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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Values-Based Leadership (VBL): Evidences from Selected School Leaders of Samar, Philippines

Rosybelle T. Sablad
Assistant Professor II, College of Education, Samar State University, Catbalogan City, Philippines
Corresponding Author: Rosybelle T. Sablad, **E-mail**: rosybelle.sablad@ssu.edu.ph

| ABSTRACT

In the formidable tasks of school leaders during these years, their challenges encountered in managing schools, teachers, and students, and the dire need to successfully implement quality education underscored the application of values as they lead their respective schools towards the attainment of the national educational goal. Values-based leadership (VBL) generally guides them to overcome daily school operations. Hence, this study was conducted to explore the views and perceptions of school leaders of Samar on values-based leadership (VBL), to examine their experiences as they apply VBL, and to probe their coping mechanisms in difficulties encountered. With phenomenology as the main method of inquiry, all participants ascertained positive views of VBL as it influences and motivates teachers and other school stakeholders. VBL gives assurance to help teachers grow as it is achieved during a heart to heart talk with the concerned teachers. However, conflicting values of teachers and being misunderstood were disclosed as the difficulties they experienced while using VBL. Nonetheless, they manage to surpass challenges by treating everyone with impartiality and by being consistent in the decision-making. This research concludes that the personal values of selected school leaders in Samar have a greater influence on their daily journey as they lead their teachers, students, and other stakeholders. All participants' narratives would certainly impart potential enlightenment among school leaders from various schools experiencing similar instances.

1. Introduction

School leaders are reckoned to be the stewards of the schools. They judiciously oversee all school activities vis-à-vis their duties and responsibilities, which are well stipulated in the national mandate through the national educational policies. In the Philippines, the school leader's authority, accountability, and responsibility are properly spelled out in Republic Act No. 9155, otherwise known as "An Act Instituting a Framework of Governance for Basic Education, Establishing Authority and Accountability, Renaming the Department of Education, Culture and Sports as the Department of Education, and for Other Purposes". It clearly provides twelve (12) feasible mandates which can be summarized and attributed to the school, teaching and learning, learners, teachers, and other personnel (Governance of Basic Education Act, 2001). Hence, the encompassing requirement for the successful implementation of a school's plans and programs is to have an effective and efficient educational leader who possesses the ability to actualize the mandates in order to successfully achieve educational goals despite several challenges.

However, successes and failures in the implementation cannot be associated solely with the obedience and disobedience of the mandates. It can also be linked to the values and ethics of an educational leader. Bush and Glover (2003), as cited by Bush, Bell, and Middlewood, 2019), hold the position that "successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and

professional values" (p.10). In the Philippines, the school leader's vision must be anchored from the national plans and programs which are laid down by the Department of Education (DepEd). Their vision has to be cascaded to their school teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders in the community. In return, the stakeholders' awareness and willingness to share views about the vision for the general welfare would lead to a more concrete and feasible quality educational outcome. Additionally, Kubaev (2020) explains that school leaders have to take "into account the views and opinions of the teaching staff in addressing issues related to the activities of the educational institution". (p. 96) Contrariwise, the views and opinions of the teaching staff and the successful implementation of the school's plans and programs based on the school leader's vision are greatly influenced by the latter's internal values.

Despite the various studies about leadership (Banks, Gooty, Ross, Williams, & Harrington, 2018) in which, there are studies revealing the ways that school leaders adhere to values-based leadership, no study has been conducted to explore the same among school leaders in the Province of Samar. It is so timely to discover how Samar's selected school leaders view and practice values-based leadership specifically that they have been empowered to manage the school and to "create a culture focused on student and teacher success". (Bryan-Chambers & Fisher, 2017, p. 1) Thus, this study aimed to explore values-based leadership among selected school leaders in the Second District of Samar Province.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do school heads/principals perceive values-based leadership (VBL)?
2. What are the experiences of school heads/principals in managing their school personnel vis-à-vis values-based leadership (VBL)?
3. How do school heads/principals cope with the difficulties they encounter vis-à-vis values-based leadership (VBL)?

