

# From Leading to Teaching: A Narratology on the Experiences of Public Elementary School Heads Returning to Being Classroom Teachers

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## Abstract

This study aimed to understand and describe the experiences of public elementary school heads who returned to being classroom teachers of the Division of Davao del Norte particularly in their pedagogy. This study is qualitative-narratological in nature. There were five (5) public elementary school heads who participated in the in-depth interviews. They were selected using purposive sampling method. This study was limited to cover only the responses of five (5) public elementary school heads. The results revealed that the return of the participants was either voluntary or involuntary. Upon their return to classrooms, they had difficulties in the following: disciplining the students in this generation; using of gadgets and technology in teaching; adjusting with the colleagues; adjusting with the work; and coping with today's teaching strategies. With regards to their learning, the participants revealed that being a school head was more stressful than being a classroom teacher. They advised other teachers that in pursuing in the administration level, they must have the enough preparation and strong will so that they would not experience returning in the classroom. The results are believed to be significant to teachers and Department of Education for policy making and provision of trainings and seminars on pedagogy to those school heads who returned in classroom teaching.

Keywords: experiences, public elementary school heads, return to being classroom teachers, narratology, Davao del Norte Division, Phillipines

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## INTRODUCTION

School heads are the managers and observers of the teachers. They are expected to train and supervise the latter to be effective facilitators of learning in the class. In most cases, before these leaders have become school heads, they were usually trained as teachers first. This has been the typical ladder of promotion in an education system, but there are circumstances that what happens is the other way around. For some unique reasons, there had been education leaders who went back to teaching and chose to practice their teaching methods, and interact to learners to provide them quality education.

A former principal who went back to teaching in Yogyakarta City, Indonesia said that the most challenging part in returning to classroom teaching was to motivate students in participating in the activities during class sessions that resulted to a low grade in their assessment. It was a bit struggle for him since he was practicing being a facilitator and manager of learning inside the classroom (Yulia, 2013). Additionally, in Singapore a returned classroom teacher shared also about teaching students in a monolingual classroom. She said that the struggles in communicating with the students and catching their attention were a big burden, and it caused failures to students to learn and improve their academics. Individual differences and peer pressures added to the adjustments, making some classroom interaction feel awkward or forced (Mohan, 2019). Furthermore, in Malaysia, the transition from leader to teacher was a reality shock for a returned classroom teacher in which the knowledge and theories of being a former school head was hardly applied when returning. The former leader was surprised and experienced difficulty about handling the behavior of students (Senom, et al., 2013).

In a report in DepEd Negros Oriental Division, Philippines, it was revealed that most of the school heads who returned to teaching in their division experienced the difficulty of integrating ICT in the lesson to a large class size. They had struggles to catch the attention of the students and update themselves on the trends of teaching students in this generation. Due to their age and years of being school heads for a long time, having ICT as part of teaching instruction gave them hard time upon coming back in the teaching field (Nemenzo, 2018).

In Kapalong, Davao del Norte, a school head mentioned that school heads who returned to being classroom teachers had a hard time in terms of their teaching, because they were adjusting on the transition from school heads to classroom teachers. Some of them had the difficulties in applying their techniques during their classes and managing the students' behaviors because they were stricter in handling them.

Many studies focused only on the transition of classroom teachers to school leaders. They had often looked on the positions, and skills of classroom teachers to be school leaders, but there have been few studies which focused on the teaching strategies of school heads who returned in classroom setting especially utilizing the narrative research approach. With this, I prompted to conduct this study. Furthermore, the findings of this study may give help to other teachers, administrators, and DepEd officials regarding the lived experiences, challenges, and insights of former school heads who returned to classroom teaching.

Therefore, this study was conducted in order to address the concerns and issues of the participants and to come-up with useful recommendations that could be helpful to them. Also, it was done to address immediately the needs of the students inside the classroom. This could be a guide to those former school heads in their transition to being teacher. This study may help them to relearn their pedagogy that could greatly affect their success as classroom teachers again.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this narrative study was to understand and describe the experiences of public elementary school heads who returned to being classroom teachers.

At this stage of research, the experiences of public elementary school heads returning to being classroom teachers were generally defined as the accounts in teaching and adjustment in strategies that they used in teaching again students inside the classroom. This study also discovered the varied coping mechanisms and learning they have actualized in order to sustain their enthusiasm in the field.

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1. Describe your experience from being a school head returning as a classroom teacher?
2. What are the lessons have you learned in your experiences from being a school head returning as classroom teacher?

### Theoretical Lens

This study was seen through Biddle and Thomas' (1995) Role theory, which emphasized how the social environment shapes the procedure of creation. In this theory, the position is defined as any set of behaviors that have a socially agreed purpose and an accepted code of norms. The hypothesis is when people assume new positions; they adjust their action to fulfil these standards of roles. Obviously, whether these behavioural shifts are positive or negative depend on the role that they play.

The role theory supported this research wherein the behavior and approach of the school head who returned as a classroom teacher would be changed to conform to the expectations of the role being the facilitator of learning inside the classroom. This stresses that school heads should consider many things to adapt the behavior, approaches, and teaching styles of being a classroom teacher to provide quality learning to the students. From this, the former school leader would concentrate on the teaching process and learning and not anymore on the supervising and managing of the school.

Another concept that supported this research was the Concept of Action by Argyris and Schon (1978). It is a linked set of proposals, a logical chain of reasoning that explains how a change would lead to improve practice. It links the dots to explain with a common sense that a change is expected to produce results that may lead to the final desired outcome.

This concept supported the study in which the action of changing the role from being school head to being classroom teacher led them to improve and refresh their practice in teaching the students inside the classroom. From this action, they developed and applied various teaching ways in going back as classroom teachers. From their existing learning as former school leaders, they could produce results that led to their goal in the field.

In addition, Cornett's (1990) Concept of Practice is defined as a systematic set of beliefs that guide the teachers in their roles, and these were based from prior and personal life experiences derived from non-teaching activities, and also from the experiences arisen as a result of the design and implementation of the curriculum through instruction (practice).

The concept of practice supported the study in which the beliefs and lived experiences of the former school heads guided them in teaching students inside the classroom when they returned. Applying their learning to teach the students from their observations from the different teachers teaching strategies, non-teaching activities, and personal experiences when they were still a school head had led them to have good results in terms of pedagogy.

Moreover, Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) of Kolb (1984) offers a whole package of learning development and an example of mature growth which are compatible on how people should learn, grow, and develop. This theory is named "Experiential Learning" in order to highlight the main role of the experience in the learning process.

This theory supported this study in which through the experiences of school heads as observers of different teaching instructions of their once supervised teachers, they developed and discovered various teaching ways that could be applied as they returned to being classroom teachers. From the conceptual learning they had, they could reflect as classroom teachers if those teaching pedagogy are effective, appropriate, and helpful to improve the learning development of the learners.

Furthermore, Thorndike and Woodworth's Theory of Similar Elements (1901) challenged the conventional view of teacher-centered pedagogy and became one of the founders of active learning theories. The classroom needs to reflect real-life situations and provide chances for learners to engage flexibly in diverse learning experiences and in diverse social context.

Before a school head became a leader of the institution, they were classroom teachers where most of them were oriented to the traditional view of teacher-centeredness. They were the center in the instruction, and learning of the students came from their instruction. Now, as they returned as classroom teachers, it has been also the time wherein student-centeredness is the emphasis of the learning development. Students, among themselves, would be the source of learning in the class. Teachers are the only the implementers of learning.

Role theory, Concept of Change, Concept of Practice, Experiential Learning Theory, and Theory of Similar Elements supported the idea of the study in which it dealt on the experiences of public elementary school heads who returned to being classroom teachers particularly in terms of their pedagogy. These theories are related to one another. Role theory focuses on the behaviour and approach of former school heads in adapting the roles and responsibilities of being classroom teachers. Concept of Change revealed that changing the role of school head to being a classroom teacher could help refresh themselves in teaching. Concept of Practice stressed that from the experiences of the former school heads, they could now apply the pedagogies they have observed in teaching the student. Next, Experiential Learning Theory emphasized that the experiences of former school heads as the observers enucleated them teaching methodologies that are appropriate to the students. Lastly, Theory of Identical Elements stressed that former school heads should adapt also the trend in teaching the learners of today's generation.

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter comprehensively explained the method that was used to conduct this narrative research study. This chapter contained the research design, the research participants, and the role of the researcher in the investigation, data sources, data collection procedure, data analysis, the trustworthiness of the study, and ethical consideration.

#### Research Design

This study was a qualitative research design. According to Creswell (2007) qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The research process involves major challenges and procedures, data typically collected in the setting of the participant, inductively developing data analysis from data to general themes, and the researcher interpreting the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those involved in this research support a way of looking at research that recognizes analytic styles, focuses on individual meaning, and the importance of the severity of the situation (Creswell, 2007).

