Delving into the Quest of Private School Principals in Integrating Core Values in the Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This phenomenological study aims to explore and understand the lived experiences of school principals in integrating core values into the curriculum. This also elaborates on how these experiences enhance their administrative role as they cope with the challenges, they encounter in integrating core values into the educational practices of their respective schools. Seven (7) school principals took part in this study which were selected through a purposive sampling technique and underwent in-depth interview. The data gathered were analyzed through thematic analysis. The study was conducted in all private schools of the Diocese of Tagum Educational System (DOTES) – Davao del Norte. Results revealed school principals experienced problems in integrating core values, but appreciate the affirmations they get about the impact of core values integration. Thus, they focus on core values to live by. Furthermore, they cope with the challenges encountered by conducting orientation and collaborating with stakeholders. They also acknowledge the impact of having proper communication engagement, conducting evaluation and monitoring, and becoming role models of the core values they wish students will learn and acquire. For their insights, school principals, recognize core values essential in identity formation, and core values can only be reinforced through collaboration, ensuring proper integration in the curriculum, and by cultivating a positive attitude despite the challenges encountered. The findings of this study suggest that school principals, including teachers, should receive relevant professional developmental activities to arm them with the necessary knowledge and equip them with skills in effectively integrating core values into the curriculum.

Keywords: Integrating Core Values Into The Curriculum, School Leadership, Private Schools, Diocese Of Tagum Educational System (DOTES) – Davao Del Norte

Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

Integrating core values into the curriculum poses an increasing demand as it has a profound impact on character development and disciplined behavior among learners (Coulson, 2023). However, educators faced significant challenges in successfully aligning values within the curriculum for manifested value-driven behavior among learners. It is important for institutions, including the efforts of school principals, to persist in their efforts and overcome these challenges to foster a values-driven educational environment (Herman et al. 2022).

In South Africa, schools faced challenges related to learners engaging in behaviors such as violence, bullying, sexual assaults, and the use of dangerous weapons both within and outside school premises. This urged schools to strengthen the reinforcement of moral standards among learners as current institutional efforts were failing to address these pressing issues (Khati et al., 2022). Similarly, In Turkey, despite the notable emphasis on incorporating values as part of the education policy, the initiative had failed to translate into observable behaviors as there was a lack of support and reinforcement at home (Karabacak, 2021).

In Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, students' capacity to practice and maintain values was hindered by their academic obligations and lack of supervision and monitoring of these essential principles. Effectively coordinating teaching staff to incorporate these fundamental values into instructional approaches remains a plan with no unified and standardized implementation and relies heavily on teachers' commitment and competence (Garcia & Bual, 2022). Likewise, in Quezon province, there was an observable decline in students upholding values, particularly on discipline and responsibility. Schools may provide efforts to conduct programs that encourage values formation but immersing students to promote understanding and internalization of these values remains very limited (Magayon et al. 2019).

In Davao del Norte, private schools exhibit a firm dedication among their administrators and teaching staff to steer students toward embodying core values. It is consistently emphasized to infuse values into instructional discussions, ensuring that every lesson imparts valuable ethical insights. Despite these efforts, challenges arise as students often grasp these values merely on a conceptual level, but struggle to internalize and apply them effectively. This is underscored by the growing incidence of students with behavioral issues, particularly in areas of discipline and respect for other students.

Several studies have been conducted on the difficulties faced by school leaders in their efforts to promote and integrate fundamental values within the curriculum. There is still a remaining scarcity of knowledge, especially on private school principals. The study of Oeschger et al. (2022) only highlights teacher's competence in aligning the values orientation of the school to its curriculum. Likewise, Arjani et al. (2022) stressed the significance of comprehending culturally endorsed values and indoctrinating them, while Gokce (2021) reported on the school's failure to transfer values and uphold necessary social norms. This study will focus on acquiring an in-depth understanding of the experiences, difficulties, coping mechanisms, and insights of private school principals in incorporating core values into the curriculum.

Moreover, delving into the personal accounts of private school principals will offer invaluable insights into the complexities of educational leadership and values integration in the curriculum. As schools serve as vessels for shaping the minds and values of future generations, effective leadership is imperative for fostering conducive learning environments and ensuring student success, especially during this time when students' values are continuously challenged by institutional dysfunction due to modernity. Furthermore, this study hopes to inspire private school principals to take committed efforts to provide value-driven high-quality education. Additionally, findings from this study will offer policymakers a detailed understanding of the key factors influencing educational leadership and the formulation of school policies aimed at enhancing educational practices and academic success. This in turn will foster a society that pays equal importance to holistic education and the development of values among its people.

Purpose of the Study

This phenomenological study aims to unveil and understand the lived experiences of private school principals on integrating the core values in the curriculum, particularly among private catholic schools under the Diocese of Tagum Educational System (DOTES) – Davao del Norte.

At this stage of the study, the lived experiences of school principals in integrating core values into the curriculum are generally defined as their challenges, coping mechanisms, and insights into their intentional incorporation of fundamental principles, beliefs, and ethical standards into the educational content and learning experiences of their students.

Research Questions

1. What are the lived experiences of the private school principals in integrating core values into the curriculum?
2. How do private school principals cope with the challenges they encounter in integrating core values in the curriculum?
3. What are the insights of the private school principals in strengthening the integration of core values in the curriculum that they can share with others?

Theoretical Lens

This study is gleaned through Prillentensky's (2000) Value-Based Leadership Theory. This theory advocates that individual behavior and interest should be coherent principles within organizational principles. Value-based leadership strongly emphasizes the alignment of individual and organizational principles, to avoid conflict in the system and members being able to function accordingly and cope with societal expectations.

In this study, value-based leadership theory is used to explore how private school principals give direction to their subordinates and keep a system where the institutional values align with what is important and valuable to its members. School principals should always reinforce the role of teachers in integrating values into the lessons and strongly help them in reinforcing these values into observable practices among learners. Through this, the school can maintain harmony between the organization's ideals and the learner's goals.

Additionally, the study also draws insights from Schwartz's (2006) Cultural Values Theory (2006). This theory emphasizes how cultural values influence beliefs, activities, and objectives within society. Cultural values shape daily interactions and contribute to an organization's identity.

In the context of this study, school principals play a pivotal role in imparting these values to learners as it can shape their directions in life. Integrating core values into the curriculum becomes essential in reinforcing the collective identity and unity of the school community, fostering a conducive learning environment and one that values academic success. It also explains the significance of collective consciousness and action, such as a learner may behave accordingly when proper behavior and values formation is strictly instilled and constantly monitored.

Furthermore, Smolicz's (1999) Theory of Core Values (1999) will also be used in this study. This theory emphasizes the importance of core values in defining social groupings as distinct entities. This theory also suggests that when a certain aspect of their culture is seen as crucial and unique to their collective identity, that aspect becomes a core value for the group.

In theory is related to this study as school principals can help the entire institution by helping enhance values inside the school, which may lead to a distinguishable trademark of their identity as a private school. It is important to understand that core values can strongly influence the day-to-day experiences and relationships within a school community.

These theories collectively provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the role of school principals in integrating values into the curriculum. By considering individual interests, cultural influences, and core values, the study aims to equip private school administrators with practical strategies

for fostering a values-driven educational environment that promotes positive performance and societal well-being at various levels.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study only involved seven (7) school principals from private schools under the Diocese of Tagum Educational System (DOTES) in Davao del Norte. The study focused only on understanding the challenges they face, their strategies for overcoming these obstacles, and their perspectives on integrating core values into the curriculum. Data gathering will be conducted in March- April 2024 using semi-structured interviews to delve into how private school principals integrate core values into the curriculum. However, despite its objectives and methodologies, the study may encounter several limitations. Firstly, the findings may have limited generalizability due to the narrow focus on private schools within a specific educational system and geographical area. The unique context of the Diocese of Tagum Educational System may limit the applicability of the results to other educational settings. Additionally, the absence of triangulation, such as corroborating data from multiple sources or methodologies, may affect the depth and reliability of the findings. Moreover, the study's reliance on individual in-depth interviews may introduce biases, such as social desirability bias, potentially influencing participants' responses. Furthermore, external factors such as changes in leadership, curriculum revisions, or unforeseen events within the schools may impact the study's outcomes. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the challenges and strategies of private school principals in integrating core values into the curriculum, offering a basis for further research and informing educational practices.

Importance of the Study

The study's findings provide significant assistance to the following:

This study will benefit the **school principals** by gaining an understanding of how to successfully integrate core values into the curriculum. They will be guided in crafting school plans and programs that encourage instilling core values inside among learners. Consequently, this may also strengthen schools' ethical standards, creating a more unified, values-oriented, and optimistic educational atmosphere for both students and faculty.

Moreover, this study's findings are crucial for **teachers** as understanding the challenges and strategies of school principals in integrating core values into the curriculum may empower them to align their teaching methods with the school's values. This may also lead to fostering a cohesive approach to values education. By serving as role models and reinforcing these principles in their interactions with students, teachers contribute to a positive school culture that promotes respect, responsibility, and empathy.

Furthermore, **students** may also experience a learning environment that is centered on values and promotes positivity. This may enhance their general well-being and academic success. Additionally, learners will have a higher probability of receiving direct and purposeful instruction. Through implementing programs that cultivate values, they will be developed academically and morally.

Additionally, **DOTES Officials** can also gain significant insights and ideas necessary for strengthening the professional development of their school leaders. This enables them to acquire the information and resources necessary to effectively carry out their responsibilities in fostering a morally guided educational atmosphere. Based on the results of this study, they may create and provide focused training and professional development programs for educators and school administrators.

Lastly, **future researchers** may be interested in further exploring this topic of the study. The study's results and suggestions will establish a strong basis for future researchers in the field of education, specifically in the integration of core values. This provides them with valuable insights into the problems

and possibilities in this field, enabling them to acquire expertise in this domain. Additionally, they may assess the impact of teachers' training approaches on their capacity to incorporate core values into their teaching.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
Core Values Integration in Education

The significance of integrating core values into education extends far beyond the classroom, fostering the growth of conscientious and socially engaged individuals. Students educated in a values-based setting are more likely to embody qualities such as tolerance, respect, justice, freedom, and human dignity, consequently enhancing the moral and ethical foundation of society (Gokce, 2021). For instance, character education programs have a positive impact on students' social and emotional growth, leading to increased pro-social behavior and participation in acts of kindness. School culture centered around core values has been shown to have a beneficial effect on both the overall atmosphere of the school and its students' academic performance (Brunt & Klotz, 2019).