2. Research Overview

This study is gleaned primarily from values-based leadership (VBL) theory which could enlighten school leaders who unfortunately suffer adversities managing a school. It must be understood that it is not easy to involve oneself in a group of licensed professional teachers who have been together for years and have been accustomed to undertaking activities that establish their routines and comfort zones inside the school premises. Hence, a new entrant school leader who wishes to inflict change for a more laudable accomplishment of the school and for the quality delivery of education to students would figure out the misery that awaits by doing such. However, the school leader has to clearly express and deliver pure intentions that radiate personal values to teachers and learners to avoid confusion and misconception, thereby understanding and accepting the need to change for the successful operation of the school. Values need to be correctly defined and properly disseminated (Niekerk & Botha, 2017) through conferences of teachers, students, and even parents to build up a complete appreciation of the newly introduced change in school directives. School leaders have to do this initiative because, by the nature of their roles, they can directly impact teachers, students, parents, and stakeholders in the community, that "they are in ideal positions to provide support, pressure, and leadership for school improvement efforts" (Dolph, 2017, p.372). By this intelligent action, it is explicitly acknowledged that the values of the school leader enable all personalities in the school to anchor their performances and accomplishments in coherence with the goals and values (Durante, 2017). Kraemer (2011) pointed out that "without values, an organization lacks cohesion and purpose" (p.81). Values-based leadership, as asserted by Morgan and Manganaro (2016), is the best strategy to utilize in leading an organization for the purpose of comprehending the results of this study; this can best work in managing schools to attain holistic learning.

It must be noted that values precede actions which becomes the fundamental consideration in leading an organization due to the fact that "values are important to understanding leadership because they explain the focus and direction of people's actions" (Fernandez & Hogan, 2002, p. 1). Values-based leadership theory is This overarching theory would guide school leaders to successfully carry out their varied roles, resulting in attaining 21st-century skills among learners. Copeland (2014) conveys that "a plethora of VBL constructs emerged or resurfaced in response to the tumultuous leadership failures at the onset of the 21st century" (p. 106), and school principals from Samar did not even escape from the inevitable leadership failures. The apparent evidence of this could be traced from the long been problem: a huge number of students per class (40-50 class size), insufficient teachers' salary and benefits, work overload experienced by teachers, scarcity of learning materials or books (4: 1), and the undeniable old-aged classrooms.

With the idea of values-based leadership among school leaders, there is a guarantee for a resolution to their pressing educational problems. School principals would be strong enough to bring improvement to their jurisdiction since they could courageously draw upon their own values and ethical behavior for the school's direction and for the teachers' and learners' motivation. At its core, values-based leadership theory asserts that people are mostly motivated by values and live according to these beliefs. Copeland (2014) describes VBL behaviors that are "rooted in ethical and moral foundations" (p. 106) which guides the school leader

to run the school and eventually desires that the same shall be adopted by subordinates and other stakeholders to stimulate the potential of the teachers and to meet the necessary educational target or goal.

Essentially, selected school leaders in Samar are unaware that they are practicing the VBL taxonomy by Norwich, which was presented in the research content. This taxonomy provides them with a general assessment of dealing with their subordinates.