This research design was appropriate in this study in which it explored and described the different experiences of the participants in this situation. I used qualitative design because this shows the experiences of public elementary school heads who return to being classroom teachers. Moreover, in-depth interviews were utilized to gather information needed as the primary sources of data which are essential for any qualitative research.

In this qualitative research, a narrative research design was used. Narrative research was defined as the exploration of the meanings of human action and the phenomena constructed in narratives. Narrative was an idea that combines stories and narration. The narrative research was concentrated on the kinds of stories told about the research phenomenon and the type of story in life and traditions that they represent (Felluga & Dino, 2003).

The researcher chose a narrative research approach to explore and discover the experiences of public elementary school heads who return to being classroom teachers. This approach in research was used to narrate and understand more the experiences of the participants and also on how they impart knowledge to the students as they go back as classroom teachers after being school heads for years. Furthermore, this approach aimed to discover and understand the ways of returned classroom teachers in supporting students' learning styles, relationships, and approaches of teachers to the students to aid their learning inside the classroom.

### **Research Participants**

In this study, the researcher followed the recommendation of Creswell (2013) that a narratological study should have a minimum of three (3) to a maximum of fifteen (15) individuals. Hence, participants in the study are five (5) public elementary school heads returning to being classroom teachers. This was supported by the statement of Lichtman (2006) that in qualitative research, a small number of individuals are selected so that information can be recovered in-depth. He also added that since qualitative research is to describe rather than interpret, no specification regarding the number of individuals that should be interviewed.

In this study, the participants were chosen according to the purposive sampling technique advocated by Yin (2014). This refers to the selection of participants or sources of data based on their anticipated richness and relevance of information about the study's research question and inclusion criteria. The researcher selected the participants (1) who were public elementary school heads who served more than two (2) years as school head in the Division of Davao del Norte, (2) have returned to being a classroom teacher until present in the Division of Davao del Norte, (3) may be a principal's test passer or may not and (4) their marital status single, married, annulled and divorced. The participants were informed through video conference or through phone calls about the interview, the time and date were dependent on the availability and preferred time of the participants.

Additionally, a gatekeeper was utilized in this study, a person standing between a data collector and possible participants. Gatekeepers, by nature of their personal or professional connection with the participant, they were in a position to control who has access and when to the participant (Lavrakas, 2008).

The researcher employed the help of gatekeepers in selecting and identifying participants in this research study. These people helped the researcher in getting the personal information of the target participants for them to be contacted and informed about this research study. The researcher assigned a gatekeeper in every school where the target participants are assigned or teaching. The gatekeeper was the one who acts as the person standing in between the researcher and the participant. They were also the ones who contacted or asked permission first to the participants about their personal contact details to be forwarded to the researcher so that the informed consent form was sent to their personal email address to ask for their participation in the research study. With this, the researcher also oriented first the gatekeeper about their roles, responsibilities, and confidentiality of the information and to protect the data privacy of the participants. The researcher ensured that gatekeepers signed first the confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement form to establish ethical consideration and data privacy of the research.

### **Trustworthiness of the Study**

Qualitative research was able to incorporate a range of measures which contribute to its reliability and validity. In order to ensure the reliability of the study, it was needed to establish the four criteria of valid research to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. If some of them were missing, doubts may arise as to the reliability of the research (Shenton, 2004). Trustworthiness of research according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) is important to evaluate its worth. Trustworthiness includes establishing credibility, confirmability, transferability, and dependability.

**Credibility** deals on the validity of the findings. Polit & Beck (2012) stated that to preserve the credibility of a study, the researcher strived to instill confidence in the truth of the data and the interpretation produced. In this research, the researcher used purposive sampling, credibility of the researcher, triangulation, iterative questioning, member checking, and thick description to present that the results are credible.

Patton (2002) described purposive sampling as information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases were those from which one could learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry. Studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations.

In this study, I employed the purposive sampling method to select and identify the appropriate participants for this study. In identifying the participants I had the pre-inclusion criteria that were related to my study. First, the participants were (1) public elementary school heads who served for more than two (2) years, (2) returned to being classroom teacher until the present, (3) principal's test passer, and (4) their marital status. With this, I can guarantee that the answers of the participants were reliable and relevant because of their first-hand experiences. The identified and qualified participants were asked to sign the consent form given to them by sending it through their email addresses.

According to Patton (2015), the credibility of the researcher was particularly important in a qualitative research study, as it was the person who was the main instrument for collecting the data and analysis. It is stated that the trust in a researcher was of equal importance to the effectiveness of the procedures.

In this study, the background of the researcher was also significant to establish the trustworthiness of the study. With this, the curriculum vitae of the researcher were included in the appendices to present the qualification of the researcher to conduct this narrative research study. Furthermore, it also provided necessary and basic information of the researcher and other documents for the future reader and researcher of this study.

In addition, iterative questioning refers to the systematic, repetitive and recursive process of asking questions. An iterative approach involves a sequence of tasks carried out in exactly the same manner each time and executed multiple times. Iterative questioning was used in this study to address credibility as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

In this study, I employed iterative questioning by asking follow up and probing questions to the participants to clarify some points and let them elaborate on their answers. This also employed to uncover deliberate lies from the answers of participants. In this manner, I was able to extract relevant ideas to attain the purpose of this study.

Thick description was a way of achieving a type of external validity. Through defining a phenomenon that is not sufficiently detailed, one can begin to assess the level to which the findings derived are transferable to other times, settings, situations and people (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This also involves providing enough details to the readers. It requires that the researcher accounts for the complex specificity and circumstantiality of their data (Tracy, 2010).

As a researcher, I explained not only the experiences of public elementary school heads who returned to classroom teaching but also the context of the study through a thick explanation so that it became meaningful to others and that interested readers and researchers can pass the data for future references. I included sufficient descriptions of the requirements for inclusion, settings, and procedures so that readers can determine if the assumptions I made are transferable to other settings.

Moreover, member checking involves seeking feedback from representatives of the stake holding groups involved in or affected by an investigation. Furthermore, this process includes asking the identified number of participants to evaluate and respond to analysis and results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

To apply member checking, the participants were asked to read the transcripts of dialogues in which they had participated. This was verified if the words matched what they intended since a recorder was used during the interview. This also ensured to clarify the intentions of participants, correct the errors, and provide additional information if necessary.

Furthermore, to establish and ensure credibility in the study, participants were allowed to verify, evaluate, disapprove or check the transcripts, records, and the summary of results. I applied different techniques to ensure that the participants honestly gave the information needed in the study. To achieve this, I developed a good rapport with the participants who are public elementary school heads return to being classroom teachers so that accurate information was gathered during the actual conduct of the study.

**Dependability** as stated by Streubert (2007) it referred to the reliability and accuracy of study results and to the extent to which research methods are recorded, allowing someone outside the research to follow, audit, and criticize the research process. As a selection criterion, dependability was directly important to environmental and conservation science implementations that were in the initial phase of multiple context testing findings (Adams, et al., 2014). The concrete measure was to gauge the validity of the research findings was an in-depth methodological description to permit the replication of the study, and an audit trail.

To address dependability, the methods in the study should be provided in detail, allowing future studies to repeat the work, if not certainly to obtain the similar results. In-depth coverage also enables the reader to explore the impact to which specific analysis have been observed (Shenton, 2004).

Moreover, an in-depth methodological description made it possible for the reader to evaluate how the data and the structures that arise from it could be accepted. Dependably, the processes within this research were documented at length, allowing future researcher to repeat the study, if it does not find the same findings, interpretations, and conclusions about the research.

In addition, Lincoln & Guba (1985) suggested that by implementing an audit trail, an auditor or second party who becomes familiar with the qualitative study, its methodology, findings and conclusions can audit the research decisions and the methodological and analytical processes of the researcher on completion of the study, and thus confirm its findings.

As a researcher, I depended primarily on the creation of a good audit trail of any information obtained, including notes, the original interview transcript of the five (5) former school heads, and the recordings of the online in-depth interviews through Google meet or zoom. The audit trail provided an overview of the processes used in data collection. Examination of the interviews, the interpretation, and the decision showed the veracity of the performance of the study.

To further develop dependability, I relied on the independent audit of my research by my professional adviser. My adviser was an expert in this area with his knowledge and experience in qualitative research. Everything in my research was viewed, reviewed, analyzed, and evaluated by my adviser, including all the data analysis and other resources and documents that were included in the study. Additionally, the researcher recognized the limitations and boundaries of this research study were not allowed since limited participants were involved in the process.

**Confirmability**, refers to the extent of fairness or the extent to which the results of the study are formed by the participants and not on the subjectivity, motivation or involvement of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) cited by Anney (2014). In order to ensure the issue of confirmability, Anney (2014) proposed the following regulations made by researchers: admittance of the researcher's beliefs and assumptions, recognition of the limitation of the study and an in-depth methodological description that would permit the credibility of the research findings to be verified.