Moreover, schools that establish well-organized and secure educational settings are conducive to effective learning and the acquisition of essential skills. It is significant for schools to prioritize creating teaching environments that accommodate diverse backgrounds to foster both social and intellectual achievements. Schools must go beyond academic courses and focus on sustaining cultures that allow students and teachers to navigate various values and social norms within their communities. Through this, social competence among all individuals involved in education can be enhanced as social curricula play a vital role in fostering mutually beneficial interactions and long-lasting interpersonal connections (Khathi et al., 2022).

Furthermore, integrating values as one of the educational foundations helps build an agreed norm of conduct in society, fostering national unity and collective purpose. These shared values, deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of countries, provide individuals with a universal point of reference to navigate their social and cultural surroundings (Gokce, 2021). Additionally, schools have a significant role in an individual's values and overall development as they help shape their cognitive and psychological progress (Smith, 2019).

Similarly, educational principles are important in fostering desirable behaviors and qualities in citizens. Principles such as tolerance, respect, justice, freedom, and human dignity are crucial in shaping a community grounded in values. This resonates with the notion that educational principles should develop socially responsible individuals. The integration of values into education is crucial for shaping individuals and society (Brown, 2020).

Furthermore, values integration in education is beneficial, particularly in communities where violence, crime, and racial intolerance prevail, especially among young people from developing economies. Educators, drawing on their cultural and religious backgrounds, bear the responsibility of integrating these values into classroom practices (Govender et al., 2022). Incorporating values education into the curriculum has demonstrated benefits for both instructors and learners, as evidenced by studies in Indonesia where learners identify and internalize values, integrating them into their daily lives. The significance of value education is integral to cultivating responsible citizens committed to contributing to the betterment of society (Pambudi & Mardati, 2019).

Moreover, actively promoting values-based education within the 21st-century education system enhances the quality of education and fosters a positive school atmosphere. Values education facilitates the

development of compassion, flexibility, moral bravery, patience, and heightened tolerance in learners, aligning with the attributes desired by both schools and society. Ultimately, a focus on values education contributes to the holistic development of students (Govender et al., 2022).

In addition, prevalent challenges in African schools are often attributed to deficient moral principles, posing threats to societal harmony and progress. Integrating values education into the educational system is essential to address these issues and shape learners positively. Teachers were required to be more proficient in incorporating values into their instructional practices effectively. Recognizing the successful integration of values education into the educational system ultimately contributes to the development of morally responsible individuals and the prevention of societal crises (Omodan & Addam, 2022). Moreover, values education equips learners with appropriate attitudes and positive behaviors, enabling them to be socially responsive. This, therefore, helps address the challenges and foster a comprehensive understanding of values education and its effective integration into the school Curriculum (Chaitanya, 2017).

Moreover, Tian-Liang et al. (2021) emphasized that embedding core values into the curriculum helps students develop a positive professional attitude, equipping them with the ethical foundation needed to navigate their future careers. This integration fosters a holistic understanding of professionalism and ethics, crucial for students' personal and professional growth. In addition, Mahdali et al. (2022) highlight the importance of incorporating religious values into the curriculum. This approach ensures that education is culturally and contextually relevant, allowing students to connect deeply with the values being taught. School principals can lead this effort by ensuring that the curriculum reflects the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of the student body, fostering an inclusive and respectful learning environment.

Furthermore, Abdullah et al. (2019) discuss the collaborative nature of character education, which involves the participation of parents, community leaders, and other adults in shaping students' values. Principals play a critical role in fostering these partnerships, creating opportunities for stakeholders to contribute to values education. This collaboration ensures that the values taught in school are reinforced at home and within the community, providing a consistent and supportive environment for students. Likewise, Noviansyah and Kurniawan (2021) underscore the importance of integrating values into students' daily lives through character education programs. These programs encourage positive habits and behaviors, helping students internalize the values being taught. Principals and teachers can collaborate to design and implement these programs, ensuring that core values are an integral part of the school's culture and daily routines.

Astalini (2023) further elaborates on the specific virtues that values education aims to cultivate, such as love, respect, honesty, justice, and tolerance. By integrating these virtues into the curriculum, principals and teachers can provide students with a moral compass that guides their actions and interactions. This comprehensive approach to values education helps students develop a strong ethical foundation.

Additionally, Dewi and Nadlif (2021) highlight the role of values in guiding student behaviors and aligning them with the school's identity. Principals must balance these core values with the social context to ensure that the curriculum is relevant and meaningful. This involves incorporating culturally significant practices into the curriculum, fostering a sense of identity and community among students. Similarly, Sultan et al. (2020) emphasize the importance of incorporating multicultural values into educational materials, such as textbooks. This inclusion promotes cross-cultural understanding and respect for diversity, which are essential for fostering a harmonious and inclusive school environment. Principals are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum includes diverse perspectives and that teachers are equipped

to handle multicultural education effectively.

Educational Strategies for Integrating Core Values

Furthermore, values education is imparted to students through various teaching and learning methodologies, both within and outside the school setting. Application of problem-based learning and cooperative learning approaches integrate moral and character values into learners. The implementation of values education is strengthened by teachers' use of diverse teaching strategies, such as theater, role-playing, simulations, debates, educational games, discussions, group work, and projects (Khathi et al. 2022).

Schools must possess a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum to utilize suitable elements of it. Familiarizing with these curricular elements to comprehend what, how, and why they teach certain topics, enhances both teaching effectiveness and learning significance for students (Khathi et al. 2022). Additionally, the implementation of new curricula worldwide to incorporate values education into school instruction, urging policymakers, parents, teachers, legislators, and other stakeholders to promptly enact educational reform (Brigas, 2019).

Moreover, character education programs are beneficial in values incorporation as they promote leadership in values education initiatives (Johnson, 2022). These programs are an effective approach in providing a structured framework for teaching fundamental principles that promote the integration of character education by encouraging instructors to incorporate values into the curriculum. Fostering teacher leadership substantially impacts the strengthening of fundamental principles within educational institutions, as instructors taking the initiative in promoting values cultivates a collective sense of accountability and dedication to values integration (Millman, 2019). Empowering teachers to take on leadership roles fosters a collaborative approach to values integration, ensuring that core values permeate every aspect of the educational environment (Martinez, 2024).

Furthermore, establishing a positive school culture rooted in shared beliefs and aspirations requires strategic integration of core values, with principals playing a pivotal role in this endeavor. Core values serve as a potent tool for communicating the school's purpose and guiding decision-making, relationships, and expectations within the community. Identifying and upholding these values necessitates deliberate introspection and collaboration among stakeholders which requires a systematic approach that involves the identification of primary values, formulation of a comprehensive set of core values, and integration of character education to foster students' understanding of humanity's essence and their capacity to contribute positively to society. By implementing these strategies, educational institutions can create an environment conducive to constructive engagement, efficiency, and supportiveness, thereby promoting holistic development and meaningful learning experiences for students (Catapult Learning, 2022).

Ginosyan et al. (2019) emphasize the positive impact of extracurricular activities on student attitudes and behaviors. These activities provide practical and engaging opportunities for students to practice and internalize core values. Principals can strategically use extracurricular programs to reinforce values like teamwork, respect, and responsibility, making them a key component of the school's overall values education strategy. Educational strategies for integrating core values are essential in shaping students' character and behavior, and school principals play a pivotal role in implementing these strategies effectively.

In addition, Zurqoni et al. (2019) highlight the importance of role-modeling and stakeholder support in character education. Principals can engage teachers and other stakeholders, including parents and community members, in character education activities. This collaborative approach ensures that students

receive consistent messages about core values both at school and in their wider communities. By organizing character-building events and programs, principals can foster a cohesive and supportive environment that emphasizes the importance of values education.

Moreover, Tuhuteru (2023) discusses the integration of democratic values in lesson plans, an essential aspect of preparing students for active and responsible citizenship. Principals can support this by providing professional development opportunities for teachers, helping them to effectively incorporate democratic principles into their teaching. This not only enhances students' understanding of democracy and critical thinking but also promotes respect for diverse opinions and collaborative problem-solving.

Furthermore, Poudel and Khadka (2022) stress the correlation between positive student behaviors and academic achievements. Teachers and principals play a crucial role in fostering inclusive and encouraging environments that promote positive behaviors. By creating a school culture that values inclusivity, respect, and encouragement, principals can enhance both the academic and personal development of students, leading to better overall outcomes.

Moreover, Matewere et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of collaboration in teaching to promote learner-centered approaches. Principals and teachers can work together to develop curricula that prioritize student agency and actively involve students in their learning processes. This approach not only empowers students to take ownership of their learning but also ensures that core values are integrated into everyday educational experiences, making them a natural part of the learning process.

School Principals' Responsibilities in Values Integration

The role of school principals remains relevant in integrating core values into educational institutions. Acquiring knowledge can aid them in recognizing the necessity of aligning personal and organizational values and serves as a basis for the development of character education programs within schools (Garcia, 2021). Likewise, school principals can foster socially conscious individuals by creating an environment that prioritizes the integration of core values. They can help cultivate empathy, responsibility, and civic engagement among students, which can also shape their academic achievements. As school principals facilitate the ethical development of students, they contribute to the overall improvement of society (Lee, 2023).

Furthermore, school administrators play a critical role in shaping students' moral growth and ethical decision-making by fostering an environment that upholds and prioritizes core values. Understanding the interplay between leadership and school culture is essential in grasping how these values permeate the educational experience, influencing academic achievements and overall development within school communities. School principals may effectively incorporate fundamental principles to the curriculum that recognize administrative duties and vision necessary for values integration. The success of this integration is heavily reliant on the school culture established by the principal and their effective leadership techniques (Al Shebli, 2022).

Moreover, school principals are instrumental in shaping the shared culture within educational settings (Arif et al., 2019). The leadership styles and behaviors exhibited by principals play a significant role in influencing the overall organizational culture, which in turn impacts the success and effectiveness of the institution While effective leadership can drive the institution forward, it's important to acknowledge that many leaders face challenges that require support to efficiently manage educational institutions. (Khanal et al., 2020). In addition, active engagement and the collective perspectives of the school community are essential for principals to exercise effective leadership to mold and nurture a school culture that pays importance to values integration. Effective leadership and a conducive school culture form the bedrock

for successful values integration within educational institutions (Al Shebli (2022).