Norwich Guiding Values

Figure 1. Values-Based Leadership Taxonomy
(NORWICH, 2015b as cited by Morgan & Manganaro, 2016)
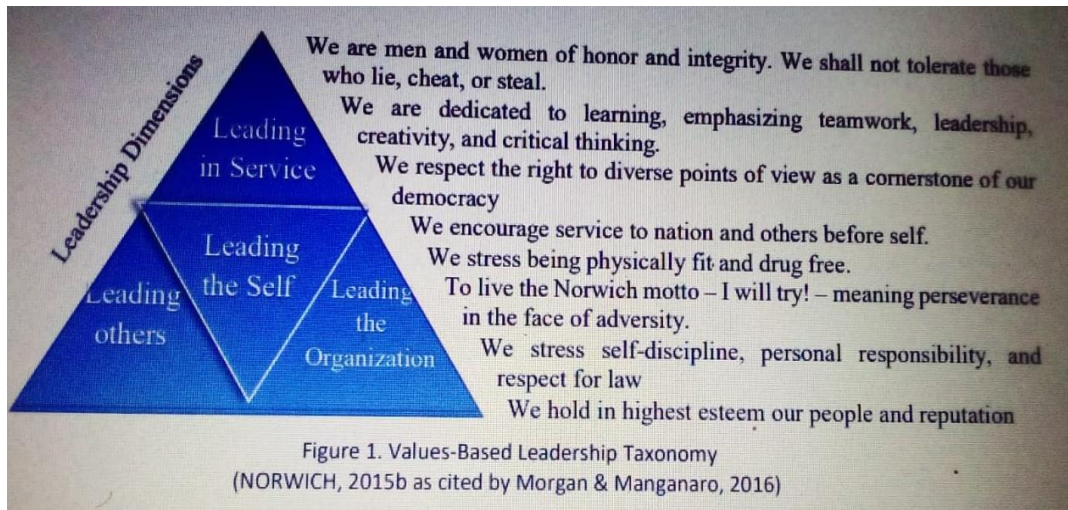
3. Research Content
3.1 Participants:
Selected school principals, teachers-in-charge, and department heads from Samar Division were requested to be interviewed. Only eighteen (18) of them acknowledged and successfully granted the in-person interview. There were four (4) Department Heads coming from Calbiga National High School; one (1) Head Teacher 1 from Tulay Elementary School; two (2) Head Teachers III from Calapi National High School and Casandig National High School respectively; nine (9) Teachers-in-Charge from San Jose de Buan National High School, Quintin Quijano Sr. Agricultural School, Hinabangan Central Elementary School, Bangon Elementary School, Lale Elementary School, Laygayon Elementary School, Malonoy Elementary School, Lamingaw Elementary School, and Talalora National High School; one (1) Elementary School Principal IV; and one (1) Secondary School Principal.

These data reveal that most school leaders are teachers-in-charge, not yet official or registered school principals. They were designated by the Division Superintendent in schools without principals provided that they have three (3) years of teaching experience and have undergone a screening conducted by the division office (DepEd Order No.42, s. 2007).

On the other hand, only two (2) qualified school principals manifested a willingness to undergo the interview process, one (1) Secondary School Principal I and one (1) Elementary School Principal IV. The former comes from San Sebastian National High School, handling thirty-two (32) teachers with twelve (12) years of experience as school head, while the latter leads Gandara Elementary School with twenty-six (26) teachers with three (3) years of experience.

There was a total of twelve (12) female and six (6) male school heads from among the eighteen (18) key informants. Accordingly, out of the eighteen (18) key informants, one (1) school head at the elementary level has the highest number of leadership tasks of fifteen (15) years, while two (2) years is the least number of leadership experience who comes from the secondary level. Further, a school head from Quintin Quijano National High School manages the highest number of sixty-four (64) secondary school teachers, while an elementary head teacher in Tulay Elementary School manages seven (7) elementary school teachers, the lowest number among the key informants. Though there are two (2) Department Heads who are managing seven (7) secondary school teachers, it is still incomparable with the teacher-in-charge of seven (7) in a school since the Department Heads still have school principals or school head who manages the entire operation of the school.

This implies that most school leaders in Samar Division are managing schools on the basis of their appointment as leaders of their fellow teachers, not exactly as qualified higher in position or passer of the National Qualifying Examination for School Heads

(NQESH) or the Principal's Test. This would also convey the impression that out of eighteen (18) school heads; there are two (2) qualified school leaders to manage the schools.

From among the participants, the least number of teachers being managed is seven (7), while forty-two (42) is the greatest number of teachers managed. This indicates that the smaller the population of students and the smaller the school is, the number of teachers are affected. While elementary schools, which are located in barangays, do have a considerably smaller number of teachers, and mostly, Teachers in Charge or School Heads.