Miles and Huberman (1994) recognized that reporting on researcher predisposition, beliefs, and assumptions, i.e. ontology and epistemology was a key test of confirmability and should be clearly stated in qualitative research. This subjectivity may not necessarily demonstrate the elimination of biases, however it does attempt to determine how the researcher's position can express itself in the study results while still providing valuable insights.

As a researcher, I admitted my predisposition in research in which beliefs and assumption were employed by following the principles in establishing the institutional format in making the qualitative research following the process of Creswell, Shenton's strategies in guaranteeing the trustworthiness of the study and Belmont Report in establishing the ethical consideration to have a valid and reliable final report.

The main measure for confirmability was the extent to which the researcher admits its predisposition. Opinions on the basis of the actions made and the methods adopted should also be recognized in this narrative study, the explanations for preferring one method, where others could have been explained the weaknesses in the techniques used.

The limitations of the study were those characteristics of design or methodology that have affected or influenced the interpretation of the results from the research. There were limitations on generalizations, implementations to develop and use of findings that were the result of the manner in which you originally chose to develop the research or the procedures involved and external validity or the outcome of unanticipated problems that happened during the research (Price & Murnan, 2004).

To also ensure confirmability, as a researcher I recognized the limitation of this narrative research study was not allowed during the conduct since limited participants participated in the study. Acknowledgment of this study's limitations was a chance to made recommendations for additional research that this narrative study on the experiences of public elementary school heads returning to being classroom teachers were unable to answer and explain.

In having detailed methodological description, the researcher helps the reader to evaluate the confirmability, to show how the data and structures and theories that come up from it, can be acknowledged (Shenton, 2004).

Furthermore, I also employed a detailed methodological description on the conduct of this research endeavor. I offered an in-depth explanation of the processes that I used so that I established that the constructs and findings of the research that emerged from the data were not from my own biases.

**Transferability**, according to Polit & Beck (2012) transferability stated the potential for extrapolation. It relied to the reasoning that could be general or transferred to other setting or groups. Additionally, transferability provides the details of the phenomena and setting in formal accounts like research papers. This is achieved by thick description of research processes and detailed description of phenomenon to describe events such that the reader can feel that they experience the events described (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

As cited by Lincoln & Guba (1985) that in transferability the detailed description of phenomenon was an external validity to describe findings of the study that were appropriate or valuable to theory, practice, and future research, and the transferability of the results of the study in other settings.

To address transferability, a detailed description of the phenomenon studied which were the experiences of public elementary school heads return to being classroom teachers and assure that the data are on file to make this study more credible and transferrable. Furthermore, I established different literature related to and the context of the study. The researcher provided a review of related literature and theories which helped to discuss and elaborate on the context of this study. Through this, it became more meaningful and interesting to the readers and researcher and can transfer data for future reference.

Thick description of the research process was to allow the reader to assess whether your results are transferable to their own setting; this is the so-called transferability judgement. This indicates that the reader would have the transferability judgment since the researcher does not know their settings (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

To further address the transferability, I also provided a thick description of the qualitative research process to show that the research can be linked and transferred to the settings of readers and researchers. Also, the return classroom teacher participants' data analysis was included in the appendices and was served as a reference for the future researcher. Hard and soft copies were kept for further verification of this research.

All concrete measures in the trustworthiness of the study were addressed in order to value the transparency of the conduct of the study and the reliability of the research findings.

### **Ethical Consideration**

Ethical consideration was among the important parts of the research. To establish ethical considerations, I adhere to the ethical principles as stated in the Belmont Report (1979) which cited three basic principles relevant to the ethics of research involving human subjects. These principles were respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.

The first principle was **respect for persons** it stated that research participants must be handled as independent entities, meaning that they were unbiased, self-governing, and capable of taking decisions on their own, as long as they had necessary information to make those choices. This principle forms the foundation for informed consent, issues of vulnerability, privacy and confidentiality of information (Creswell, 2007).

The principle of respect for persons was explained by the fact that researchers used informed consent, and the Belmont Report (1979) identifies three (3) elements of informed consent: information, understanding and willingness. In other words, respect for persons means that the participants must provide with necessary information in an intelligible format and then voluntarily agree to participate in the conduct of research (Belmont Report, 1979 cited by Office for Human Research Protections, 2018).

To employ respect for persons in this research, the researcher has first contacted the target participants through video calls or phone calls and provided them the informed consent form by sending it to their email address if they voluntarily and willingly contribute to this study. With this, the researcher gave information to the target participants who were public elementary school heads who returned to being classroom teachers and their school heads. The target participants were informed about the objective of this study, the process of conducting the research, and the meaning of their involvement in completing this narrative study. Participants were notified also that their involvement in the study was voluntary, free from coercion and undue influence and that they can withdraw at any point in the process.

As the University of California, Irvine Office of Research (2019) cited that Institutional Review Board (IRB) shall determine that where appropriate, that there are adequate provisions to guard the privacy and to maintain confidentiality of data in order to approve human subject research. The board noted the sensitivity of the data gathered and the security provided to the participants.

To further establish respect for the persons, the Research Ethics Committee of the institution who reviewed the research to check if the provisions to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of the data were followed by the researcher. Thus, as the researcher, I employed this through sending consent forms to the participants for the acknowledgment of their voluntary involvement in the research through email or Google forms to ensure that only the participants and the researcher can access it. Moreover, during the online in-depth interviews in Google meet or Zoom both researcher and participants utilized headphones to ensure that nobody could hear the conversation. Also, the researcher asked permission from the participants to record the whole interview and ensured that their identity and data gathered were treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Additionally, all the data gathered and other documents from the participants were handled with the utmost confidentiality and protection. The data were stored and kept in the personal email or laptops with a password to ensure that no one could access it aside from the researcher. The data gathered would be preserved for three (3) years for future researcher references and be destroyed immediately after in a secure manner that would prevent unauthorized access of it.

And lastly, participants were informed of their right to check and correct the transcript results of the interview. Also, they were informed of the results to verify the final report. The researcher let the participants chose what online platform was utilized during the interviews so that they could freely express their thoughts and ideas. Also, it was explained to them that they were not obliged to answer those questions which they do not feel comfortable answering. The researcher also ensured that the participants were not harmed in contributing to this research.

The second principle is the **principle of beneficence**. It refers to making efforts to secure the well-being of research participants, to maximize the possible benefits of the research and minimize the possible harm. Beneficence requires a commitment of minimizing the risks of the participants rather maximizing the profits that are due to them (Creswell, 2012).

Risk and benefits assessments required detailed series of relevant information, including, in some instances, additional means of obtaining the benefits sought in the research. Thereby, the assessment presents both a chance and an obligation to gather thorough and structured data on the research study (Belmont Report, 1979 cited by Office for Human Research Protections, 2018).

In this study, the researcher minimized the risk for participants by providing complete information to the participants in the context and objective of this research. The orientations of the participants were done using online platforms preferred by the participants. Moreover, the researcher has also notified the participants about the process and the manner of gathering the data to avoid unnecessary risk during the procedure. And also, the researcher ensured that the identities of the participants were hidden through the use of pseudonyms.

To further employ beneficence, the participants were treated with utmost care and protection. Thus, everything in the procedure of collecting the data was performed online to ensure the safety of everyone since we were now experiencing a pandemic. Besides, the participants were assured that the data gathered are treated with the utmost confidentiality and that their identities were concealed to ensure that no harm may be done to them caused by their participation in the study.

Additionally, the researcher maximized the benefit of the participants since they shared their stories in the study and able to inspire other educators. This uncovered the experiences of public elementary school heads who return to being classroom teachers in terms of their pedagogy and teaching styles that can influence and help others in the field of teaching.

And lastly, to show transparency of the result and findings of the study, the sharing of results and findings of the study were distributed to the participants to verify and modified their answers by sending them to their email addresses. With this, participants were also aware of the result of the study and can add other information that can help to the credibility of the result.

The last principle of Belmont Report was the **principle of justice**. All categorizations of individuals (race, gender, ethnicity, age, etc.) must be equally subject to the risks and benefits of the study, and individuals should be included or excluded only for reasons related to research questions or assumptions (Adams, 2014).

I ensured that participants were chosen from the pre-determined selection criteria to ensure adherence to the study and not from the basis of their position or their manipulability to achieve justice in the research. There were no qualifying participants who were denied in this study due to classification like gender, sex, and ethnicity. I ensured also that five (5) former school heads who returned to classroom teaching were handled fairly in the process of the study.