Concurrently, school principals play an indispensable role in the integration of values into the curriculum (Benson, 2021). They establish the ethical standards that shape the institution's identity and mission (Kumar et al., 2020). Principals play a pivotal role in discerning and articulating core values that align with the school's vision and meet the needs of the broader community (Chen & Li, 2019). Collaborating closely with teachers, they ensure the successful integration of these values into the curriculum, transforming abstract ideals into tangible elements of students' learning experiences (Garcia & Rodriguez, 2023).

Moreover, principals serve as catalysts for advancing teachers' professional growth, providing them with the necessary support and guidance to effectively deliver value-based education (Johnson & Smith, 2022). By fostering a culture of continuous learning and development, principals empower educators to imbue lessons with moral and ethical dimensions, enriching students' educational journey (Martinez & Lopez, 2024). Through regular communication, mentorship, and the cultivation of a nurturing and values-driven environment, school administrators play a vital role in promoting the holistic development of students and ensuring the overall success of the educational institution (Lee & Kim, 2019).

Furthermore, with the increasing moral decline, schools' principals help in fostering the development of youngsters into mature individuals. One of the primary roles of school principals is to impart ideals that promote essential moral development in the younger generation through relevant school programs and school policies (Khathi et al., 2022). Furthermore, school principals can help enhance or reinforce desirable behaviors and attitudes by aligning with societal aspirations and curriculum implementations. Learners acquire this process through various tactics, comprehending the reasons and methods behind exhibiting specific behaviors or attitudes in society. For instance, in values education, students become discerning beings who possess the ability to understand and demonstrate humanism and a profound regard for the welfare of others. Values education integrates ethical principles to cultivate responsible citizens and emphasizes the importance of instilling ideals in schooling (Ajaps & Obiagu, 2020).

Furthermore, through strategic vision and commitment to fostering a culture of learning, principals play a central role in creating an educational environment that promotes holistic development and instills values in students. Just as teachers, they can be role models for students, as their actions can have both positive and negative influences. Integrating essential instructional principles into the school system is crucial for modifying students' social conduct and fostering responsible citizenship (Rahmadi et al. 2020). In response, school principals, emerge as pivotal figures tasked with addressing difficulties and implementing successful approaches to values integration, ensuring the creation of a conducive school culture that enriches the entire educational experience for learners (Brown, 2020).

Moreover, Omodan and Addam (2022) highlight the responsibility of principals in addressing social issues such as juvenile delinquency. They emphasize the importance of creating a safe and supportive environment where values like respect, responsibility, and self-discipline are instilled in students. Principals are tasked with developing programs that not only address immediate behavioral issues but also promote long-term ethical development. School principals play a crucial role in the integration of core values within the educational system, ensuring that these values are consistently reflected in all aspects of school life.

Furthermore, Sengul et al. (2019) stress the need for principals to uphold and integrate values consistently across all facets of school operations. This involves embedding core values into the school's policies, practices, and daily routines, ensuring that they are not merely theoretical but actively practiced within the

school community. Additionally, Apriyansyah (2023) underscores the importance of collaboration with educational institutions and community partners in enhancing the integration of core values. Principals are responsible for promoting this collaboration through events and partnerships, which help to reinforce the school's values and extend their influence beyond the classroom.

Moreover, Sembiring and Pakpahan (2021) emphasize the role of principals in integrating core values into the curriculum. This involves not only designing the curriculum to include these values but also fostering positive relationships among students and staff. By doing so, principals create a supportive environment that is conducive to the teaching and practice of character education. In addition, Komariah et al. (2020) highlight the need for principals to support teachers in implementing character education. This support includes providing the necessary resources and creating an environment where teachers feel encouraged and empowered to integrate values into their teaching practices.

Furthermore, Pössel et al. (2023) focus on the importance of positive teacher-student interactions. Principals have the responsibility to prioritize these interactions as they are crucial for enhancing students' emotional well-being and engagement. This includes providing teachers with the tools and training needed to maintain a positive classroom atmosphere. Likewise, Ho et al. (2023) emphasize the role of principals in supporting parents by providing resources and guidance. This support is crucial for fostering student autonomy and effective learning strategies at home, thereby ensuring a consistent approach to values education both in and out of school.

Challenges Faced by School Principals in Integrating Values

An essential obstacle in incorporating fundamental principles is the swiftly evolving educational environment. In response to changing educational expectations, school leaders must adjust their practices to align with the needs of a dynamic society (Bush Institute & ETS, 2019). It necessitates a nuanced equilibrium between conventional principles and current educational requirements. Moreover, external factors, such as the widespread presence of secular, modernistic, and materialistic attitudes, can undermine the fundamental principles that schools aim to teach (Gokce, 2021). The growing emphasis on individualism and consumerism in society poses a challenge to fostering a sense of shared values within the school community. Furthermore, the COVID-19 epidemic has presented novel obstacles; the transition to remote learning and less interaction between teachers and students has undermined the promotion and implementation of fundamental principles. Learners' use of digital devices and modules has resulted in the neglect of basic values, requiring the development of creative methods to include and oversee these values. Integrating values into school settings presents various challenges that need to be addressed for successful implementation. Lack of technical support, insufficient time, and inadequate resources, the need for effective collaboration between educators have been identified as crucial to combat moral decadence, although challenges like overpopulation, single parenthood, and the influence of social media hinder the integration of values education in schools (Khathi et al., 2022). Moreover, the integration of character values in teaching requires not only identifying the appropriate values but also ensuring that teachers possess the necessary skills and methods for effective integration during the teaching-learning process. Lack of systematic approaches and significant barriers have been noted in the integration of sustainability into business curricula, indicating a broader challenge in incorporating values across different subjects. The tension between shared values for community building and the principles of inclusiveness poses a dilemma in creating cohesive school environments (Ajaps & Obiagu, 2020).

Furthermore, Musa and Ariyanti (2020) point out that teachers often lack confidence and cultural competence, which can impede the effective imparting of values. To overcome this, principals must

provide professional development that includes cultural awareness and diversity training, ensuring teachers are equipped to handle diverse classrooms. Integrating core values into education poses several challenges for school principals, requiring careful consideration of cultural sensitivity, stakeholder collaboration, and supportive systems.

Moreover, Basnet and Sherpa (2020) emphasize the critical need for aligning teachers' personal values with the school's core values. This alignment is vital as it influences teaching practices and student outcomes. Principals can facilitate this through targeted orientation programs that introduce and reinforce the school's values and ethical standards, promoting a unified educational approach.

Furthermore, the role of teachers in promoting positive behaviors is crucial. Teachers serve as role models, and their attitudes significantly impact student behavior. Principals can support teachers by providing resources and training in effective behavior management strategies, thereby fostering a positive and conducive learning environment (Nuryana et al., 2022),

Additionally, Sullanmaa et al. (2019) and Hu and Wang (2019) stress the importance of stakeholder collaboration in integrating core values into the curriculum. Principals can facilitate this process by organizing regular meetings and workshops and promoting open communication and mutual respect among all parties involved. This collaborative effort ensures that the curriculum is reflective of shared values and goals. Moreover, engaging parents is essential for reinforcing core values outside of the school environment. However, this can be challenging due to varying levels of engagement. Principals can strengthen home-school connections through regular communication, workshops, and inclusive events, thereby ensuring consistent messaging and support for students' value of education (Nangwele & Raymond, 2021).

Synthesis

Integrating core values into education is crucial for fostering conscientious and socially engaged individuals who contribute positively to society. Schools play an essential role in instilling values that enhance students' moral and ethical foundation. School principals, on the other hand, serve a significant role in school culture, aligning values with the institution's vision and ensuring their seamless integration into the curriculum. By fostering professional development among educators and promoting a culture of continuous learning, principals empower teachers to deliver value-based education effectively. However, challenges such as evolving educational expectations and external influences values integration. Overcoming these challenges requires collaborative efforts, adequate resources, and systematic approaches to ensure the holistic development of students and the promotion of shared values within school communities.

Furthermore, integrating values education into the curriculum is essential for addressing societal challenges and fostering responsible citizenship. School principals play a crucial role in shaping students' moral growth and ethical decision-making by fostering a nurturing environment that upholds core values. By prioritizing values education and embracing collaborative approaches, school principals can ensure the holistic development of students and contribute to the creation of a more compassionate and socially responsible society. Conducting a comprehensive study on the role of school principals in values integration is therefore essential to bridge this gap in the literature and inform effective practices in educational leadership.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is a cyclical process aimed at comprehending and enhancing the community's condition through a deeper understanding of the issue under investigation (Aspers & Corte, 2019). This study focuses on the lived experiences of private school principals in integrating the core values in the curriculum and qualitative research applied to investigate the insights of the selected participants. Furthermore, qualitative research is suitable as it allows for the collection and documentation of various perspectives from the participants.

Furthermore, this study also utilized the phenomenological approach. Phenomenology is a type of qualitative study that investigates the subjective experiences of an individual within their environment. It aims to elucidate the fundamental nature of an event by examining it through the lens of those who have directly encountered it, focusing on both the content and the manner in which it was perceived (Neubauer et al. 2019).

In this study, phenomenological is used as it aligns with the main objective of this inquiry. Understanding the experiences of school principals in integrating values into the curriculum the best explored thoroughly using the firsthand experiences and accounts of the participants, the private school principals. This facilitated a comprehensive examination of their challenges and coping strategies, which can be a good foundation for comprehending the complex nature of these social phenomena.

The phenomenological technique is highly beneficial for revealing school leaders' personal and distinctive viewpoints, providing researchers with a deeper comprehension of their experiences. The study seeks to elucidate the complex difficulties school principals encounter, offering deep insights and uncovering concealed problems. This technique effectively explores the complex issues faced by school leaders in incorporating fundamental principles. It enables the investigation of personal experiences and perspectives, leading to a more thorough understanding of this essential element of educational leadership.

Research Participants

The study involved seven (7) school principals selected from various private catholic schools within the Diocese of Tagum Educational System in Davao del Norte. In phenomenological research, a sample size of 10 to 50 individuals is sufficient for this investigation as long as the selected individuals hold divergent perspectives and viewpoints about the topic of inquiry and can provide rich and thick data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Furthermore, the participants exhibit diversity in terms of gender, age, and social standing. In this study, the researcher selected participants based on inclusion criteria: (a) they have been a school principal for at least three (3) years, (b) They currently managing a private catholic school, and (c) the school they are assigned is part of the Diocese of Tagum Educational System (DOTES). On the other hand, this study excluded school principals who had been assigned to their school for less than a year.