Apparently, the male school leaders are outnumbered by female ones, with a ratio of 6:12. This data reveals that most school leaders are female, which would only explain why more female educators would want to become school leaders than male educators.

3.2 Data Gathering Method:
Prior to the data gathering, the author hired an enumerator who would help her interview some of the school heads. The author oriented, trained, and prepared the enumerator for the efficiency of the research (Oxfam Research Guidelines, n.d.).

Strictly following health protocols because of the pressing situation of Covid-19 transmission, the author and enumerator personally interviewed the eighteen (18) key informants. Consent letters were handed to the target KIs for their approval. Out of the thirty (30) school heads who were purposively selected, only eighteen (18) of them responded to an in-person interview. This number of KIs was deemed sufficient since they provided acceptable and reasonable more than enough data that drove into saturation. Moreover, the author contacted them for their available day and time of interview that would reconcile with the former's available travel (since not all weekdays in the university where the author is connected are allowed for research and data gathering schedules). All KIs were visited at their respective schools where the interview transpired. They were informed prior to the interview that the data gathered would never jeopardize their profession nor would take them into a disadvantageous position and that the result of the study would not disclose the identity of the interviewees. It was made clear by the author that no monetary nor any other means of privileges shall be provided to the KIs. The interview occurred during the KIs' vacant day and time, where a smooth flow of exchange of information deepened despite the unstructured interview protocol. The author and KIs agreed to the use of audio recordings during the duration of the interview to easily secure the information. They were informed that their recorded answers would be disposed of properly after the thematic analysis was done. Eventually, they were given 15 to 20 minutes for their responses to each question. The author would sometimes interpolate to lead the interview process in place. The interview ended with words and tokens of gratitude from the author.

This study employed a qualitative research method utilizing a phenomenology research design. The participants' lived experiences on the manner of their implementation of educational plans and programs based on the national educational goals of the Philippines. Their amazing experiences in managing various components of the school, from the students, teachers, parents, community people, community leaders, government agencies, and higher in rank educational leaders such as District Supervisors, Division Supervisors, Education Program Specialists (EPS), School Governance and Operations Division (SGOD), Assistant Superintendent and Schools Division Superintendent. On top of that, school leaders have to take countless processes everyday "like a broad umbrella encompassing a number of processes such as: planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, controlling and evaluating the performance".(Kashyap, n.d., p.1)

3.3 Instrumentation:
Researchers had to utilize interview protocol to gather significant data that would reveal the key informants' experiences. There were three (3) parts that composed the protocol. Part I is the Demographic Profile which allows the KIs to disclose bits of their personal data such as age, address, school handled, school's address, number of years being the school or department leader, and number of teachers being managed. However, they were not compelled to share their age and name if they did not feel like sharing. This is to protect the identity of the school head as part of the study. Further, Part II is composed of questions that seek the perception of the key informants about values-based leadership (VBL) vis-à-vis their experiences as school leaders. A few probing questions were added to deeply explore the school leaders' views on VBL. On the other hand, Part III of the protocol comprised questions that would enable the school leaders to share their own experiences in managing schools in relation to VBL. Just as importantly, Part IV sought to grasp the mechanisms that school leaders employ or practice in order to cope with challenges faced in the application of VBL in the discharge of their duty. It was in this part of the protocol when KIs had to divulge the secret ingredients they personally formulate to balance their values and their role as school leaders to that of the teachers' and learners' values and obligations in the school. The success of the school's operation depends on the responses of the school leader in the fourth part.

3.4 Data Analysis: This study utilized a descriptive phenomenological method by Collaizzi as adapted by Shosha. The data analysis trailed the seven (7) steps as follows:

Figure 2. The seven stages in thematic analysis by Colaizzi's approach adapted by Shosha

Step 1. The author hired an enumerator to help her transcribe the responses of the key informants. This made the analysis of the data easier. After the transcription of participants' responses, the author, with the help of the enumerator, had to read a number of times each verbatim transcript to "gain a sense of the whole content" (Shosha, 2012). This helped to discover the phenomenon as experienced by the key informants themselves. This enabled the author to understand the KIs' leadership using their own values and the values of their teachers and learners, which were derived from the statements and testimonies of KIs themselves, who have first-hand experience of the effects.