Furthermore, the questions that were asked have relevance for the achievement of the intent of this study and were not discriminatory in any way. In the interviewing process, I considered the safety and protection of my participants by ensuring that the in-depth interview was done online conditional on the platform preferred by the participants. The researcher also ensured that throughout the online interview it was only the interviewer and interviewee that were present so that nobody could hear the conversation.

Also, the adequacy of the facility was ensured by providing the participants' internet load for them to have access to the internet connection. I assured also that the participants did not spend any amount of money. Instead, I gave a token to express my gratitude for their contributions in the process of the study and also provided them internet load during the gathering of data. To further ensure justice, the qualification, background, and experiences of the researcher to conduct this narrative research study were stated in the curriculum vitae that were included in the appendices. Moreover, this provided basic information of the researcher for this study's future readers and researcher. Also, the researcher ensured that all the principles are addressed to protect the rights of the participants.

Lastly, this study conforms to the **Republic Act No. 10173**, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act, a law that seeks to protect all forms of information, be it private, personal, or sensitive. It is expected to prevent both natural and juridical people involved in the processing of data. The government says the important impact of information and communication technology in the country process and its innate responsibility is to inform that private details in the information and communication technologies of the government and the private sector is safeguarded and shielded (National Privacy Commission, 2019).

To remain true to the Data Privacy Act, I seek the consent of my research participants. I let them signed and gave consent forms before the conduct of the study by sending them online. I also ensured that the identities of the research participants were

protected by the use of pseudonyms. The data were also treated with total confidentiality. Furthermore, I conducted my study by using of online platform whether Google meet or Zoom that they could fully express and share their views and opinions without any hesitation. With this, participants were encouraged to not share the links and codes for the in-depth interview to avoid the invasion of privacy. And both participants and researcher were highly advised to use headphones during the interview.

In this study, the experiences and necessities of the participants were important. Therefore, I strictly followed the steps and measures referred above to ensure the principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. In this way, clear steps were also taken throughout the process of the study to conform to the Data Privacy Act and other ethical standards.

## RESULTS

This chapter presents the narratives of five (5) selected participants who were interviewed and asked about their experiences, realizations, and lessons they have learned when they returned to being classroom teachers from being school heads. The participants of this study were public elementary school heads returning to being classroom teachers from the selected schools at the Division of Davao del Norte.

### ANITA'S NARRATIVE

#### Husband's Health Condition: Root of Returning to Classroom

Everything happens for a reason. Just like the experience of Anita, there was a deep root reason in her return as a classroom teacher. Her life as a school head was peaceful since she had no problem with her co-workers. When her husband had undergone a major stomach operation, she chose to return as a classroom teacher to take care of his husband's health. She prioritized the health of her husband and not her responsibility as a school head. According to her, there were times that she was not able to go to the school where she was assigned to execute her duty because her husband needed her and there is no other person who would take good care of him. That was the primary reason why she chose to be transferred to the nearest school as a classroom teacher and gave up the position of being a school head. She also mentioned that during that time she only thought of the distance that has to be traveled from home to school for going home every day was necessary since her husband was the only one left at home.

*"Una nako nganong nikuan ko sa classroom teacher kay tungod sa layo ako assignment from balay layo ang assignment. Unya that time na operado ako bana wala nako maka adto kay walay maka atiman sa iyaha whereas naa rako diri sa central duol ra kayo makauli ko sa balay unya maatiman nako siya kuan man major operation man ang iyang tiyan giputlan og tina-e maong dili sya makalihok. Then mao to ako reason na mas maayo mo transfer nalang ko diri dili nako mag school head kay tungod lang sa akong bana maong duol rako sa iyaha og dali ra nako sya ma atiman."*

Anita

(The first reason why I returned as a classroom teacher was because of the distance of my house going to my school assignment. When the time that my husband had undergone surgery and I could not report to the school because no one could take good care of him I decided to transfer and give up being a school head. I realized if I am here in the central school I am near with him and I could able to assist him easily since he cannot move because it was a major operation in the stomach.)

#### Dilemma on the First Days: From a School Leader to Grade 1 Teacher

She said that it was really hardback and very challenging when she returned to a classroom teacher after serving as a school head for many years and assigned immediately to the younger students specifically grade 1. These children were very hard to manage since they were very active and need to be guided always.

*"Ang imohang malisdan sa pagbalik nimo sa classroom teacher labi na first nako grade 1 lisod jud na pag manage sa ilaha kay dugay-dugay najud ko wala ka kuan sa classroom."*

Anita

(The difficulty when you return to classroom teaching was to manage the students, especially the Grade 1 since I was assigned to them immediately, and it was a long time when I teach students in the classroom.)

After that, she made lesson plans and instructional devices for her classroom instruction. Students had to be provided with different instructional materials and activities during classes for them to fully understand the lesson presented. She experienced difficulty in the lesson planning and making devices because there was a need to put materials and suitable activities for every lesson.

*"Pagbalik nako sa classroom teacher ang una una ana ang pagbuhat og devices syempre ang mga lesson plan tapos diha jud ko malisdan permi. And then ang mga bata karon kailangan dili pwede og wala kay devices nga ipakita sa ilaha para dali ra nila masabtan."*

Anita

(The first things I did when I return to classroom teaching were lesson planning and the making of teaching devices. I always found it difficult to make those things, especially that the students now needed to aid with teaching devices for them to understand easily the lessons.)

Handling students who were not listening in the discussion was one of her burdens during her comeback as a classroom teacher. It was a problem since she could not do corporal punishment to make them listen during class hours. She expressed that it was the major problem of the teachers dealing with these kinds of students because even though she was trying her best to impart her knowledge to them, the students were just talking or chatting with their seatmates or worst they would go outside that in the end, they cannot answer the seatwork given to them. She also added that returning to a classroom teacher requires ample patience to deal with the young and overactive students.

*“Tapos ang sunod kay kanang pag handle pud sa bata nga dili maminaw sa imoha. Mao na ang ikasunod ana na problema kay bawal naman karon maka kusi og bawal nata makasinghag sa mga bata mao nga kailangan hatagan jud nato sila og dako kayong pailob. Mao jud na ang kalbaryo o problema sa maestra kung ang bata dili maminaw labi na og naga lecture ka sige kag explain sa ila pag after ana wala siyay nasulod kay sige siyag tabi, sige og gawas-gawas.”*

Anita

(The next was how to handle children who were not listening to you. It was a major problem for the teachers if the students were not listening to the discussion because after the class they had no learnings since they were busy talking with each other and keep going outside. That was why teachers needed to give the students ample patience since we could not pinch and shout at them.)

Another burden came during enrolment. DepEd is using Learner Information System (LIS) to have reliable registries of learners in every school. To have this, the teacher has to complete enrolment records in the system which would be done online using devices (cellphone or Laptop). It was challenging for her because she did not know how to use a laptop and enroll students in the system. She admitted that she was not computer literate. She was not an expert in using a computer and doing online reports for the school and students.

*“Katong mga report na kanang computer ang gamit mao jud ang pinakalisod kay dili man ta jud computer literate. Labi na sa panahon sa pag enrol og sa LIS syempre dili ko kaayo kuan sa computer.”*

Anita

(Those reports that needed to use a computer were one of the hardest things. Like in the time I enrolling in the LIS, it was hard for me since I am not good at using the computer.)

### **On Dealing with Misbehavior: Adjustments on Discipline**

There were also adjustments she encountered as she returned to the classroom. One of these was the adjustment in disciplining students of this generation. She mentioned that to discipline the students, there was a need to establish a close relationship with them and not immediately scold them for their mistakes to reprimand them too much. At this time corporal punishment was no longer allowed that was why she needed to be patient with the students. According to her, a close relationship with students would result in a positive outcome in which students would love you also as their teacher since you would show them the care and concern of a teacher.

*“Ang una una ana kailangan jud nimo ang mga bata kanang hatagan nimo ahh discipline then iclose nimo sila dili ingon magkamali imong kasab.an kay the more imohang kasab.an ang bata magkamali ang bata mag kuan jud na sya magsamot jud og pabadlong sa imoha. Pero og close nimo siya kinsa katong nga sige og pabadlong iclose nimo siya close monitoring siya hantod nga makuha nimo iyahang ang iyahang batasan na sa sunod dili najud na magpadlong kay mahadlok na siya og ma love napud ka niya nga kuan as a teacher nga kabalo ka sa iyaha mo dala. Pero parti sa kuan tagaan pud nimo ang mga bata og unsa ang iyaha. Labi na nga naa pud silay mga requirements tapos dili sila mutuman ikuan pud nimo sya iguide og insakto og para musunod pud sa imoha og dili mahimong tapulan.”*

Anita

(The first thing to do is you need to give the children discipline and be close with them. Do not get mad easily when they made mistakes because the more you get mad, the more they get worst. Having a good relationship and close monitoring of those unruly students will help you to understand their behavior. With this, they will follow you and love you as their teacher since you know already how to handle them. In terms of teaching, we need to give the children what they deserve to have. We need to guide them, especially in updating them in complying with their requirements in school.)