Role of the Researcher

Researchers follow a set of rules and procedures as they engage in research. This entails ensuring the efficient execution of processes and protocols to monitor and conduct appropriate research procedures to gather the requisite data for the study. Their role includes seeking, organizing, and generating new information to present a problem (Moro-Tejedor & García-Pozo, 2023). In this study, I assumed the roles of an interviewer, transcriber, translator, and primary data analyst.

As an interviewer, I asked questions to the participants throughout the in-depth interview to obtain a comprehensive record of their ideas. Nevertheless, throughout interviewing the participants, I temporarily

suspended my perspective on the case to maintain impartiality. This approach enhances the reliability and trustworthiness of the research. To document the process of conducting interviews, an audio recorder app will be used. This helped ensure that sharing ideas and information was accurately documented. Moreover, the participants were encouraged to communicate in any language or dialect, enabling them to express their thoughts and opinions freely.

As a transcriber, I faithfully transcribed the participants' responses without altering their content. I strived to maintain accuracy and precision in the transcribing process. I allocated pseudonyms to each participant to conceal their identities throughout the data transcription. Moreover, I ensured accurate and meticulous translation of the replies. To ensure the correctness of the data, I allowed my participants to review and check the transcript, which guarantees that their responses are accurately transcribed. This improves the overall trustworthiness and dependability of the collected data.

As a main data analyst, I evaluated the data collected from the participants specifically selected for qualitative research. I examined the data to comprehensively understand the transcripts and extract themes from the obtained information. Upon completing the collection and analysis of the data, I submitted it to the professional analyst for their evaluation and verification. Likewise, I seek assistance from my thesis advisor to guarantee accurate analysis of the collected data and the entire process.

Data Sources

The data sources consisted of the information and insights provided by the study participants. The significance of identifying research participants and obtaining permission helps to establish a positive relationship and ensure reliable data collection (Creswell, 2018). The data was obtained via in-depth interviews with seven (7) private school principals who were members of the DOTES-Davao del Norte. An audio recording device was used to capture accurately their accounts and confirm their clarity and comprehension. This study interview seeks to comprehend the experiences of school principals in integrating core values into the curriculum. By examining the participants' perspectives, emotions, and viewpoints, they can provide valuable insights into how educational leaders play an important role in reinforcing values within instruction.

In addition to conducting individual in-depth interviews (IDls), this study utilizes secondary sources such as government documents, websites, books, journal articles, mandates from the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), and other relevant studies to support further the data obtained from the primary source.

Data Collection Procedure

Qualitative data collection methods involve gathering textual data for study and analysis. This data investigates the understanding of a certain social phenomenon (Freeman, 2023). In addition, qualitative research employs rigorous and systematic processes to accomplish its research objective. The essential procedures include identifying qualified participants, obtaining permission to carry out the study, and preparing the necessary materials and instruments for data collection. All this ensures the acquisition of precise information (Creswell, 2007).

Initially, I requested an endorsement letter from the Dean of the Graduate School at St. Mary's College of Tagum Inc. to obtain permission to carry out the study. The letter of approval was forwarded to the DOTES-Davao del Norte. Upon acquiring formal authorization from pertinent authorities, such as the study permit, I ascertained the individuals who possess knowledge within various private schools affiliated with DOTES. This license is essential as it enables me to thoroughly investigate school leaders and their endeavors in incorporating fundamental principles. Obtaining and adhering to the essential approvals is

crucial from an ethical perspective before proceeding with the research.

Prior to the conduct of the interview process, all qualified participants got an orientation clarifying the objective of the study, research methodologies, anticipated advantages, participants' prerogative to discontinue their involvement in the study, and measures taken to ensure confidentiality. The English version of the informed consent form was sent to them and all requests for clarification were addressed during the orientation. Subsequently, qualified participants were asked to sign an informed consent confirming their willing engagement in this research.

Before commencing the study, the participants were asked about their consent to engage in audio recording, with the assurance that the data was securely saved in a protected disk to safeguard their well-being and anonymity. The participants got a notification that all collected data, including the recorded audio and transcript, was permanently erased upon completion of the research. Written informed permission was obtained before interviewing at the agreed-upon time and place. The participants' inquiries, elucidations, and apprehensions shall be courteously attended to and resolved.

During the in-depth interview, each participant presented with self-explanatory questions. The researcher aims to identify the issues faced by school principals, their coping mechanisms, and insights into integrating values into the curriculum. Additionally, the audio recordings of the replies were transcribed word for word to guarantee the precision and reliability of the results and authenticated by the participants. Furthermore, any data collected during this study that may be linked to the participants' identities was treated as confidential and only be shared with the individuals' consent. The information collected about the participants was encoded using pseudonyms, initials, or numerical identifiers to ensure anonymity. Rigorous procedures were implemented to protect this information, guaranteeing its security and limiting access to authorized personnel only. Therefore, any sharing of identifiable data strictly followed the permissions given by the participants, highlighting the dedication to preserving the confidentiality of all information gathered throughout the research.

Data Analysis

The obtained data was examined to provide findings addressing the topic of this research. The qualitative data analysis process involved identifying, coding, and categorizing fundamental concepts and patterns within the data. The analysis was conducted after transcribing the interview from the participants. I employed coding and theme analysis to scrutinize the data collected and compiled in this study. Thematic analysis is used to examine and describe the recurring themes in the textual data and is regarded as the most common approach to analysis in qualitative research (Kiger & Varpio, 2020).

In this study, I employed a particular method of analysis since it assists me in comprehending intricate and abundant qualitative data. This approach enabled me to delve into and identify the fundamental patterns and significance inherent in the gathered material. To acquaint myself with the data, I engage in the process of listening to and transcribing the recorded interviews of the participants. Additionally, I continued perusing these transcriptions to discern any recurring or analogous responses. I started the coding process once I had been acquainted with the data. This coding involved confirming the data in order to identify certain themes, concepts, and classifications. In order to enhance the dependability of the data, I enlist the assistance of a data analyst who possesses expertise in the relevant sector and may serve as an advisor for additional data verification. Finally, I show the results and analysis of the data.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Trustworthiness in qualitative research pertains to the results' quality and truthfulness. This served as a criterion for assessing the quality of a study design and checks on the accurate implementation of research

procedures (Williams et al., 2020). In this study, the trustworthiness of the study observed the following principles of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability.

Credibility pertains to the veracity of the study findings. In research, decisions made by the researcher must align with their intended study aims to ensure credibility. The researcher must exhibit a discerning and self-assured approach while making methodological judgments. Biado et al. (2021) stated that high-quality research must adhere to several requirements, including rigorous processes and approaches renowned for gathering significant data.

After gathering the data, it is crucial to perform a comprehensive analysis, carefully considering the reliability, validity, triangulation, and the researcher's trustworthiness. Furthermore, a pioneering and comprehensive examination of the data should be conducted. In this study, I employed iterative questioning and member-checking techniques while utilizing in-depth interviews as the primary method for data collection.

Busetto et al. (2020) assert that iterative questioning involves using probing questions to gather comprehensive data. The researcher revisits the subjects previously discussed by the participants and obtains pertinent information by asking questions differently. In this study, the process of iterative questioning involved using probing questions to gather data. In order to further clarify the information presented and ensure mutual comprehension between the researcher and participants, extra inquiries were posed to uncover any supplementary factors that may impact the data.

Moreover, the technique of member checking is employed inside the framework of this investigation. Before proceeding with coding and analysis, it is essential to document and transcribe the interviews verbatim properly. Member checking is commonly used to ensure research legitimacy and improve its rigor. This approach entails obtaining verification from participants about the precision and comprehensiveness of interview transcriptions, guaranteeing that the transcripts faithfully represent the significance and purpose behind the participants' contributions (Johnson et al., 2020).

Furthermore, I ensured to adopt a well-established research method. Following recognized and proven methodologies provides a strong foundation for research design and execution. These are methods that have undergone rigorous testing and refinement over time, earning recognition and acceptance within the scientific community (Creswell, 2019). In this study, I used well-established research methods to maintain the credibility of the study. I also review studies and ensure that I adhere to established protocols to enhance the trust in my research findings.

In addition, asking a participant to check the interview transcript may enhance data accuracy and confirm the adequateness of their response. With this, participants can remove sections that they feel no longer accurately reflect their experience. In this study, I allowed the participants to peruse and scrutinize the transcripts to check their veracity. I also allow the participants to request the researcher to exclude any sections they deem inappropriate or believe they did not utter.

Dependability in research refers to the trustworthiness and consistency of the findings and the comprehensive recording of research techniques. This record aims to facilitate comprehension, evaluation, and critique of the research process by persons not actively engaged. Furthermore, the reliability of qualitative data is demonstrated by guaranteeing the stability of the research findings even when there are alterations in the study environment or among participants throughout data collection. Utilizing meticulous methods and protocols for collecting data is essential to ensure the reliability of the data (Data & Statistics, 2024).

To ensure clarity and provide a solid basis for this investigation, it is imperative to start by defining and expressing the fundamental principles being examined. It is important to meticulously record research techniques during the investigation, which involves creating and executing plans that include fundamental principles.

In addition, peer debriefing allows input from experts with different academic backgrounds to contribute to a more holistic evaluation (Garcia & Brown, 2022). In this study, I solicited insights and critiques from experts in the field, including my research adviser, to gain external perspectives on the study. Their critical evaluation and feedback were incorporated to strengthen the methodological robustness of the study.

Confirmability refers to the impartiality and replicability of research findings. In order to establish that the results are not influenced by deliberate or unintentional bias, other researchers must be able to replicate the findings using independent research methods (Devault, 2019). Hence, the research needs to guarantee that the findings are derived from the firsthand experiences and preferences of the participants rather than being influenced by the researcher's own experiences or preferences. This is necessary to maintain control and accurately represent the impact of philosophical or empirical choices. Additionally, implementing the method is necessary to ensure an audit trail since the researcher must furnish a thorough record of notes on the decisions made during the research phase. In addition, the researchers demonstrate their results by providing comprehensive explanations and direct quotations (Stenfors et al., 2020).

Within the framework of this study, the researcher established an audit trail to ensure the research's confirmability. Furthermore, I furnished an exhaustive and meticulous compilation of protocols that were implemented, along with maintaining and documenting records meticulously throughout this study. This served as substantiation to avoid prejudices and guarantee that the study remains impartial and unbiased, devoid of the researcher's viewpoint and agenda. Furthermore, implementing an audit trail, in which all choices and modifications made during the research process are meticulously documented, increases transparency and enables external examination. The study seeks to improve the credibility and dependability of its findings by implementing these methods, enhancing the overall verifiability of the research.