Step 2. Significant responses or statements relative to VBL's practice were listed on a separate sheet of paper. They were coded based on their transcripts. Meanings were formulated according to the agreement of the researchers as to the significant facts of the data provided by the participants.

Step 3. In this stage, the author had to formulate meanings based on the significant statements. "Each essential meaning was coded in one category as they reflect an exhaustive description" (Shosha, 2012).

Step 4. The author grouped the formulated meanings in order to obtain the clusters of themes. "Each cluster of the theme was coded to include all formulated meanings related to that group of meanings" (Shosha, 2012). This was done in coordination with the hired enumerator, who was part of the data gathering procedure. Once an agreement on a certain category was finalized, a unique cluster of themes was deliberated to be considered. The process had to be applied to the entire transcripts of the KIs' responses until all research questions were themed. As soon as the themes emerged, the author had to consult the qualitative experts in the Research and Innovation Center (RIC) of Samar State University for the correctness of the themes.

Step 5. To complete this stage, the author "defined all emergent themes into an exhaustive description" (Shosha, 2012). With the aid of the research experts, the VBL phenomenon had to be described as a strong basis for effective and efficient school leadership.

Step 6. This stage had to reduce the themes that are "redundant, misused or overestimated descriptions" " (Shosha, 2012). The purpose of this stage is to polish the emergent themes in order to generate clearer findings for the study.

Step 7. Here, the author and enumerator had to present to the KIs the result of the analysis, with the analyzed themes from their responses. This was done in order to validate the study findings. The extracted themes were presented to them and asked for their confirmation if what they meant was correct upon the analysis of the researchers. Fortunately, most of the KIs consulted as to the correctness of the concept approved the findings.

4. Results and Discussion
4.1 School Leaders' Views on VBL
It is imperative to know the perceptions of school leaders' key informants on values-based leadership vis-à-vis their roles and responsibilities as they implement their school's plans and programs. With the utilization of the unstructured interview guide, the KIs perceptions about VBL were made possible. Though it was not exactly what the KIs understood about VBL since some of them did not comprehend at first about VBL, it made them realize that values-based leadership is the actual application they are practicing in managing their respective schools.

Upon treatment of the data, ***positive views*** surfaced as the major theme of their views on VBL as they discharge their duties. Under the emergent theme were *inspires, influences, guides, motivates, leads, improves, and helps others*. They perceived VBL as something that *inspires* and *influences* teachers, which could be emulated as they undertake their classes and implement curricular programs. Just as one (1) participant shared that values-based leadership (VBL) is the:

> ...*values practiced by the leader himself/herself that, in return, constructively*

> *and positively influence the members of the   group or organization.*-KI 10

Moreover, VBL is perceived positively as it guides school leaders in decision-making. It serves as their motivation in coming up with a relevant solution to the difficult situations that were successfully resolved. It is their personal values that enable them to sustain their tasks and responsibly carry-out school matters even in the midst of trying times. Values lead them to the fruition of their vision for their teachers and students. Likewise, their values tend to improve teachers' performance in school. School Principal IV would proudly say that values-based leadership:

> ...*instills a common set of values in all "employees, improving their cohesiveness and willingness to work*.-KI 9

The way the school leaders perceived VBL ascertains their positive grasp about the leadership style as they apply it in leading their school and eventually being successful, surpassing each day. It is believed, and this study confirmed, that values-based school leaders inspire and motivate teachers, using their influence to pursue the common goal.