She added that students' behavior before her promotion as a school head, was different. She revealed that students now are hard to manage and discipline because they are aware that corporal punishment is no longer allowed. That was why when she attempted to scold the students, they replied that they would complain to the Bantay Bata and their mother. And as a returned

classroom teacher, it was an emotional challenge for her not to discipline students properly the way she did before. With this, she said that in this generation the discipline of the teachers is limited because of the law that needs to be followed.

*“Ang rason ana kay ang mga bata karon, karon na generation dili na nimo basta-basta na ahh kasab-an. So maglisod jud ka tungod sa bata na once kasab-an nimo moingon man dayon na sige Ma’am kasab-i ko kay ma 163 ka isumbong tika sa akong mama. Maong diha jud naglisod ang teacher kay dili naka makapangasaba sa ila dili naka makahatag bisag gamay na rason unta para sila mahimong unsa ni maayong bata. Pero kay karon ang mga teacher limitado ang pag disiplinang sa mga bata tungod aning kuan balaod na imong ginasubay.”*

Anita

(The reason behind this was the children in this generation were hard to discipline because once you scold them, they would say that they would complain to Bantay Bata or their mother. Because of the law that we need to follow, teachers have limitations in disciplining and correcting them to be good students.)

### **A Helping Hand: Overcoming Trials through Colleague’s Support**

After Anita experienced the challenges and adjustments in returning as a classroom teacher, some people supported her to overcome those difficulties. Since her co-teachers respected her as one of the senior colleagues in the school, they were willing to help her in every problem she encountered. There was no gap between them because she treated them like her sisters and brothers and they respected her well. Her co-teachers were always ready to help her with any problem she encountered during her comeback as a classroom teacher.

*“Ang sa pagkakaran, nga nakauban ko nila itreat ko nila as pareha rami mag Ma’am pud sila sa akoa tapos mo respect jud sila sa ako kay mas older man gud ko sa ilaha. Sa pagkakaran mura naman mi kanang ang pagdala nila sa akoa kanang sisterly jud og unsa ako problema ginatabangan ko nila.”*

Anita

(When I became their colleague, they treated me like the same teacher. They also respected me since I was older. They treated me as their sister, that whenever I had problems they would always help me.)

She survived the challenges and difficulties during her return as a classroom teacher because she received much support and help from her colleagues. The integration of ICT and the use of technology in doing some reports was the hardest challenge however, her colleagues helped her in this area. Even in doing her report they also help her to handle it that’s why she able to cope with this difficulty because many people are willing to help her. There were times also that her co-teachers would offer that they would do the report instead of her because they understand that she was having a problem using a laptop. That’s why she said, when she returned to the classroom it was expected she would having trouble using technology but because of her co-teachers she also learned with this and she felt challenged to learn more. And she appreciates the help and support of her co-teachers in surviving this difficulty.

A: Pinakalisod jud na nasupportahan ko nila kay kaning sa computer. Unsa among report sa computer sila jud nag handle og nag support sa akoa. Og dako kayo ang ilahang tabang, dako kayo kog pasalamat sa akong mga kauban kay supportive kayo sa akoa.

R: Aside sa computer Ma’am unsa pa ilang natabang nga support sa imoha?

A: Pareha anang naa koy trabahuon nga dili nako dayon mahuman mo offer sila og Ma’am tabangan taka ani para madali na. Aside pa ani na trabahuon nga para sa classroom og para sa mga bata mo offer jud na akong kauban walay pag duha-duha kung mao ni ang wala pa nahuman na report. Tapos mo ingon sila nga sige Ma’am ako nalang ani, kami nalang bahala ani Ma’am.

R: Supportive jud di ay kayo imong mga kauban Ma’am.

A: Supportive jud kayo wala jud koy maistorya sa ilaha.

R: Dili kayo ka maglisod.

A: Hmm mao na the more na maglisod jud unta pero kay supportive kayo ma challenge ka. Makabalo pud ka unsaon nimo pag adjust og unsaon nimo ni kay sila supportive kayo sila sa akoa wala koy maistorya sa akong mga kauban. Supportive tapos ikaw pud makita nimo ilahang tabang sa imo.

(A: The hardest thing that they supported me was about the computer. Any reports related to the computer they would handle it for me, and it was a big help. I was thankful to them because they were very helpful.

R: Aside with computer Ma’am, what are the other things they supported for you?

A: When I have work that are not done yet they would offer to finish it for me. They offered help without any doubt to lessen my work.

R: Your colleagues were really supportive with you Ma’am.

A: They were very supportive with me and I cannot tell anything to them.

R: It was not hard for you.

A: Actually, it was hard for me but since they were very supportive I got challenge also to learn. I adjusted and do it also on my own because they were always there for me. And I could always see how helpful they were.)

It was not only the support of her colleagues that made her overcome the difficulties but also the experience she got when she was still a school head. Her observations from the different teachers are applied when she returned as a classroom teacher, especially the teaching strategies. She ensured that the activities she used helped the students to understand easily the topic given to them. She added, that as a teacher you need to have ideas on how to help pupils understand the lesson. You must consider that during the activities, students understood the instruction to have better learnings.

*“Pwede pud nimo ang activity nga dali ra makasabot ang mga bata ana. Ang isa napud nimo ana as a teacher naa napud kay gina ingon nga kaugalingon na idea na para masabtan tanan. Labi na magbuhat kag activity sa mga bata na masabtan pud jud sa bata og unsaon niya pag answer.”*

Anita

(The activities should be easy to understand. And as a teacher, I should have my idea on how to make everything easy for the students, especially on making activities that are simple to understand on how to answer.)

### **Inner Triumph: Happiness in Teaching Learners**

Despite the difficulties in returning as a classroom teacher, she still had this feeling of success in teaching again. She narrated that she was happy to see that some students were doing their best to learn and this encouraged her of doing her best to provide them the needed knowledge and guidance that they deserved. At present, she is teaching only one subject and the reason why she could focus the subject, in doing so she could contribute to the learnings of her student.

*“Sa pagbalik nako sa classroom teacher syempre naa koy na achieve diha nga nalipay ko na ang akong gitudluan na as a classroom teacher nga naa koy nakita nga naningkamot pud ang mga bata naningkamot pud sila na makahibalo og ako pud para sa mga bata. Sabagay pila rapud akoang subject kung unsa man akong nahibal-an mao rapud ang natudlo nako sa bata og ang usa ka ahh as classroom teacher naningkamot pud ko nga matuman pud nako ang akong trabaho nga maka contribute pud ko sa mga learning sa akong mga bata.”*

Anita

(The achievement I had in returning to classroom teaching was happy for the students I taught because I saw them worked hard to learn. It was an advantage that I had few subjects taught, and what I had learned with that subjects was also imparted to them. I did my best to follow my role as their teacher, and it was to contribute to their learning.)

Though she had difficulties in coming back as a classroom teacher because of the use of technology, she was still motivated to continue doing the tasks because of the undying support of her colleagues. She knew that her co-teachers were always ready to help her in every challenge she might encounter in the remaining days she had in the teaching field.

*“Sa akoo sa motivation, ma challenge nalang man pud ka kay naa naman ka diha na part so ma continue nimo kay imoha pud mga kauban wala man pud sila mag pabaya kundili tabangan pud ka parte anang unsa ni ahh problem nga imong na encounter.”*

Anita

(I was motivated to continue because I was challenged on that part of my life. Also, my colleagues were always there for me and ready to help me with every problem I would encounter.)

### **Either Leading or Teaching, Learners' Welfare Above All**

By this time, she realized that the work of the school head has a big difference from the work of a classroom teacher. The scope of the work of the school head is the entire school while the classroom teacher has to focus on the students and the teaching instruction. There was a big difference for her because as she returned to teaching, she thought more about the welfare of her students and in doing lesson plans. It was a relief for her that she no longer thought of any administrative work. She added that her burden was tightened before because she had big responsibilities since she had to manage the school, the teacher, the parents, and the students. After all, she was accountable to them.

*“Akong na realize na ok man then wala nakay laing huna-hunaon nga parte sa school kundili ang imohang huna-hunaon nalang ang imohang class ang imohang klase og imohang subject og imohang buluhaton na lesson plan. Not like before nga imong huna-hunaon entire school mao na imong responsibility kay imong teacher, og mga pupils, parents kay as a school head imoha na tanan na accountable.”*

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Anita

(I realized that it is good to be back as a classroom teacher since you do not think of any related work in the administration. And your only concern now is your class, subjects taught, and the lesson plans you need to prepare. Unlike before, that you need to think about the entire school; teachers, students, and parents because all of them were part of your responsibilities.)