Transferability refers to the factors determining the extent to which something may be applied. The researcher must furnish a thorough account of the participants and the study technique, enabling the reader to determine the applicability of the findings to their circumstances. To enhance transferability, the researcher should meticulously delineate the research setting and the fundamental assumptions of the study. The person who plans to apply the findings in a different situation is accountable for assessing the suitability of the application (Trochim, 2020).

Within the framework of this investigation, I furnished a comprehensive and detailed description of the participants. It is important to focus on giving a thorough analysis of the participants and processes of the study to provides a comprehensive and contextually detailed description that enables readers to evaluate the applicability of the findings to their educational environments. Furthermore, by clearly defining the research environment and underlying assumptions, the research enables prospective researchers to make well- informed assessments of the relevance of the study's findings in other settings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical concerns in research encompass concepts that safeguard morality and guide researchers in executing their studies. Furthermore, these measures ensure the researchers' responsibility and establish the public's confidence in the research (Mazumdar, 2022). The research project will employ the SMCTI-REC ethical standards, including social value, informed consent, vulnerability of research participants,

risk, benefits, safety, fairness, transparency, quality of the research, appropriateness of facilities, and community engagement. The research includes private school principals who are appointed to DOTES schools. This research examined the issues faced by private school principals. This research primarily focuses on school principals' difficulties in effectively incorporating fundamental principles. The research designates them as primary school leaders; hence, their safety and complete security were ensured. This is done in order to maintain the confidence that they bestowed. Consistent with this, the present investigation upholds ethical norms to ensure the safety of the participants.

Social Value. This pertains to the study's significance in a societal or medical issue. The outcomes are anticipated to foster a more comprehensive comprehension of interconnected matters or facilitate the advancement of the welfare of individuals, their families, and communities. Furthermore, this concept is included because of its emphasis on the significance of carrying out research that yields significant and beneficial effects on society (Edelheim, 2021).

The study demonstrates the social value by actively addressing educational challenges, promoting comprehensive development, and improving the school culture. strengthening community relationships, encouraging ethical decision-making, and contributing to forming responsible citizens within the private school setting. This study aims to create a long-term beneficial effect on the individuals directly participating and the wider societal environment impacted by the inculcated ideals. Moreover, it is crucial to prioritize cooperation with key stakeholders, including educators, administrators, and policymakers, to guarantee that the research findings are immediately pertinent and applicable to the specific needs and concerns of the educational community.

Informed Consent. Informed consent refers to the voluntary decision made by a capable prospective participant to participate in research after being provided with and comprehending pertinent facts without being subjected to force, undue influence, or incentive. Furthermore, informed consent is considered an ethical standard due to its role in ensuring that participants comprehensively understand the study's nature, goal, and potential risks and benefits (Leguizamo, 2023).

The informed consent process is paramount in this investigation to maintain ethical standards. The participants will receive explicit and open information regarding the study's objectives, methods, and possible results. A thorough informed consent statement will be created, clearly stating that participation is voluntary, explaining the precautions used to ensure confidentiality, and detailing the protocols for data usage. The permission form incorporated a segment where individuals can explicitly recognize their comprehension and freely assent to partake.

Furthermore, a clear and detailed orientation was provided to each participant, elucidating the study's goals and potential consequences. This initial engagement fosters an environment of openness and allows participants to make informed decisions regarding their involvement. In this study, orientation was provided comprehensive discussions ensuring that participants were adequately briefed and maintained transparency Ultimately, this research project seeks permission from the appropriate ethics committee to ensure that obtaining informed consent on the access of data adheres to ethical principles and protects the rights and well-being of all participants. Likewise, I secured the storage of personal information such as saving all files as password-protected files with only me having access. This exemplifies the commitment to safeguarding participants' privacy, in line with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. I have confidential and meticulous handling of data, whether in hard or soft copies. The researcher must ensure responsible custody of these files, ensuring restricted access to sensitive information (Miles et al., 2021).

Ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of research participants is paramount in maintaining ethical

standards. Therefore, respondents in this study were provided with a comprehensive Data Privacy Notice for Research Respondents, which outlines the purpose of data collection, types of data collected, and measures taken to protect their personal information. By offering transparency and informed consent through the provision of this notice, the study upholds ethical principles and respects participants' rights to privacy, fostering trust and collaboration between researchers and respondents.

Vulnerability of Research Participants. Individuals who cannot make independent decisions on their participation in research due to factors such as physical and mental disability, poverty, imbalanced power dynamics, and social exclusion, among others, are more vulnerable to potential damage. Furthermore, this principle is incorporated as a means of emphasizing the need to safeguard those who may be more vulnerable to potential damage or exploitation due to diverse circumstances (Gordon, 2020).

This study applied a comprehensive method to prioritize the participants' welfare. The informed consent process was carefully crafted to elucidate the study's aims, procedures, and voluntary involvement. Ensuring privacy is of utmost importance, with a dedication to securely managing sensitive data and limiting any breaches of participants' privacy.

Furthermore, uninterrupted contact lines were established, providing participants with chances to inquire, seek assistance, and voice any issues they may have during the study process. Additionally, we used culturally sensitive methods to honor and acknowledge the varied viewpoints within the participant group. The project aims to mitigate power disparities, enhance participant agency, and include debriefing sessions to address emotional repercussions. Finally, ethical supervision and scrutiny were established to identify and promptly resolve any emergent problems, confirming the dedication to prioritizing the welfare and rights of all study participants.

Risk, Benefits, and Safety. One of the primary responsibilities of the researcher is to find the balance between mitigating any potential risks and maximizing the benefits experienced by participants. In this study, I adhere to the principle of beneficence by dedicating myself to enhancing the positive aspects of the research experience for all participants. Johnson et al. (2020) stressed the important role of beneficence in research, advocating for an ethical obligation to amplify the positive outcomes of participants.

Moreover, I also recognize and appreciate the invaluable contributions of each participant. Their voluntary involvement is indispensable, and without it, the study would be incomplete. As a token of gratitude for their time and effort, participants will receive school materials and sanitary kits. Additionally, I ensured that participants had control over the dissemination of study findings. Only upon their request, the results be shared, fostering a sense of ownership and reinforcing the social significance and relevance of the research.

Moreover, throughout the study, I maintained transparency with my participants. They were fully informed about the research's nature, objectives, and the potential benefits of their participation. Williams et al. (2023) emphasize the significance of transparent communication with participants, stressing the importance of ensuring that participants are well-informed about the research's purpose and objectives, reflecting the emphasis on transparency and participant comprehension.

Accordingly, I reassured participants that they would not encounter any form of harm, emphasizing the use of non-offensive and appropriate language in all interactions. Additionally, participants were given sufficient time to understand instructions, prioritizing their comprehension and ensuring their safety and well-being throughout the research process. Lee and Robinson (2024) advocate for a proactive approach to safeguarding participant well-being, emphasizing continual considerations for safety and welfare as paramount in protecting participants.

Anonymity. I prioritized the protection of participants' identities. Recognizing the sensitivity of their personal information, I am committed to implementing stringent confidentiality measures. To achieve this, I used pseudonyms to safeguard their true identities during the study. These meticulous steps are designed not only to ensure the participants' protection but also to mitigate potential risks associated with the research. Garcia et al. (2022) delve into the importance of safeguarding participant identity, highlighting pseudonymization as an effective strategy for maintaining participant confidentiality and minimizing risks associated with the disclosure of private information. In accordance, this study adhered to Republic Act 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act, which mandates the secure handling of personal information. To protect personal data, pseudonyms were used to refer to participants, ensuring their identities remained undisclosed.

Additionally, anonymizing and aggregating data whenever possible further mitigates privacy risks. By proactively addressing data privacy concerns, this study upholds the ethical standards and legal requirements, effectively safeguarding the confidentiality and privacy of participants' information in accordance with Republic Act 10173.

Justice. This pertains to the fair allocation of the difficulties and advantages experienced by study participants. It is unjust for one segment of society to suffer research expenses while another enjoys its advantages. Furthermore, fairness is considered an ethical value due to its emphasis on ensuring impartial and equal treatment of research participants and the equitable sharing of research benefits and burdens across diverse groups (Lévy-Bruhl, 2023).

In this study, the researcher stresses fairness by achieving inclusion among varied stakeholders, therefore adhering to principles of justice. The study's methodology and presentation were attuned to cultural subtleties, ensuring that it does not contribute to continuing disparities. Furthermore, the results were examined and documented in a manner that honors the varied perspectives and experiences of the participants, fostering an equitable portrayal of their input. Furthermore, the study's results and suggestions equally benefit the whole school community, promoting fairness in the distribution of information and prospective enhancements in teaching procedures.

Furthermore, Smith et al. (2020) also emphasize the need for fairness and impartiality in the treatment of participants. With this, I ensure that participants receive what they rightfully deserve and that I maintain objectivity in the selection of my participants considering only the research objectives and the inclusion criteria set. I also show care and respect to each participant throughout the study process.

Transparency. Ethical research must be characterized by transparency. All parties must be honest about topics relevant to their engagement. This fosters trust in the study endeavor, even when protecting privacy and maintaining anonymity is necessary for sensitive subjects. Additionally, this plays a vital role in maintaining the integrity of the research process, guaranteeing responsibility, and fostering trust among stakeholders (Moravcsik, 2019).

The study upholds high transparency to promote confidence and clarity. All stakeholders, including the participants, were informed about the study method, aims, and ramifications. Ongoing updates were consistently supplied throughout the research, and participants were actively encouraged to inquire or seek further explanations. Likewise, the techniques for gathering and analyzing data were thoroughly explained clearly, guaranteeing that the study may be replicated. The findings, whether favorable or difficult, were honestly communicated without any prejudices, fostering an open and honest exchange of information with the whole school community.

Qualifications of the Researcher. The researcher must possess the necessary skills, expertise, and resources to conduct the suggested study as it may directly influence the integrity of the study process and the welfare of participants (Resnik, 2020). In this study, the researcher possesses ample expertise to undertake the study, supported by her educational background. She is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Education- Major in Educational Management. Additionally, she has attended training sessions on classroom management and research methodology, further demonstrating her preparedness to delve into this area of inquiry.