4.2 Application of VBL in Various Circumstances
The themes that emerged in the application of VBL among the KIs are **circumstances** and the **application of values-based leadership (VBL).** Under the **circumstances**, sub-themes such as *teachers feeling favoritism, reporting to school, teachers' (late) submission of reports, everyday dealing with teachers, and defective, malfunctioning, and broken school properties*. For the theme **application of values-based leadership (VBL),** a corresponding application of the aforementioned circumstance emerged, such as: *heart to heart talk with teachers and giving assurance to help teachers grow; respect everyone's beliefs, traditions, and gender preferences; weigh things out, consider the situation of teachers and a constant reminder before the deadline; practicing and "walking the talk"; and, show patriotism through caring and repairing of school properties and beautifying the school environment.*

School leaders would start their day managing schools even before they entered the school premises. School plans, and programs are being conceptualized at home in preparation for the meeting with designated teaching personnel. School leaders have to be in school at an early hour of the day to serve as role models among teachers and students. This was stressed out by the teacher-in-charge:

> *Practice and "walking the talk" in our daily experiences with the school personnel*
> *, such as coming to school early/on time and extending beyond the service hours as*
> *call of the time requires it; best examples of management that require the highest*
> *standards of ethics and values.* -KI 7

Moreover, circumstances and application of VBL were the themes that surfaced during the analysis of the responses. The following circumstances were identified: teachers feeling favoritism, reporting to school, and teachers' (late) submission of reports, everyday dealing with teachers, and defective, malfunctioning, and broken school properties. For each situation, there is a corresponding VBL approach that school leaders freely disclose. Amongst are heart-to-heart talks with teachers and giving assurance to help teachers grow for those teachers who feel that school leaders favor somebody in the school; respect everyone's beliefs, traditions, and gender preference when reporting to school; weigh things out, consider the situation of teachers, and a constant reminder before the deadline during the times when teachers tend to submit reports later than the deadline set; practicing and "walking the talk" for every day that they deal with teachers; and, show patriotism through caring and repairing of school properties and beautifying school environment for defective, malfunctioning and broken school properties.

When teachers tend to be late in going to school, the school head tries to respect the teacher's situation if the occurrence is not habitual. This is to show that teachers matter in the school and that their presence is still needed for the completion of the teaching-learning process. As one school principal uttered:

> *I have to ask the reason for coming to school beyond the time, but sometimes, it would*
> *even reach half day; they're not considered late or absent since I understand them,*
> *they have emergencies to attend to. Wag lang na aabuso sila, ibang kuwento na 'yun.*
> *(They should not abuse me, it's a different story to tell.)*-KI 11

Respect is one of the identified values in the 3Rs (*respect, responsiveness, and result*) model of values-based leadership of Kraemer (2011) that conveys genuine humility as the basis of forgiving undesirable activities, letting the subordinates understand that their school head is one in it. It is through the application of humility over some unexpected circumstances that the school head and teachers would be able to go beyond what is expected of them as administrators and implementers of quality education.
Similarly, when teachers feel favoritism, which is one of the circumstances that surfaced during the interview, KIs shared that they resort to *heart to heart talk with teachers,* and they *give assurance to help those teachers grow.* As one KI mentioned:

> *I have a teacher who's close to me. Once I heard from her that may nakakaramdam*
> *ng hindi binibigyan ng (feels not being given) task; I would call the attention of the*
> *teacher and have a close door conversation that concerns him/her feelings.*-KI 3

The feeling of favoritism disheartens teachers as they discharge their duties at school, particularly during important school activities. Teachers resent being productive, and they become more ineffective in the delivery of their lessons and even become detached from some of the group of teachers. This feeling of exhaustion makes them worthless (Alic, 1996, as cited by Boru, 2018). Nevertheless, KIs tend to be more open-minded in dealing with these feelings. They see it as a natural phenomenon that occurs within and among a bigger group since not everyone is given attention all at the same time. Some of the KIs would design the title of the work order so that everyone would be a coordinator in the school; Such that all courses would have coordinators like Mathematics Coordinator, English Coordinator, Technology and Livelihood (TLE) Coordinator, etc. Others would become Heads of each level, such as Science Head, Araling Panlipunan Head, MAPEH Head, etc. For some, they would be assigned to be Gulayan sa Paaralan Coordinator, Feeding Program Coordinator, School Disaster Risk and Reduction Management Coordinator, etc. In these ways, everyone would be able to take part and be part of the school's vision.