She added further that being a classroom teacher is advantageous on her part since she has a lesser teaching load compared to other teachers in the school. She has more time to relax and could do other works and reports because she had more time outside the classroom than teaching with the students inside.

*“sa pagkakaran gamay nalang akong load, so relax ka. Mao na akong advantage karon kay gamay nalang akong load human maka trabaho nako og unsa pa akong dapat buhaton. Kay the rest na time wala naman koy klase.”*

Anita

(I have less teaching load that is why I am more relaxed. That is my advantage now because after I teach, I could work with the other task that I need to accomplish.)

### **To Teachers, DepEd Community: A Humble Call**

After facing the difficulties that she experienced during her come back as a classroom teacher, she has now advice to those teachers who wanted to become a school head and vice versa. For her, it is a must that they have achievements before targeting the position of being a school head. It is good to start at an early age since if you are young there is a possibility that you will be successful and eventually become a superintendent because you have a long time serving and at the same time grow as a school head. She also advised those school heads who wanted to return to being a classroom teacher to be prepared to adjust with the students and colleagues. Adjustment is one of the difficulties you will face in becoming a classroom teacher again.

*“Ang akong advice sa ilaha og gusto nila mahimong school head dapat naa jud kay achievements mao gyud unang una ang naa kay ahh qualifies ka nga mahimong school head. Ang ma advice nako sa ilaha na mas ok mag school head kay bata paman mo puydi pamo, dako pa inyong ma abot og bisan pa gani mahimo pamong superintendent. Ang ako lang pud jud ma advise sa school head mobalik og classroom teacher kinahanglan naa kay full adjustment sa mga bata og sa imohang mga bag.ong kauban sa school. Kay og dili ka kabalo mo adjust sa mga bata syempre dugay na kayo ka nahimong school head unya mobalik ka sa pagka classroom teacher grade 1 pa gyud o kinder, mao na ang pinakalisod na adjustment og iadjust pud nimo ang matag-usa sa imong kaubanan sa school.”*

Anita

(For those teachers who wanted to become school heads, they need to have achievements that will qualify them in that position. Also, they should be a school head at an early age to have a longer time in the service and have the chance to become a superintendent in the future. And for those school heads who wanted to return as classroom teachers my advice to them that they need to adjust for the students and even with their colleagues in the school because that is the most difficult they will be experienced. If they do not know how to adjust with the students for they served as school heads for many years they will expect to experience difficulty in handling students especially when will be assigned in kinder or grade 1.)

She suggested that those school heads who will be assigned as classroom teachers would be given works that are not hard on their side especially those who are at the retireable age. She hoped that the DepEd officials would see the challenges they would experience in returning as classroom teachers especially in using technologies. She expressed that this is usually the trouble of teachers like her being illiterate in computer and therefore could not able to do it alone like for example in having google meet. She hoped also for the less difficult work for them since they cannot function fully due to their age.

*“Ang ako lang ma advice ana nga hatagan lang og dili na kaayo lisod na trabaho kaparehas sa akona na retireable dili na lisod na trabaho ang ihatag kay nibalik naman na siya sa pagka classroom teacher. Hinaot nga makita pud nila ang problema labi natong dili mga computer literate mao gyud kasagran karon na problema sa mga dili kaayo kuan aning trabahua. Unya dili lang jud unta nila tagaan og lisod-lisod ang kana nga ningbalik, kay syempre dili na gyud ang ilahang function. Unya nibalik pagka teacher tigulang na kailangan tagaan enough lang unta para sa akona nga dili na kaayo lisod ag trabahuon na ihatag sa ilaha.”*

Anita

(They should not give difficult work to those retireable teachers like me especially that I returned in the classroom teaching from being a school head. I am hoping that they will see the problems of those who are not computer literate since it was usually our difficulty. And also they should not let the work hard instead they will give us work that are enough for us to do since we are not fully capable because of our age and situation.)

## PEDRO'S NARRATIVE

### Tagged as 'Activist': Wounds Beyond the Decision of Higher Authorities

Being a school head was a big achievement, but to avoid conflict and make him safe from his previous assigned area, it was decided by the higher officials of the division to return him in the classroom teaching. This started when the division officials learned that he worked at Non-Government Organization (NGO) as a staff coordinator in the Salugpungan Community Center. This NGO was suspected as against the government and this triggered his position as a school head of a school located in the hinterland. Even the community asked the division officials to transfer him to protect him from the danger he might encounter in the area. As a result, the division came up with the decision to assign him as a classroom teacher in their locality. He felt sad about it because he wanted to serve children as a school leader, he even pursued graduate studies to make him fit to that position. But at the end, his safety is more important than the position.

*"Actually maam this is not my decision na ma balik ko as school head this is the decision of my higher superior before na ibalik ko og ihiluna na diin mas safety ko ug mas ma hilonaon ug sanglit na ang akoang participation ko kiniadto when I was working in NGO o non-government organization as a staff for a staff coordinator of this salugpungan community center then personally ang participation nako is nakita. So yon crisis personal in terms sa pag trabaho sanglit na anad na man sab ko mag trabaho as administrator itself kay naka serve na man sad ko during NGO sa non-government organization then nag pursue ko sa akong pag skwela as masteral tungod kay gusto nako mag serve sa bata as school leader."*

Pedro

(It was not my decision to go back as a classroom teacher, it was the decision of my higher superior before. They returned me to have peace and saved me from any danger I may have experienced since my participation in the NGO or Non Government Organization as a staff coordinator before of the Salugpungan Community was traced. There was a crisis in terms of my work since I was comfortable to work as an administrator because I already experienced it in the NGO and I also pursued my study in master's degree because I wanted to serve the children as a school leader.)

The main reason why he experienced hardships in coming back as a classroom teacher was his refusal to accept the decision of the higher officials in returning him in the classroom. He was hurt that they questioned his previous involvement in the NGO and as a result he became very dominant and strict in terms of teaching and interaction with his colleagues. The officials tagged him as an activist and would affiliate him with the movement. And with that, he was demoted without further investigation. He added that having been returned in the classroom was the will of the DepEd authorities. It was difficult on his side because his interest and passion was not in teaching.

*"Para sa ako ma'am kana man gud siya kay sakit para sa akoo kay ang question diha is sayop ba diay ang pag apil nako sa una nga diin nila na gi gamit ang akong partisipasyon nga naga serve ko sa mga tao? gi identify ko nila submissive person? gi ila ko nila na aktibista? gi ila ko nila na biskan unsa. Ah sayop ba diay na nga mo serve ko sa mga IP ilaha kong tangalon didto sa pag pangalagad nako isip solid. Dili nako ka bubuton na mag balik ko as adviser lahi man gud ang pag sabot lahi sad ang pag adapt kay ang usa ka tao mao na passion iyahang ka gustohan."*

Pedro

(I was hurt that my participation in the NGO was being used to remove me in my service like it is wrong that I joined it before. They identified me as submissive and activist person where I only wanted was to serve the IP but they removed me from my position because of this. It was not my will to comeback as an adviser because as a person we have different adaptation, passion and willingness.)

Another reason for his hardship was that theories have changed; the ones that he practiced for the long time were no longer applicable when he came back as a classroom teacher. It was a big disadvantage for him to teach the students where his knowledge and learning were not suitable for teaching instruction. This disadvantage resulted to his arrogant behavior.

*"Kadtong theories, mga practice nako nga dili man jud siya swak sa karon so kana mga disadvantages na siya na naay tendency nga mo gawas akong pag ka arrogance."*

Pedro

(Those theories and practices I had been before are not compatible for now. It was a disadvantage that resulted to my arrogance.)

As he returned to being a classroom teacher the attitude that he developed was being arrogant. He was arrogant in the sense that he compared the work of a classroom teacher to the work of a school head. He has been a school head for a number of years so he has been accustomed to that kind of working style and it was not easy to shift abruptly into another working style. Sometimes, he would have a conflict with his co-teachers and school head because of his arrogance.

*“Dako jud ug adjustment personally, dala nako isa sa gi ingon nako nga arrogance kumbaga gi hambing nako tung trabaho. Advantage siya kay atbang lang ka sa skwelahan, pero ang kadtung trabaho na ang style og force ang istilo sa trabaho nga diin maoy akong na andan so nawala. So katung gi tawag nato nga arrogance ari nakita sa akong kauban nga aduna juy dili jud simple nga storya ug dili conflict jud sya. Kanang mo tumaw akoang pag ka arogante jud kay na ka agi na pud gud ko kay tungod lage atong leadership.”*

Pedro

(It was a big adjustment because I compared the work of a school head and a classroom teacher. However, there was still an advantage since the school was only in front of our house but the nature and style of the work that I used to was different. And with that, my colleagues saw me as an arrogant person for there were instances that we had conflict because of my attitude. My arrogance would really show naturally because I was in the leadership before.)