Furthermore, the researcher benefited from the guidance provided by a highly qualified research adviser, who holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Education- Major in Educational Leadership, and has served as the Dean of Graduate Education of SMCTI. With extensive experience and expertise in research evaluation gained through participation in the research panel of the SMCTI, the adviser brings invaluable support to the study.

Adequacy of Facilities. The researcher must take deliberate measures to ensure the availability and accessibility of essential resources, which serve as vital support for the study (Johnson & Smith, 2019). In this study, appropriate equipment such as audio recorders, cameras, and other necessary materials was utilized to record data effectively, thereby enriching the depth and quality of data collection. Additionally, securing approvals from relevant institutions and offices is crucial, as emphasized by Brown and Davis (2022), highlighting the importance of adhering to ethical and regulatory standards. Through proper communication and collaboration with involved entities, the study's overall success and legitimacy were ensured.

Recognizing the significant role of library resources in strengthening the study's foundation, the researcher utilized academic journals, books, and electronic databases to augment the literature review and theoretical framework (Anderson & Carter, 2020). Moreover, prioritizing the implementation of health protocols during face-to-face data collection aligns with ethical considerations and public health standards, as underscored by Turner et al. (2022), thus ensuring the safety and well-being of both the researcher and participants.

Community Involvement. The study on school principals' integration of core values into education offers valuable insights that can profoundly benefit the community. Principals serve as influential figures within educational institutions, shaping the culture and values that permeate throughout the school environment. By understanding how principals prioritize and implement values such as integrity, respect, and empathy, this research provides a blueprint for fostering a more ethical and socially responsible society. These findings can inform not only educational practices but also community initiatives aimed at promoting positive values and behaviors among individuals of all ages. Moreover, the study can enhance collaboration between schools and the broader community, fostering partnerships that promote shared values and contribute to the overall well-being and cohesion of the community.

Furthermore, the study holds promise for promoting inclusive and equitable educational practices within the community. By examining how principals address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in their schools, the research can shed light on effective strategies for creating supportive and inclusive learning environments. These insights can inform efforts to address barriers to education and promote greater equity and access for all students. Additionally, the study can empower community members to advocate for positive change within the education system, fostering a sense of collective responsibility for nurturing the holistic development of students. Ultimately, by highlighting the critical role of school principals in

values integration, this research has the potential to inspire transformative change and contribute to the creation of a more compassionate, ethical, and socially conscious community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, the key themes derived from participants' responses were presented and discussed, drawing support from various concepts and ideas by different authors. The implications for teaching practices and potential areas for future research were also explored.

The study sought to delve into the experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of school principals in integrating core values into the curriculum. To gain a deeper understanding of the study's focus, interviews were conducted with 7 school principals among private catholic schools under the Diocese of Tagum Educational System (DOTES) – Davao del Norte. Participants engaged in individual in-depth interviews using a validated study instrument, and their responses were meticulously examined with the assistance of qualified specialists.

Experiences of School Principals in Integrating Core Values in the Curriculum

Relevant readings from various authors and researchers were gathered to support the various themes that emerged for this research question. Their experiences emerged in three (3) major themes: (1) having problems in integrating core values, (2) getting affirmations about the impact of core values, and (3) focusing on a value to live by.

Having Problems in Integrating Core Values

Integrating core values into the curriculum is challenging. Factors such as diverse student backgrounds, resistance to value-based education, and the complexities of aligning school culture with core principles were just some of the reasons that school principals needed to navigate and address. Through this, they can ensure that core values are not only taught but also internalized by students, teachers and everyone in the institutions.

This theme was supported by the idea of Gokce (2021), who pointed out that external factors, such as students' attitudes, can undermine the fundamental principles that schools aim to teach. Students come from diverse backgrounds with varying beliefs and value systems, which can lead to resistance or indifference towards the values being taught. For instance, students who do not see the relevance of certain values in their personal lives might disengage from the curriculum. Garcia and Bual (2022) also noted the challenge in assessing the efficacy of incorporating core values into various aspects of the school environment. Principals must ensure that values are reflected not only in classroom teachings but also in school policies, extracurricular activities, and the overall culture. This comprehensive approach requires meticulous strategic planning and continuous evaluation, which can be both resource-intensive and complex to implement effectively.

Furthermore, Omodan and Addam (2022) mentioned that school principals often find themselves at the forefront of deep-seated social issues, such as juvenile delinquency, and must ensure that students internalize the values being taught. Principals need to develop programs that address immediate behavioral issues while instilling long-term values that guide students' actions and decisions. Similarly, Musa and Ariyanti (2020) discussed the challenges relating to the lack of confidence and knowledge among teachers in adapting to different cultural settings, which can impede the effective imparting of values. School principals are expected to provide professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their cultural competence and teaching strategies. Creating a supportive environment where teachers feel equipped and confident to handle diverse classrooms is crucial for the effective integration of core values.

Getting Affirmations about the Impact of Core Values

Hearing affirmations about the positive impact of core values on students' development and school culture is essential for school principals as they strive to integrate core values into the curriculum. Core values do not only influence academic achievements but also students' and parents' overall satisfaction with the educational experience. Hence, principals play a pivotal role in embedding core values into both curricular and extracurricular activities to create a consistent and comprehensive approach.

This theme is supported by Tian-liang et al. (2021), who cite that school principals who successfully integrate core values into the curriculum help students establish a positive professional attitude, preparing them for future challenges and opportunities. This integration requires strategic planning and a commitment to embedding values so that students can internalize these values and apply them in their personal and future professional lives. Additionally, Poncini (2023) emphasized the importance of a holistic approach to learning, which includes spiritual, moral, and ethical dimensions. School principals are instrumental in ensuring an education that balances academic rigor with spiritual development, helping students develop a well-rounded character grounded in strong moral and ethical principles.

Furthermore, Sengul et al. (2019) highlighted the positive impact of a strong emphasis on core values within educational institutions on student outcomes, including higher cognitive achievement and greater educational aspirations. School principals play a crucial role in ensuring that values are consistently upheld and integrated into all aspects of school life. This commitment to values-driven education can lead to measurable improvements in student performance and motivation. Similarly, Sugiharto et al. (2021) pointed out that positive student experiences, satisfaction with the educational environment, and a favorable perception of the school's reputation are crucial for fostering loyalty among students and stakeholders. School principals who effectively integrate core values into the curriculum can create a supportive and engaging school culture, enhancing student contentment and loyalty, and contributing to a stable and thriving educational community.

Focusing on a Value to Live by

Integrating core values into the educational environment is essential for fostering a holistic learning experience. Effective implementation hinges on the active role of school principals, who can weave these values into both the structured curriculum and daily school routines. By creating supportive and organized settings, principals provide the stability necessary for students to internalize and practice these values consistently.

Practical implementation of core values involves creating a school environment and learning activities that actively promote and reinforce these values. Schools can integrate core values into their daily practices and curriculum through the help of school principals. For instance, Khathi et al. (2022) emphasized that for effective learning and values integration to take place, school principals must focus on creating structured and supportive settings. This also means that core values should be seamlessly integrated into the daily routines of students. By maintaining a well-organized environment, principals can ensure that students have the stability and clarity needed to internalize and practice core values. Additionally, Mahdali et al. (2022) discussed that the curriculum should integrate religious values through specific subjects, references, and activities. School principals can incorporate culturally and contextually appropriate values into their curricula, thus making education more relevant and impactful for students.

Furthermore, Ginosyan et al. (2019) noted that extracurricular activities and social interactions positively impact students' attitudes toward learning, academic performance, and social behaviors. School principals can leverage these activities to promote core values by providing a practical and engaging way for students

to practice and internalize these values in a less formal setting. Likewise, Jiang et al. (2022) stressed that educational activities shape students' values and identities, steering them toward sustainable behaviors and social equality. To implement this, school principals can support and promote educational activities that not only enhance learning but also help students develop a strong value system that guides their actions and decisions.

Coping Mechanisms of School Principals in Integrating Core Values in the Curriculum

Relevant readings from various authors and researchers were gathered to support the various themes that emerged for this research question. Their coping mechanisms emerged in five (5) major themes: (1) conducting orientation, (2) collaborating with stakeholders, (3) becoming role models., (4) having proper communication engagement, and (5) conducting evaluation and monitoring

Conducting Orientation

The integration of core values into the curriculum is fundamental to fostering an inclusive and values-oriented school. With this, school principals play an important role in providing necessary orientation and support to teachers, parents, and students. Effective orientation programs, therefore, serve as a critical mechanism for school principals to equip others with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to successfully integrate core values into the curriculum.

This theme is supported by Garcia and Bual (2022), who emphasize that school principals can conduct orientations on practical implementation strategies of core values. Through these orientations, teachers can be empowered to take on roles in values education, ensuring that these core values are consistently reinforced across all aspects of the school experience for learners. Similarly, Rojo-Ramos et al. (2022) highlight that orientation and professional development sessions can cultivate positive attitudes among teachers, enhancing the overall learning environment.

Furthermore, Basnet and Sherpa (2020) mention that the values and attitudes of teachers significantly affect the learning and success of students. Therefore, it is important that the professional values of teachers align with the core values of the school. School principals can create a cohesive and supportive educational environment by maintaining this alignment through targeted orientation programs. These orientations can emphasize the importance of values-based education and provide practical strategies for teachers to incorporate these values into their pedagogy. Moreover, Nuryana et al. (2022) recognize the crucial role of teachers in instilling qualities that promote attitudes discouraging discrimination and encouraging positive behaviors. School principals can support this process by conducting orientation sessions that focus on these core values and by providing continuous support and resources to teachers.

Collaborating with Stakeholders

Collaboration with stakeholders is a critical component in the effective integration of core values into the school curriculum. This partnership involves teachers, curriculum planners, principals, school managers, parents, and the broader community working together to ensure that educational practices align with the desired values and principles. By fostering strong relationships and open communication channels among these stakeholders, school principals can create a supportive environment that promotes the holistic development of students and the embedding of core values in everyday learning experiences.

This theme is supported by Sullanmaa et al. (2019) who emphasized the significant role of stakeholders and the importance of collaboration during dialogue and decision-making to ensure that the curriculum reflects and reinforces the school's core values. School principals can facilitate this by organizing regular meetings, workshops, and feedback sessions, allowing stakeholders to contribute their perspectives and expertise to the curriculum development process. Likewise, Fenyi and Morrison (2022) also added that

collaboration among various stakeholders may include enabling them to design programs that sustain and enhance learners' interest. School principals play a crucial role in coordinating these efforts, ensuring that the curriculum not only meets academic standards but also promotes the core values essential for students' personal and social development.