The results of the application of VBL in the school could legitimize the claim of Phil and Phil (2014) that people can be depicted as leaders on the assumption that they are able to "mobilize people and guide them towards collective achievements" (p.9). School leaders become more effective if they are able to retain performing teachers (Betteille et al., 2016), and, based on the interviews with the KIs, they feel they are effective if they are able to encourage teachers to work for the achievement of their students.

A separate circumstance that KIs encounter at school where they are unaware that they are applying VBL is when they are confronted with *defective, malfunctioning, and broken school properties*. The sub-theme for the application of this circumstance involved that they would *show patriotism through caring and repairing school properties and beautifying the school environment.* One KI even pointed out the current defective sound system which they use during flag ceremonies by saying:

> *I hired a technician from my previous school whom I know could fix that sound*
> *system. Students would be more energetic during exercises if they had a very good*
> *sound system.* KI 8

4.3 Difficulties vis-à-vis Values-based Leadership
Considering VBL in managing a school, it is undoubtedly true that school leaders do face several difficulties among the direct receiver of their commands-the teachers. This was construed by Jackall (1988, as cited in Alvesson & Einola, 2019) that leadership is like diving into the social norms and being able to compromise instances that yearn for appropriate discernment based on the existing and practical solution, not only being able to convey the leader's disposition or values. Thus, it is not enough that school leaders should possess a good-natured ability to run a school since a group of teachers and students are a mixture of individuals coming from different communities with differing views and attitudes. The challenge in school is the possibilities for participation and collaboration across all personalities comprising the teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders in the community (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011). This has become more challenging because of the inadequacy of competent teachers and appropriate curriculum for the students (Aydin, 2017).

Some identified difficulties that school leaders encounter that surface from the transcripts of interviews are: ***conflicting values of teachers, adjustment with individual beliefs, that of the teachers and learners, misunderstood by teachers, encouragement dilemma, and reconciling disputes among teachers***.

It troubles the school leaders to encourage teachers who have differing beliefs and values, particularly if those beliefs and values contradict the former's unveiled values. They have difficulty on how to implement plans and programs based on VBL due to the fact that they cannot compel teachers and learners to consistently follow something beyond their beliefs.

One of the evidence of the dilemma experienced by school leaders is shared by one KI, to wit:

> *When the values and ethics I practice or uphold are different from my teachers'*
> *perception of their values and ethics. I am sometimes misunderstood.*-KI 17

Equally unsurprising are the statements of the KIs about their recurring adjustment as a genuine challenge for most of the KIs since each day has a matchless incident in their schools. Yet, KIs have to be fearless in attending to each complaint. This was attested by one KI:

> *What's important, you don't give up. You are ready to face each one who comes*

> *to your office and be more willing to adjust, go down to their level, and practice empathy*
> *so you would understand them.* -KI 1

On the other hand, opposing moral beliefs or principles among teachers may cause disagreements and disputes, which affect the harmonious relationship at school. Teachers become support one another in the group so that they become empowered (Zastrow et al., 2019, p. 16). Hence, it definitely becomes a problem among school leaders to weigh the possible resolution to the occurrence since there are two parties involved. If, in any case, they would decide favorably on the other party, there might be a notion that favoritism occurs. A secondary school head shared that:

> *My day is ruined when two factions of teachers would complain. They're not helping*
> *me, I cannot, and I don't want them to feel that I have favorites. I am trying to resolve*
> *each other's issues.* -KI 12

4.4 Ways of Combatting Difficulties
There are several means that school leaders KIs shared relative to their experienced difficulties. The data revealed two major themed mechanisms which KIs pronounced during the data gathering, such as **impartial treatment and consistency**. They do not suggest that these themes entirely pertain to the precise application of solutions that correspond to the mentioned and themed difficulties that they presented, but these are the mechanisms they personally employ when confronted with challenges.