Even his colleagues had a hard time of understanding his attitude, his co-teachers and school head were willing to adjust with him because they understood his situation. They were the ones who adjusted for him and his attitude. He was then able to see his lapses as a new member of the teaching staff and accepted that he himself was at fault. He had less of understanding and acceptance with his situation.

*“bisan pa man adunay mga ingun ana sako personal ug unsa akong attitude nga usahay dili nila ma saktan so...sila mismo nag adjust para sa akoo, ako mismo nakita man nako nga naa koy pag ka liberal no, kanang diha sa attitude nako, so ako mismo nag kulang sa pag sabot ug sa pag adapt sa kadtong attitude.”*

Pedro

(Even if they could not understand my attitude they still adjusted for me. And I admitted that I was the one who lacked of understanding and adjustment because I had seen it in myself.)

Another reason that he became demotivated was he could not accept the decision of placing him back as a classroom teacher. In his personal view, he wanted to continue serving that school and community and faced the possible danger he might encounter than being returned as a classroom teacher in their locality. He was happier to remain in his position and served the children as a leader. He added that he would be even happier if he would die there. He explained that his dedication was his way of hoping that someday he can return to being school head again because he felt what had happened to him was not fair.

*“Personally dili nako ka gustohan mo balik ko sa na ma balik ko as school teacher kumbaga na kadto gi ingon nako gaina sa unahan naa sa ako ang arrogance, usa ka kinaiya hinaot na sa usa sa professional, usa ka individual dili niya gusto ang gusto na ma hitabo sa iyahang superior. Kumbaga mas ika lipay nako ug ipabilin ko didto nga kanang to serve. Na ilang gina ingon na mas ma lipay ko nga didto ko namatay kay didto ko nanginabuhi kay sa isip na naga trabaho ko wala nako gi dili nako deserve sa akoo, so kani siya ma'am mag kuan ug form kadtong arrogance.”*

Pedro

(It was not my personal choice to return in the classroom teaching and the attitude of being arrogant was a way for me as a professional and individual to show that I did not want to happen what my superior wanted to do to me. That was why I would be happy if they retained me there to serve even if I would die as long as I work there because I did not deserve what happened to me that resulted to my arrogance.)

Another impact of his arrogance was his being a strict member of the teaching staff in the school. He preferred to stay inside his classroom than to interact with his co-workers, building camaraderie with his colleagues was not part of his plan.

*“So ang akong observation is kadtong istrikto ko sa mga bata at sometimes doon sa mga kauban. Katong ako mismo walay time makig join sa akong mga kauban. Dayon mas kalipay nako kung naa sa classroom rako mag tambay.”*

Pedro

(I observed that I was strict with the children and sometimes with my co-workers. And I had no time to join with them instead I preferred to be inside my classroom.)

Since he had been a school head, he described himself as a dominant teacher. He added that he could not avoid being dominant because that position was higher than others. He adapted the characteristic of being a leader inside his class especially he was assigned in the grade 4 and grade 5 students. He refreshed himself with those teaching strategies he had when he was an intern teacher. He reviewed everything from the beginning to provide learning to his students. Those positive experiences he had were used as his bases in teaching and it helped him to continue his work as a classroom adviser.

*“Particular sa akong mga bata usahay kay kato mahimong dominante diha ah sulod sa classroom nga dili siya malikaayan. Kadto laging naabot sa posisyon na kadto imong level kay mas ni angat na. So karon na kay gipasok ko sa grade 4 og grade 5 so adjustment lang na mas ni balik ko, ako lang sab gi balikan ang strategies sa unang panahon na intern ko as teacher, coordinate teacher na dayon didto ko sa private kadto lang nga mga positive nako na naagihan gi himo nakong panaminan kundiin nga na padayon ko hangtud karon isip isa ka adviser teacher.”*

Pedro

(Since I was in a higher position before I could avoid being dominant inside the classroom. When I came back and assigned in grade 4 and grade 5 I started in the beginning and recall those strategies I had when I was an intern teacher and a private teacher. Those positive experiences I had were the bases why I continued being a classroom teacher.)

When he started teaching again, he ensured that he followed what was written in his class program. The class program fisted the schedule and activities that were needed to be followed and applied throughout the class days. He said, that he always tried his best to teach every subject assigned to him. To comply the needed work of a classroom teacher and a grade 3 adviser at present. Even the forms that were needed to comply for every student’s data he was trying accomplish everything.

*“Siyempre ma’am naa man tay gina sunod na class program inig kuan naa man tay mga subject so kadto maningkamot ta na makatudlo sa atong subject gikan diha so mao to. Icomply nato siya as teacher gi kumbaga ayon so nag sunod ko as a classroom teacher ng grade 3 na adviser. Tanan na activity, tanan na mga forms sa mga buluhaton sa teacher sa sulod.”*

Pedro

(We had a class program to follow so those subjects written there were needed to do in the class. As an adviser of grade 3 I followed and complied the activities and other work of a teacher written in there.)

Aside from following the class program, he was able to incorporate his learning as a school head before. He used only those applicable strategies since his school before was different from his current station. So far, there were activities that he wanted their school to be on top. As a former school head he pushed himself to achieve the maximum improvement for the school. He aimed higher performance as an adviser since he was now in the lowland area wherein there was an access to education for student, that was why as an individual he pushed himself to try harder so that everyone will be successful.

*“Kumbaga ihimay himay lang gi pilian to para sa akona, ang kadtong mga applicable na mga learnings kay lahi man ang kinaiya sa skwelahan na akoang gi gunitan sa una. So far, sa karon ug adunay mga activity nga siyempre naningkamot na mag top school pwede aboton sa pinaka maximum learnings. When I was there in elementary area when I was school head kumbaga mas taas taas ang performance gusto nato aboton unya nia nako karon sa patag nga skwelahan para mo tudlo as an adviser so kana siya Ma’am maningkamot as individual maningkamot para sa kaayohan kadaogan sa tibuok staff sa school.”*

Pedro

(I chose only those applicable learnings because the attitude and traits were different from the school I handled before. From the different activities conducted I was aiming to be on top because when I was a school head before I was expecting a higher performance from myself. But now that I am in the lowland school as an adviser I will try my best for the betterment and success of the whole school and staff.)

### **Deeper Sense of Support through Understanding One Another**

To overcome his hardships in the field, he received full support from the people around. First, his co-workers always found ways to connect with him and since some of his co-workers were his neighbour they would meet in the church and in the community, eventually he could be able to mingle with them easily. They celebrated birthdays and gatherings together and they became united in the activities and programs they had in their school. Second, the parents’ involvement was very helpful for him. He would follow up the learning of his students through the parents because as an adviser he learned to trust the parents of the students to help the students continue learning in the school. And with this, he would stand firm as a teacher teaching grade 3 or any other grade level that would be given to him depending on the decision of his school head. As he said, that he would just follow the instruction and decision of his direct administrator.

*“Tong gi ingon nako kadaghanan sa teacher nga silingan mga kaila magkita mi diha sa simbahan diha sa community. Dili lisud para sa amoa para sa akua dili lisud maki halubilo. Malipay mi ug naay mga gathering, birthdays sa mga teacher, adunay mga activity sa mga coordinatorship magkahiusa pag abot sa skwelahan, mga programs na naga participate sa community. Naga involve ko sa community environment naga kuan sab ko and mas patok ang integration sa katawhan and mga ginikanan. Like working, follow up sa mga bata, so pinaagi usab kanila naga salig sad ko sa mga ginikanan kadtong ga timbang sa pag unong sa kabataan nga gusto mo skwela. Kani gihatag sa institusyon ug sa atong skwelahan sa mga ginikanan, community na makauban so ako mo barog mo stand firm ko dayon sa akoang pag tudlo as a school adviser grade 3 kahit na g5 o g6 kung unsay desisyon sa school head or principal o administrator diha man ko mosunod.”*

Pedro

(It was not hard for us to socialize since most of my co-teachers were my neighbours and we saw each other in the church and in the community. We were happy when there were gatherings or activities for every coordinatorship that united us for the school programs and in the community. I was more involved in the community activities especially with the people and the parents since they were my partners in helping the children to continue to go to school. This connection was given to the school by parents and community and as a teacher I would stick to my teachings to any grade level that would be given to me depending on the decision of the school head.)

### **In the Name of Service: It is for the Learners After All**

The triumphs and success he had in returning to teaching was that he was able to teach those students who had limited knowledge or learnings. It was a success for him to catch their attention so that they would understand the lesson he has given to them. In addition, throughout his teachings he was able to identify his individual students', attitude, their enhanced skills it's the nature of children to talk, to sing, and to be happy inside the classroom and these were the things that made him feel successful. With this, he always worked hard to transfer what he learned before to his students. Since we are now in a pandemic situation and there are no students inside the classroom but based on his experiences those lessons, strategies, and challenges that he faced are coming from the learnings of being once a school head. Now that he returned in classroom teaching, those things were still on his mind that helped him to overcome challenges and continue to teach and serve the students and even the parents and stakeholders because according to him that is his mission as a teacher.