Furthermore, Hu and Wang (2019) also discussed the necessity for stakeholders to continuously interact and negotiate their roles in the teaching and learning process. This ongoing collaboration helps create a conducive environment for learners, where their needs and interests are met, and core values are consistently integrated into their educational experience. School principals can support this dynamic interaction by fostering a culture of open communication and mutual respect among all stakeholders, ensuring that everyone is aligned in their efforts to promote core values. In addition, Nangwele and Raymond (2021) also mentioned the importance of parental engagement and the partnership between home and school, particularly within the context of values education. By encouraging active parental involvement and fostering strong home-school connections, principals can reinforce the core values taught in school, creating a more cohesive and supportive learning environment for students.

Becoming Role Models

The school environment and the behavior of school principals, teachers, and staff play a crucial role in shaping students' values and identity. Schools act as cultural environments where the norms and values promoted significantly impact students' behavior and sense of self. Integrating core values into the educational framework is essential for developing students' moral and ethical compasses, influencing their character and identity formation. This integration is facilitated by the combined efforts of teachers and school leaders who model and uphold these values.

This theme is supported by Omodan and Addam (2022) discussing the influence of teachers and the school environment on students' values and behavior. Students are deeply affected by the values and norms promoted, which contribute significantly to their identity formation. School principals can support this process by creating a school culture that consistently reflects core values through policies, practices, and the everyday actions of all school members. In addition, Catapult Learning (2022) also emphasizes that core values shape the identity and culture of educational institutions. These values provide the moral guidance necessary to ensure that the behavior of students, instructors, and administrators aligns with shared standards and principles. By fostering a culture that prioritizes core values, school principals can ensure that these values become embedded in the school's ethos, guiding the actions and attitudes of the entire school community.

Furthermore, Khathi et al. (2022) stress that the successful incorporation of values education into the educational system depends on teachers' ability to demonstrate exemplary behavior and serve as role models. The conduct and attitudes of teachers have a profound impact on students, influencing their character and identity development. School principals can facilitate this by providing professional development opportunities that focus on ethical teaching practices and by recognizing and rewarding teachers who exemplify the school's core values. Likewise, Richey (2019) also added that the behaviors of teachers and school staff contribute to creating a positive classroom climate. A positive climate enhances students' sense of belonging and overall learning experience, which is crucial for their emotional and social development. School principals can support teachers in creating such environments by ensuring they have the resources and support needed to maintain a positive, values-oriented classroom atmosphere.

Moreover, Ulfa et al. (2021) emphasize the pivotal role teachers play in motivating students, creating conducive learning environments, and serving as role models. These factors are essential for fostering an

environment where core values can flourish. School principals can enhance this process by promoting collaborative practices among teachers and encouraging the sharing of best practices for values education. Accordingly, Zurqoni et al. (2019) also cited the importance of role modeling by teachers, engagement in character-oriented activities, and support from educational stakeholders in implementing character education. Effective values education requires a collaborative approach where teachers, supported by principals and other stakeholders, actively engage in activities that promote character development.

Having Proper Communication Engagement

Core values and character education are fundamental to creating a supportive and positive school atmosphere that enhances teaching and learning. By clearly communicating the school's purpose, principles, and desired outcomes, core values serve as the foundation for a cohesive and morally guided educational environment. Effective character education, which involves the concerted efforts of educators, parents, and community leaders, is essential for instilling admirable qualities in students and shaping their overall character.

This theme is supported by Catapult Learning (2022) emphasizing the importance of core values as a powerful tool for communicating the school's mission, principles, and intended outcomes. These values help foster a positive and supportive atmosphere for teaching and learning by providing a clear framework that guides behavior and decision-making within the school. School principals play a crucial role in promoting and upholding these core values, ensuring they are consistently reflected in school policies, practices, and the interactions between staff and students. Similarly, Abdullah et al. (2019) define character education as a deliberate effort by adults, including parents and community leaders, to shape children's character and instill admirable qualities. The collaborative nature of values education highlights the need for involvement from various stakeholders. School principals can facilitate this by fostering partnerships with parents and community leaders, ensuring that character education extends beyond the classroom and into the broader community. In addition, Apriyansyah (2023) points out that collaboration with educational institutions and communities is essential for enhancing core values integration. This collaboration ensures that the efforts to instill core values in students are reinforced by consistent messages and support from all areas of their lives. School principals can promote such collaborations by organizing community events, creating opportunities for parental involvement, and building strong relationships with local organizations. Furthermore, Mubarok et al. (2021) mentioned that effective communication by teachers shapes student morale through values education. Teachers who communicate clearly and consistently about the importance of core values and character development can significantly influence students' attitudes and behaviors. School principals can support teachers in this role by providing professional development focused on effective communication strategies and by fostering an open and supportive school culture. Accordingly, Sembiring and Pakpahan (2021) also emphasized the importance of engaging all learning stakeholders—encompassing curriculum, learning processes, relationships, and management—in the successful implementation of character education. This holistic approach ensures that every aspect of the school environment contributes to the development of students' character. School principals can lead this effort by integrating core values into the curriculum, promoting positive relationships among students and staff, and ensuring that school management practices align with the principles of character education.

Conducting Evaluation and Monitoring

The rapidly evolving educational landscape poses significant challenges for school principals, who must continually adjust their practices to meet dynamic societal needs. Integrating core values into the curriculum is essential for addressing these challenges, providing a framework for modifying learners'

social conduct and promoting their holistic development. Effective character education programs and the active engagement of teachers and principals are crucial for fostering an environment that supports students' growth and adaptation to changing societal demands.

This theme is supported by The Bush Institute and ETS (2019) citing that the challenge of swiftly evolving educational environments requires school principals to adjust practices accordingly. Through a proactive approach to integrating core values into the educational framework, school principals can ensure that students are equipped with the moral and ethical foundations necessary to navigate and thrive in a constantly changing world. School principals can lead this effort by staying informed about societal trends, implementing relevant educational practices, and promoting a culture of continuous improvement within their schools. In addition, Komariah et al. (2020) also stressed that teachers and school principals are central figures in the implementation of character education across various educational settings. Their active engagement is vital for the successful integration of core values into the school culture. School principals can enhance this engagement by fostering a collaborative environment where teachers feel supported and empowered to incorporate character education into their teaching practices.

Moreover, Rahmadi et al. (2020) also emphasized the burden on the school system to incorporate essential instructional principles that modify learners' social conduct. By embedding core values into the curriculum, schools can guide students toward positive social behaviors and attitudes. School principals can provide professional development for teachers on effective values-based instruction by creating policies that reinforce the importance of character education. Likewise, Millman (2019) also mentioned that values education programs as an effective approach to teaching fundamental principles. These programs offer a structured framework for integrating values into the curriculum, promoting students' understanding of the essence of humanity and their ability to assist themselves and others. School principals can facilitate the implementation of such programs by selecting evidence-based character education curricula and ensuring that teachers are trained to deliver these programs effectively.

Insights of School Principals in Integrating Core Values in the Curriculum

Relevant readings from various authors and researchers were gathered to support the various themes that emerged for this research question. Their insights include: (1) considering core values in identity formation, (2) reinforcing core values through collaboration, (3) ensuring proper core values integration in the curriculum (4) cultivating positive attitude.

Considering Core Values in Identity Formation

Core values play an essential role in shaping students' identities and preparing them to be responsible, ethical citizens. Educational leaders, especially school principals, are crucial in integrating these values into the curriculum and school culture, ensuring that students internalize and demonstrate these values in their daily lives. This process not only fosters desirable behaviors but also helps students develop a strong sense of identity grounded in ethical principles.

This theme is supported by the Bush Institute and ETS (2019) highlighting the critical role of core values in fostering desirable behaviors and qualities in citizens within a democratic society. School principals help in developing a community grounded in core values, therefore creating an environment where students practice and experience these values daily. This in turn prepares them to be responsible and ethical citizens. School principals can achieve this by promoting activities and policies that reflect these core values, ensuring that students see and experience their importance firsthand. Furthermore, Adler et al. (2019) also discussed how attitudes, influenced by personality traits, significantly impact behavior. By fostering positive attitudes through core values education, desirable behaviors can be developed. School

principals must, therefore, focus on creating curricula that promote positive attitudes towards learning, and ethical behavior. School principals help shape students' actions by ensuring that the values learned translate into real-world behaviors. This can be accomplished through engaging teaching methods, inclusive school policies, and programs that encourage positive interactions among students.

In addition, Sukirno et al. (2023) also described that the process of internalizing and demonstrating good values is crucial to the formation of students' personalities. School principals need to implement strategies that encourage students to absorb and exhibit these values, such as through role modeling, value-driven projects, and reflective practices. They should guide and help students internalize these qualities to make it integral to their identities. Practical implementations might include mentorship programs, community service projects, and classroom discussions that focus on real-life applications of core values. Moreover, Dewi and Nadlif (2021) also emphasized the importance of values in guiding students towards commendable behaviors aligned with school identity and traditions. School principals are tasked with balancing these values with social context to ensure that the values of education remain relevant and meaningful. This involves integrating culturally and socially significant practices into the curriculum, fostering a sense of identity and community among students while promoting universally accepted ethical standards.

Reinforcing Core Values through Collaboration

Reinforcing core values within educational institutions requires active collaboration between schools and stakeholders, particularly parents. Parents' involvement in the design and development of educational programs, as well as their attitudes towards values education, play a significant role in ensuring the successful implementation and reinforcement of these values. By fostering strong partnerships with parents, schools can create a supportive environment that promotes the holistic development of students and the integration of core values into their everyday lives.

This theme is supported by Hanssen and Erina (2021) which emphasized the importance of parents' views on inclusive education and their involvement in designing and developing inclusive educational programs. Parental engagement is crucial for the success of these initiatives, as it ensures that the programs are tailored to meet the diverse needs of all students. School principals can facilitate this by creating platforms for parents to share their perspectives and collaborate with educators in program development. This collaborative approach helps to ensure that the educational environment is inclusive and reflective of the community's values. Furthermore, Mumpuniarti et al. (2019) highlighted that parents can guide their children within the educational framework, particularly when they hold positive attitudes towards values of education and diversity. Likewise, parents who value and support diversity can influence their children's perspectives and behaviors, promoting an inclusive and respectful school culture Schools can encourage this by organizing workshops and seminars that educate parents about the importance of values education and how they can support it at home (Handayani et al., 2021).

