other reasons cited were peculiar to the participants. Hence, the BOT cited the teachers' disregard for loyalty and school training; the teacher's lack of sense of purpose or direction according to the GC, and a low regard for discipline and excellence according to one AH. The latter also mentioned that some teachers prepare for review for licensure exams while being connected with the school. Moreover, a student thinks that teachers leave because of students who are unruly, noisy or disinterested with learning no matter how much the teacher tries to reach out to the student.

The teachers' exit interview results point to the local employment opportunity as the main reason for resigning which particularly refers to transfer to public school that offers a better compensation package for licensed teachers. In a place where poverty is still an issue, it is not a surprise that teachers will prioritize the economic security as foremost especially if the teachers are the breadwinners.

In terms of job dissatisfaction, the following were noted from the teachers who resigned:

1. Slightly to very dissatisfied with recognition for work, training and seminar, sick leave, paid vacation, policies on promotion and overtime, and overall policies, programs, projects and problems.

2. Slightly dissatisfied with health benefits, opportunity to utilize ability, superior's management method, opportunity to talk with superior, and performance evaluation policies and practices.

Generally, the above dissatisfiers are psychological and career/professional concerns which are important to the teachers' happiness at work. These could be assessed further by the management to improve the school climate. These are what Moore (2016), and the study on "The attrition problem" (2018) refers to.

Parent 2 assessed the retention issue as a management flaw. The root of the problem has to be addressed. However, if despite the management's offer of additional school benefits, teachers still leave the institution, perhaps the school should consider the psycho-social concerns like recognizing the teachers role, supporting the teacher's accomplishment, appreciating their contribution for the school, and having good relationship with co-teachers and superior according to the GC. Proper communication with the parties concerned has to be established. This seems to be aligned with the research findings that beyond the pay issue are organizational characteristics and conditions of schools that are responsible for teacher attrition. (Barnwell, 2015; "The Attrition Problem"; 2018, Witting, 2006).

Teacher 1 believes that the private school cannot compete with the government's offer because the former depends on the tuition fee. Since there has been no increase over the past 8 years in tuition fee, it is understandable that some teachers look for greener pastures. However, the management has been addressing the financial concern of teachers through financial literacy program, the giving of student scholarship to teachers' dependents, insurance and health care assistance as well as professional trainings.

The BOT recommends that the government give financial assistance to private school students and teachers to assist the private school in managing the financial concern of teachers. Mentoring of teachers is also suggested to assist them to be focused on their commitment. Added one teacher, perhaps extending the contract to 2-3 years at the outset would lessen the transfer issue; this of course is alright if the teacher has the right attitude and is qualified. At present, the contract is annually prepared.

Parents are not bothered with the constant change of teachers as long as their children are happy in school, and the school is doing its best to provide quality education with newly hired teachers. Teachers who are open to suggestions and corrections and who can serve as inspiration or role models to their children are expected to be hired. Indeed the retention of teachers is more of being able to engage in a healthy relationship of teachers with students.

Interconnections among the Three Constructs

SOP 4.) How do the social actors perceive the interconnections between and among the school identity, structured practices and teacher retention?

The participants were asked to interrelate the three constructs through the questions:

- 1) Which policy implementation contributed to a better school identity? Why?
- 2) Is the school responsible for the number of teachers who leave the school? Why?

3) Does the kind of teachers contribute to a better school image? Why?

Perceived policy implementation and school identity

When asked to specify which policy implementation led to a better school image, the following were gathered:

1. All school policies lead to positive school image. This was what AH stated. This was also supported by Teacher 2 who said that all policies contribute to order and discipline of students and teachers.
2. Specific Policies for Students and Personnel. The BOT specified the policies which contributed to a better school image: tuition, exams, competition, student activities, and institutional activities as well as benefits and privileges of employees, and their ranking and classification for salary standardization, These policies have to be aligned with the MRPS, Deped, the Code of Ethics, Labor Laws, and Child Protection Policy for better school image as pointed out by the AH. They have to be promoted to the community in order to build trust and confidence. Moreover, the implementation of educational benefits to children of regular employees contribute to a positive image. It implies that employees trust the school's quality according to the HRO and the GC.
3. Policy on Students' Achievement. Parent 1 specified the policy to educate students to excel, and showcase their skills & capabilities as contributory to an enhanced school image.