Remaining to be steadfast and coming up with the unified ideas to resolve inevitable occurrences in the school belong to **impartial treatment**. These are the mechanisms that were mentioned which remain to resolve issues among teachers. Secondary and elementary school principals uttered that:

> *I remain steadfast in my decisions, especially when I know that they will be beneficial*
> *to everyone. If there are instances that there are clashing viewpoints, after hearing*
> *everyone's stand, I will decide not favoring anyone.* -KI 11

> *The school's rules are rules. The Division Office's mandate has to be followed. When*
> *the division says to attend a certain training, then the mentioned names in the Division*
> *Order should attend. Since the budget for School Maintenance and other Operating*
> *Expenses (MOOE) has not yet arrived; no matter what, ako an magasto gud (I will spend).*
> *Waray lugar it mga reklamador kon para hit ikauupay para ha ira profession. (No place for*
> *those who keep on complaining if it's for the improvement of their profession.* -KI 9

On the other hand, *explaining the pros and cons to teachers, adhering to what is RIGHT and implementing the RIGHT one, and exhibiting logical decisions* are considered to bear the theme of **consistency**.

School leader KIs would want to emphasize that they need to weigh the pros and cons before they decide and announce their final decision to teachers in order to make sure that the outcome of their decision should benefit everyone in the school. Department heads shared:

> *Having a sound mind, weighing the pros and cons of each decision to make, and*
> *arriving at a decision beneficial to the majority, not compromising the norms and*
> *standards of the society.* -KI 5

> *I try to explain the pros and cons if my teacher does not want to write lesson plans.*
> *I opened up about the positive and negative implication kon waray lesson plan. Makuri man*
> *mag impose ka nga deri mo ipapakita ha ira kon ano it negative ngan positive (It's*
> *difficult to impose that I didn't show the negative and positive effects.) I asked*
> *them which would they prefer, writing lesson plans or not?* -KI 2

In weighing the pros and cons and in presenting them to the concerned teachers or students, the school leader is building trust among the teachers and students (not only to the concerned individuals). They would eventually realize that the school head does not favor anyone but tries only to resolve the problem with the help of the concerned persons as well. By doing so, it could be fathomed that everyone may develop mutual confidence (Lawson et al., 2017) because the decision was based not on the person (complaining or being complained) but based on the logical sense of the issue.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper builds the existing evidence of values-based leadership (VBL) amongst selected school leaders in the Province of Samar. The positive perceptions of school leaders on VBL enabled them to manage their schools effectively without complaints from the district and division supervisors and superintendents. Their experiences with the VBL application empower them as they continue to pursue the implementation and accomplishment of every mandate from the Department of Education through the Division of Samar. School leaders KIs were able to surpass difficulties and challenges as they undertook various activities and issues in their respective schools. VBL concretizes each mechanism to combat certain difficulty that arises.

This study is entirely an indication that school leaders' personal values have a greater influence on their daily journey as leaders in their field. The fact that they are handling a number of teachers, learners, and other stakeholders, their roles require them to be active advocates and implementers of VBL. They are the epitome of public servants in the field of education, unconsciously applying the four (4) principles of VBL taxonomy, leading in service as what is ought by them, leading the self (as the center) of their service to be able to lead others and the entire organization.

Hence, it is recommended that Values-Based Leadership shall be applied consistently and be part of the school leaders' system in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities in order to attain a harmonious relationship with the teachers and successfully attain quality education for all learners. Likewise, it is deemed that the data presented in this paper would help the education supervisors to plan intervention programs and develop policies that would highlight VBL as the core framework in addressing issues in school and in promoting educational goals for better and quality education. This study would also provide background information in hiring and screening applicants for school heads; the screening committee would apply background checks as to the values and activities of the school head applicant to determine the kind of values the latter has. A certain guideline considering the values and activities must be created by the division office to support their decision of a qualified school head. Thus, prior to the entrance of the school heads into the actual school management, they should be aware that values have a greater contribution to their appointment as the school leader. As such, with the deeper orientation and practical application of the four (4) principles of the Values-Based Leadership taxonomy of Norwich, success in leading a school would no longer be a hindrance.

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