Moreover, Ho et al. (2023) also underscored the importance of parental support in fostering students' autonomy and learning strategies. When parents are actively involved in their children's education, they can help students develop independent learning skills and effective strategies for academic success. This involvement is particularly crucial for reinforcing core values, as it helps students internalize these values through consistent practice both at school and at home. School principals can support this by providing resources and guidance to parents on how to nurture autonomy and values education. In addition, Mumpuniarti et al. (2019) also cited the role of family education in fostering independence and character development in students. The family environment is a primary context where children learn and practice

values, making parental involvement essential for character education. Schools can strengthen this by creating family-oriented programs that encourage parents to participate in values education activities with their children, reinforcing the lessons learned at school.

Ensuring Proper Core Values Integration in the Curriculum

Integrating core values into the school curriculum is fundamental to promoting a holistic educational environment that fosters students' moral and ethical development. This integration involves embedding values into various aspects of teaching and learning, ensuring that students develop a strong character and an understanding of democratic and multicultural principles. Effective integration requires collaboration among educators, thoughtful curriculum design, and a focus on fostering both individual and collective growth among students.

This theme is supported by Matewere et al. (2022), who share that collaboration in designing teaching and learning activities promotes learner-centered approaches. This approach empowers students by giving them control over their learning processes and fostering collaboration between learners and teachers. By incorporating core values into these activities, teachers can create a dynamic and interactive learning environment that encourages students to actively engage with and internalize these values. School principals and teachers can work together to develop curricula that prioritize student agency and promote collaborative learning, ensuring that values education is an integral part of the learning experience. Furthermore, Tuhuteru (2023) highlights the role of teachers in embedding democratic values in lesson plans. By integrating democratic values into everyday teaching, teachers can help students understand the importance of participation, critical thinking, and respect for diverse opinions. This process not only enhances students' academic learning but also prepares them to be active and responsible citizens. School principals can support this by providing professional development opportunities focused on democratic education and encouraging teachers to incorporate democratic principles into their classroom practices. Moreover, Sultan et al. (2020) highlight the importance of integrating multicultural values into textbooks to foster cross-cultural understanding, respect for diversity, and anti-conflict attitudes among students. Including diverse perspectives in educational materials helps students develop a broader worldview and appreciate different cultures, creating an environment where diversity is celebrated and respected. School principals should ensure that the curriculum includes inclusive content and that teachers are prepared for multicultural education. Similarly, Noviansyah and Kurniawan (2021) emphasize the role of character education in helping students develop habits aligned with the school's values. Consistently reinforcing these values helps students build a strong moral foundation and guides their actions. School principals and teachers can collaborate to create programs that focus on character development, offering students regular opportunities to practice these values. Astalini (2023) adds that values education aims to cultivate virtues such as love, respect, honesty, justice, and tolerance. By systematically integrating these virtues into the curriculum, school principals and teachers can help students develop a well-rounded character that supports personal growth and positive social interactions.

Cultivating Positive Attitude

Cultivating positive attitudes in students is essential for their intellectual, emotional, and social development. Values-based education plays a critical role in this process by fostering qualities such as compassion, moral bravery, and patience. These positive attitudes not only enhance students' learning achievements but also contribute to their overall well-being and ability to engage effectively in the classroom. The reciprocal relationship between teaching behavior and student affect emphasizes the importance of educators' role in shaping students' attitudes and emotional health.

This theme is supported by Govender et al. (2022) who highlights the significant impact of values-based education on students, noting its role in developing qualities such as compassion, flexibility, moral bravery, patience, and heightened tolerance. These attributes are highly valued by both schools and society, as they contribute to creating a supportive and empathetic community. School principals and educators can promote values-based education by integrating these principles into the curriculum and daily school activities, ensuring that students consistently practice and embody these positive attitudes. Furthermore, Poudel and Khadka (2022) emphasize the connection between positive behaviors in students, such as a willingness and ability to engage in the classroom, and their learning achievements. When students exhibit positive attitudes towards learning, they are more likely to participate actively and perform better academically. Teachers can foster such behaviors by creating an inclusive and encouraging classroom environment where students feel valued and motivated to engage. School principals can support this by providing professional development for teachers on strategies to promote positive student behaviors.

Moreover, Olifant et al. (2019) also asserted that fostering positive attitudes among students can lead to significant intellectual and academic progress. Positive attitudes enhance the capacity of students to learn, think critically, and solve problems, thereby improving their academic performance. Schools can cultivate these attitudes by recognizing and rewarding positive behaviors, implementing character education programs, and creating a school culture that values and promotes a positive mindset. Likewise, Pössel et al. (2023) also noted how the behaviors of teachers and school members can impact students' emotional well-being and engagement in the learning process. Positive teaching behaviors, such as showing empathy, providing support, and maintaining a positive classroom climate, can significantly enhance students' emotional health and willingness to participate in learning activities. School principals can encourage this by fostering a school environment where positive teacher-student interactions are prioritized and by providing teachers with the resources and training needed to support students' emotional well-being.

Implications for Administrative Practices

The outcomes of this investigation can serve as a framework for enhancing the integration of core values into the curriculum by school heads. The following implications arise from the study:

DepEd officials should develop and implement supportive policies for integrating core values into the curriculum, providing clear guidelines and resources to schools. In addition, offering professional development opportunities focused on effective strategies for core values integration is crucial. Engaging various stakeholders, including parents and community leaders, can enhance the relevance and impact of these values. Likewise, regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be established to assess schools' progress and share successful practices across the education system.

School principals should prioritize regular orientations and training sessions to ensure all staff members are well-informed about integrating core values. By fostering collaboration with teachers, parents, and the community, they can create a shared commitment to these values. School principals should also embody core values in their actions and establish open communication channels for feedback and engagement. Continuous evaluation and monitoring of the integration process are also crucial to making data-driven improvements and maintaining a strong, values-driven school culture.

Teachers should integrate core values seamlessly into their lesson plans and teaching methods, using activities and projects to highlight these values. By acting as role models and demonstrating core values in their interactions, teachers can reinforce these principles among students. Furthermore, collaborative teaching, sharing best practices with colleagues, and positive reinforcement of student behavior are

essential strategies. Patience and persistence in guiding students through the gradual process of internalizing core values will also help foster a consistent and supportive learning environment.

Students should actively participate in activities and discussions that promote core values, helping them understand and internalize these principles. Providing platforms for feedback and reflection, such as surveys and journals, allows students to share their experiences and insights. Recognizing and celebrating students who demonstrate core values reinforces the importance of these principles and motivates others to follow suit.

For future researchers, this study serves as a helpful resource for deciding on research focus areas. It can be a reference point for those exploring the experiences of school heads in integrating core values into the curriculum, allowing them to delve deeper into the key findings presented in this study.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study revolves around the experiences of school principals in integrating core values into the curriculum. The study was limited only to the experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of 7 school principals among private catholic schools under the Diocese of Tagum Educational System (DOTES) – Davao del Norte. Future researchers may conduct studies beyond greater scope from other districts or divisions to expound the findings of this study.

In this chapter, we presented and discussed key themes derived from the responses of the participants, drawing support from various concepts and ideas by different authors. We also explored implications for administrative practices and potential areas for future research. The study aimed to delve into the experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of school principals in integrating core values into the curriculum, conducting interviews with 7 school principals.

To enhance the integration of core values into the curriculum, further research should focus on conducting longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects on students' academic performance, behavior, and character development. These studies can track students over several years to determine the sustained impact of core values education, providing valuable insights into how these values influence students beyond their school years.

Additionally, comparative research across different schools and regions is essential to identify best practices and common challenges. This analysis can highlight effective strategies and contextual factors that contribute to the successful integration of core values, offering a roadmap for schools seeking to improve their approach. Further research should also explore the effectiveness of various teacher training programs dedicated to core values education, examining how different training methods impact teachers' ability to incorporate these values into their teaching practices.

Moreover, investigating stakeholder perspectives, including those of parents, community members, and policymakers, can provide a broader understanding of societal support and the perceived impact of core values education. Additionally, studying the role of technology, cultural, and socioeconomic factors in core values integration can help tailor strategies to diverse student populations, ensuring inclusivity and equity. Developing new evaluation and assessment methods to reliably measure the impact of core values on student behavior and learning outcomes is crucial for continuous improvement in this area.

Concluding Remarks

This study explores the challenges faced by private school principals on integrating core values into the curriculum, which also acknowledges their role as educational leaders and how they impact the process of educational growth and personal development of their learners through core values integration. The accomplishment of this research is attributed to rigorous investigation, extensive literature review, and

countless hours of diligent effort and commitment. As the primary researcher, the most important lesson I gained from this study is the recognition of the resilience and dedication of school principals that is essential to overcome the challenges inherent in educational reform. The aim of embedding core values despite obstacles is also very challenging as it highlights the critical role of leadership, collaboration, and innovation in achieving this goal.

Throughout this study, my appreciation has been for the efforts of private school principals, especially my research participants, who have shared valuable time, effort, and knowledge just to make this academic endeavor successful. I would also like to express my gratitude to the school heads of private schools who consistently strive to enhance their school community. Their unwavering support, dedication, and willingness to serve always result in a lasting commitment to creating a nurturing school environment.

The results of this study aim to contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge in educational management and curriculum development. By highlighting the specific challenges and successful strategies employed by private school principals, this research provides a practical framework that can be utilized by other educational institutions facing similar issues. It underscores the importance of embedding core values within the curriculum, not just as an educational goal but as a fundamental aspect of holistic student development. This study's findings can inspire educational policymakers and administrators to adopt more effective approaches in value-based education, ultimately leading to a more ethically grounded and well-rounded student population.

Furthermore, this study has been a challenging endeavor. The time spent gathering data from participants, thoroughly examining collected data, and analyzing it was very demanding. However, this process helped me develop my communication skills, critical thinking, and ability to interpret information accurately. Conducting a study can be demanding and intricate, but it opens the door to opportunities for learning, exploration, and the discovery of my capabilities in research. Though I am not yet in the field of educational leadership, this educational journey opened my interest to inquire more about what relevant programs or activities I can facilitate to address immediate behavioral issues and also instill long-term values in students. Moreover, I regard this study as a significant milestone in my personal and professional development which motivates me to advance towards the next phase in my pursuit of another notable achievement.

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