Parent 2 cited the policy on grading system based on performance. She did not hear yet of any bias or favoritism on grading of students. The student further said that recognition of students thru award serves as a good motivation to students.

On the other hand, Teacher 1 disclosed that there was one case when the management did not address immediately the parents' concern regarding one erring teacher which resulted to lesser enrolment of students. However, Teacher 3 honestly claimed that she was not knowledgeable of which policy contributes to better school image.

As in the formation of corporate or school identity, a unified, consistent and clear alignment of all the messages of the stakeholders and those with whom the school interacts, is important to strengthen its image. (Kelsey, 2015). Otherwise, a confusing and ambiguous school image is created by the school's implementation of policies.

Perceived school's accountability for teacher retention

When the respondents were asked whether the school is responsible for teacher retention, most of them did not agree fully. Some declared that the school is not at all accountable. The following are their stand:



1. **School Not Responsible.** The BOT, AH, and HRO mentioned that the teacher makes his/her personal decision regardless of what the school offers. Although the school has been more generous in salary and benefits when compared to other private schools, and willing to assist the teacher, as accounted by the BOT, the bottom line is the teacher's choice. For the HRO, the financial mindset of the teacher may be responsible for the change of school.
2. **School Partially Responsible.** There are certain rules to be followed and if the teachers do not agree with them, or their attitude does not align with the thrusts of the institution, resignation or non-renewal comes in. Both the teacher and the school are responsible for the transfer as claimed by the GC.
3. **Many Factors Responsible.** Aside from financial concerns, there may be other factors that matter according to Teacher 2. These are security of tenure, superior-teacher relationship, sense of belongingness. Although teacher tenure is still connected with financial concerns, the other perspective is the security of employment which is a long term assurance of career development. This is consistent with the study of Moore (2016) on the climate of support and mentoring, and that of Gumuseli and Eryilmaz (2011) on management of teachers.

Perceived teachers' role on school identity

Do teachers create the school image? The participants interviewed had varying perspectives regarding this. The following summarizes their answers:

1. **Teachers as School Image.** The teachers are the first to be praised or criticized according to Teacher 1. When one errs, the image could be generalized to other teachers as in the case of a teacher who posted in the Facebook with wrong grammar and wrong spelling. The concrete action of the teacher speaks much of the school identity as perceived by the students and parents (Moran & Gareis, 2015). Some even go far in saying that the quality of the school cannot exceed the quality of the teachers (Barnwell, 2015).

Moreover, to parents who monitor the performance of their children, the teachers represent the school. Their credentials and competence with values and traits of good teachers speak much of the quality of education that the school offer according to the BOT. In addition, teachers who stay are usually the ones who love teaching as concurred by the other AH. They have a strong identification with the school (Witting, 2006).

2. **Positive Image created.** Teachers are vital in contributing to a positive image according to the GC. They serve as "the movers, the implementers, the role model in executing the ideals and vision of the school." Teachers who are committed to the school's goal of quality education create a positive image of the school by enriching the relationship with their students and colleagues characterized by openness, trust, respect and appreciation ("School culture", 2013).
3. **Partial Role of Teachers.** The AH declares that the school founders and academic heads direct the building of the school image and identity and this is passed on to teachers who get to imbibe the set direction. This means that whatever the teachers recognize and value from their superior, are translated into the set direction of the school. Hence, they do affect the kind of school identity that emerges (Avest & Bakker, 2007; Whetten, 2006).

Theoretical Propositions

SOP 5.) What theoretical propositions may be formulated regarding school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention?

From the interview transcripts, exit interview results, and document review of the Students Manual, Faculty Manual, and school papers, I came up with the following interconnections of constructs:

1. The school identity provides the direction of structured practices. What the school envisions as its goal specifies the kind of climate it requires. Hence a development-oriented school demands a continuous change for the better, an open attitude to new ideas that can transform the school, a continuous review of policies and practices that may have positive as well as negative consequences. Nevertheless, the school is being prepared by its leaders to reckon with the innovations, and/or keep the traditions that may strengthen the school identity.

2. The school identity is enhanced as structured practices are improved. The former develops as structured practices are enriched which may eventually match the school identity. Hence the identity of being a development-oriented school with supportive students and parents is aligned with the structured practices in a culture of learning and development, and also a culture of policy support. With upgrading of the school identity comes improvement in structured practices.

3. Teachers and administrators are perceived to have a partial to an inclusive role in the formation of school identity. What they do and become shapes the school identity positively or negatively as in the case of teacher retention. It is therefore important that the right kind of personnel make up the school. Though they may not be perfect, an open attitude to continuous improvement makes a lot of difference.

4. Structured practices are perceived to contribute to a positive school identity particularly on the implementation of policies affecting students (i.e. tuition, grades, exams, competition, activities, achievement), and employees (ranking, salary, benefits and privileges). Policies have to be rationalized in the light of development rather than merely complied with.

The participation of the people concerned in policy formulation will be necessary to ensure their cooperation and eventual empowerment in the implementation. Moreover, a periodic evaluation is essential to safeguard its relevance in promoting the intended school identity.

5. Pecuniary (better compensation) and other factors (school identity, security of tenure, superior-teacher relationship, sense of belonging) are accountable for teacher retention. Various factors from personal to external reasons are responsible for teacher attrition. Though financial concerns are topmost in the responses and exit interview, in the long run, this may be superseded by more important concerns as in continuing in a conducive environment of growth and development. What will make the teachers stay long will be the kind of school community that contributes to the happiness, the sanity and the professional development of the teachers, sans individualities.



Conclusions

1. The common central/core, enduring and distinct features suggest that both tangible (well-designed school bldg. and state of the art facilities, school program offering, strategic location) and intangible attributes (highly qualified and seasoned school administrators and personnel, and development-oriented school) are important to the stakeholders. Reasonable school fees are recognized as a core and distinct feature that cannot sustain the school given the financial challenges faced by the institution. However, with continuous learning and development, reputable education can be sustained with the parents' and students' support.
2. Some structured practices implemented are aligned with the school identity. The culture of learning and development matches the school identity of a development oriented school. The culture of policy support is equivalent to the school identity of having parents and students' support. The culture of communication thrives with highly qualified and seasoned school administrators and personnel who would go an extra mile of attending to the needs of the students and parents. However, with a weak and inconsistent policy implementation of basic structured practices is a school identity that may be directionless and which could put the school management in a critical position. More so, the school image of not observing good school practices may be detrimental in the long run.
3. The weak, inconsistent and lenient policy implementation of basic structured practices serves as a challenge to school managers. It may put the management in a critical position where compliance becomes a problem because of the lack of credibility and integrity of the implementors.
3. The good school practices recommended by the participants conform with the qualities of highly effective and efficient schools. These cover the documentation of implementation of policy with appropriate sanctions, excellent and quality performance of teachers as good leaders, the appointment of qualified personnel, and the creation of a committee to take charge of policy implementation.
4. The prominent reason that surfaced behind repeated teacher attrition in our school is the significant starting salary being offered to LET passers by public schools. This, however, does not set aside the value of a good psychological climate in school for teachers and their students, and most especially between teachers and their superiors.
5. The theoretical propositions illustrated the close interactions between and among the three constructs of school identity, structured practices, and teacher retention. With

good structured practices, a better school identity is created and communicated, and which could influence positively the teacher retention in the institution.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered as a result of the evaluation and analysis of the findings and conclusions:

- 1.) The management should consider reinforcing the tangible and intangible aspects of the school that contribute to a positive school identity. It must continue the periodic review of the student and faculty manuals to include the formal school identity as stipulated in the VMIOCV and as points of clear reference in the expected conduct of students and teachers. The VMIOCV may be revisited to verify the direction of the school and its identity being espoused. Likewise, the school must strengthen its relationship with parents and students whose support may have a pivotal role in making reputable education as a sustaining/enduring feature of the school, and which could lead to preparation for accreditation of the school programs. In this case, a good communication culture is imperative to discern what school identity is expected to achieve the institution's vision and mission. This could be highlighted in the school marketing, and the formation of school identification among the stakeholders.
- 2.) The formalization of the school identity, the implementation of structured practices particularly on attendance and submittals, and the corresponding sanctions for non-compliance must be improved. The structured practices that contribute to a positive school identity such as policies on student achievement, and employees' benefit, among the ones cited, must be sustained, and further improved, if necessary. The noted strengths of school culture must be fortified in order to improve the policy implementation which is observed to be weak, lenient and inconsistent. On the other hand, the noted weaknesses may be included in the school's developmental plan. Moreover, the Child Protection Policy as perceived by parents and students may be clarified as to how it conflicts with the standard rules and regulations of the school. In all these, a culture of communication that respects the culture and at the same time, takes time to assess its merit for a better learning and progressive community.
- 3.) Selection of teachers and also administrators must consider how they can represent the school since they form the school identity consciously or unconsciously. Moreover, the school, as it considers its training ground role for first time teachers, may tie up with good teacher colleges that may have their practicum in the school. Correspondingly, a good development program for the retention of quality teachers



is indispensable. With a good communication scheme and a positive psychological climate for students and teachers, and the rest of the stakeholders, the monetary value that lures teachers to leave the institution may be a temporary incentive. As to teachers who would really like to try greener pastures, a new perspective may be assumed by the management as to the school's special role of preparing good teachers for both public and private employment. This is the school's generous contribution to society in sustaining quality education.

- 4.) The school may prepare for accreditation to sustain its core attribute of reputable education. The noted weaknesses and strengths may be the foundation of building up the school identity of quality education.
- 5.) With formalization of the school identity, the implementation of the structured practices must be improved particularly on the basic rules on attendance, and teacher submittals, and the corresponding sanctions for non-compliance with the rules set. The conditions to be observed in implementing the rewards or sanctions may be indicated to allow for humanitarian considerations, if needed. Gradual empowerment of personnel may lead to more committed and responsible staff who have been involved in the formulation and implementation of policies.
- 6.) The management must sustain the structured practices that contribute to a positive school identity specifically those that secure the welfare of the students and the rest of the stakeholders. These could include periodic training for teachers and administrators as servant leaders, periodic orientations/meetings/conferences with students and parents to carry out the school's mission, and periodic review of the status of policy implementation and its consequences.
- 7.) Correspondingly, a good development program for the retention of quality teachers is indispensable. With a good psychological climate for students and teachers, and the rest of the stakeholders, the monetary value that lures teachers to leave the institution may be a temporary incentive. A community where the teachers experience a sense of belongingness may be a stronger factor of retaining the teachers than just giving a compensation package amidst the strain and stress of a working community.
- 8.) As to teachers who would really like to try greener pastures, a new perspective may be assumed by the management as to the school's training role of preparing good teachers for both public and private employment. This is the school's generous contribution to society in sustaining quality education.

- 9.) To strengthen teacher retention, the emphasis on the psychological welfare of the teachers must be heightened along with the school's practices to attain the vision and mission aligned with the school identity. A good communication scheme between teachers and the AH including periodic feedbacking system has to be created to set up a proactive way of handling teacher attrition and related concerns.
- 10.) Researchers may consider the areas for further exploration as mentioned in this research particularly on the theoretical propositions which could be investigated in the empirical setting at a wider range. Examine the process of implementation of structured practices as they contribute positively to the school identity and eventually teacher retention.
- 11.) A policy framework has to be created to clarify the roles of people assigned to formulate, implement, and evaluate the policy. With the right culture for structured practices, the intended school identity can be attained. This could be a subject of action research to validate this claim with our school spearheading the study.
- 12.) The results of this study must be disseminated to the parties concerned specifically the Board of Trustees and the administrators whose decision regarding the school identity and structured practices are essential to ensure the retention of good and quality teachers. This prepares the ground for theory building and also an action research on the mix of structured practices and school identity attributes evident in a wider scale among different learning institutions experiencing various kinds of teacher departure.

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