*“Kadaugan nako is kitang teacher mo tudlo jud ta sa ilaha nga bata maski blangko ang usa ka bata. Ang kadaugan nako is tong ma sabot nila ang mga learnings ug mga skills particular sa kinaiya sa usa ka bata nga mag kanta, kinaiya sa bata nga mag storya, kinaiya sa bata na malipayon, so ako naga paningkamot na kana ma transfer sa ila ang akong na tun-an kaniadto. Og sa karon na isa ko ka teacher sa mga subject na akong gina tudlo so siyempre sa karon man gud na putol tungod kini sa issue so karon ang mga bata sa karon na year 2020-2021 wala man nako ma kita pero siyempre base on my experience tung mga lessons, challenges, strategies ug naa akong natun-an gikan sa pagka school head now karon na nabalik ko nag pa bilin na siya nga mag tudlo didto sa mga bata kay tungod atong mission is mag tudlo sa mga bata ug pag serve sa mga bata pati na mga ginikanan og sa mga stakeholder sa skwelahan.”*

Pedro

(It was an achievement to us teachers to teach children who were in need of learning. When I came back, it was a success seeing them understand and learn the different skills that I imparted like singing, talking, and being happy. I taught different subjects but it was stopped because of the issue we experienced but eventhough I did not see them personally in this school year 2020-2021 those lessons, challenges and strategies that I had learned when I was a school head those would still remain to me to be able to teach children, serve the parents, and other stakeholders because that is our mission.)

Accordingly, the things that motivated him to continue in the teaching field despite those hardships he faced was his family especially his two daughters. It was still a motivation that every month he received salary and other benefits to support and provide the needs of his family. He expressed that he could actually resign being a classroom teacher because he knew that his children can be supported by their mother and also he can work back in the NGO where he previously worked, where he also felt that he was qualified. He was proud that even many years had passed some students still recognized him as their teacher. When they saw him in the road or in the community they called or greeted him. It motivated him to continue because the children respected him as a teacher and as a school head. He heard also that there were little children and students singing the song that he composed and it was a big achievement for him. That music that he introduced to them was never forgotten, he was also happy to see those children playing musical instruments which only mean that his expertise, knowledge, skills, and hobbies were transferred to those children though not exactly one hundred percent, but still those few students who received the learnings and able to

practice it in life was one reason why he continued to be in the teaching field. This was because he treasured the success that he has imparted to his students.

*“Ang nag motivate sa akoang pag tudlo is ang akong mga bata. I have 2 child na puros mga ladies sila ang nag hatag, sila ang rason kung nganong nag padayon ko sa akong pag tudlo actually pwede na man jud ko mo resign kay kaya pa buhion sila sa mama. Actually pwede man ko mo balik sa pagka NGO pwede rajud ko mo balik sa akong trabaho nga gusto nako nga diin didto nako nakita nga didto ko haom sa akoang kapasidad... Makita jud nimo na sa last previous year nga na experience nako adunay pipila na makita nako naa juy bata nga dili maka limot sa akoa maski man lang sa pag sampit ug sir na sa dihang mag tagbo mi diri sa among community nagpa bilin nga ako usa ka teacher na maski dili na school head pero usa ka teacher na nga diin dako ang ilahang pag saludo. Adunay nakita ug madungog nako sa akong mga bata nga nag kanta sa akoang gina compose nga kanta. Sa mga kanta nga diin ako ang nag introduce sa ila makalipay nako ang mga bata nga nag gunit ug mga musical instrument nga dili nako malimtan nga akong expertise, akong knowledge, skill nako, hobbies nako na na transfer sa pipila ka mga bata dili pana hundred percent na nak kuha sa akoang kahibalo apan naay mga pipila ug kana moy dako nga bahandi para sa akoa tungod kay sila ang naga padasig sa akoa nga nag pa bilin gawas sa akoang mga anak ug mag pa bilin na usa ka dasig teacher.”*

Pedro

(The people who kept me motivated in my teaching were my two kids. They were the reason why I was still in the teaching eventhough I could resign and return in the NGO where I am comfortable to work and suited my capacity since their mother could provide their needs. But in the previous year, I witnessed that there were students who did not forget me because whenever we saw each other they still greeted me and I remain a respectable teacher for them eventhough I am not a school head anymore. There were also times I heard students singing the song that I composed and introduced to them. It made me happy also seeing them holding some musical instrument which I could not forget that it was my expertise, my knowledge, my skills and my hobbies that I transferred to some of them and it was a big treasure for me because they were the other reason who inspired me to work hard as a teacher aside from my two kids.)

### **On Lifting One's Self Professionally: Lessons Worth Sharing for Others**

Advices can be given by those people who had the first-hand experiences of the situation. Pedro said that those teachers who wished to become school heads someday, they need to continue their study or start it early. For him they should not be tired of learning and studying as long as they have life, if they have chances and have the money they should continue to earn degrees. It is important to learn more theories, have more knowledge because practice will follow. He added that one should not only be good in speaking and work but also in theories for this is the key for practiced. It is the children to see and become a knowledgeable teacher or leader.

*“As of now I advise them to continue their study kung wala man sila nag sugod pa so you have to study kay para sa akoa wag magsasawa mag aral mao na akong kuan motives para sa ilaha. Samtang aduna tay ginhawa, samtang aduna tay chance, samtang aduna tay kwarta, naa tay financial, samtang aduna tay chance na mag padayon sa atong pag skwela, learn more theories, learn more knowledge, sunod na diana kay ang practice. So ang usa ka tao naa siya usa ka theory, usa ka practice, kuyog ng duha kumpara sa usa ka tao na scientific naka kay pareha sa akoa isa ka tao may lang mo storya, so ug ikaw isa ka tao maayo lang ka sa trabaho, ug wa pud kay theory, so para sa akoa akong advice skwela ang gi kinahanglan. Kana ang kinahaglan nato makakita tag susi ana para sa mga kabataan na mahimong usa ka datungan nga teacher.”*

Pedro

(My advice to them, never gets tired of learning and continues their study or starts it now if they have not started yet. We have the chance to learn more theories and knowledge as long as we are still alive and money for it. And a person should have both theories and practice because if you are only good at talking and working and you do not have the theory it is useless and so there is a need for you go to school. We should do it for us to be good teachers for our students.)

Another piece of advice that he shared was for those school heads who wanted to return as classroom teachers. He said if it is not their own decision to return as a classroom teacher then let it be, but if it is the decision of the superior or higher officials to return them in the classroom teaching even though they wanted to continue to manage and serve the school with the same reason with him, then he would be very much willing to join them rallying and marching asking for the reason why they put them in that situation that they do not deserve. It was painful that he finished his master's degree and he has already enrolled one semester for a doctoral to improve his leadership and learning but in the end, he was demoted to his position.

*“sa akoo lang kanang let it be. Ah kung desisyon nila wala man koy ma himo external ko nga factor, external nga puwersa na kagustuhan niya pero sa mga tao nga gusto mo alagad as school head or supervisor nga na tanggal o sa taas pa nga posisyon kung gusto niya mo serve unya gi tanggal siya sa mga ing-ana na rason? Ah sige mag kuyog ta mag rally ta mag marcha ta kitang duha mangita patag lain kay ngano gi butang ta sa ingon ani nga dili nato deserve. Ang pasabot nako ma’am kintahay no kung ikaw daw naay pangandoy na imong pangandoy para sa kadaghanan, unya hala sige mag uban ta. Pero ang imong pangandoy o kagustohan para sa imong kaugalingon, ah ikaw ray imo wa koy labot nimo wa ko ka ila nimo. Pero ikaw gusto isa ka school head or even ikaw na mo balik ka sa kuan aw okay it’s your choice wAla pud mi labot. Pero og maminaw ka nako aw sige mas maayo mag hiusa ta balik sa imong posisyon. Para sa akoo sakit siya ma’am kay naka skwela unya gi human nako akong masteral, naka skwela ko one semester sa doctoral sakit sa akoo nga gi tanggal ko, sakit sa akoo mao na akong ma ingon ug mo ingon tag experience mas daghan akoo, pero mas daghan ang negative experience, sa dihang gi balik tungod kay naka sinati nako nga isa ka school head mao nay tinuod ma’am.”*

Pedro

(If that was their decision, we have no choice because we are not passers. If they wanted us to be removed from our position as being school heads or supervisors, even though we wanted to serve, then we will be united and make a rally and find other people who had the same experiences as we had for we do not deserve this. And if we had the same goal to help the people I am willing to help but if their goal was for their own sake I would not help them. But if they would listen to me, we could unite so that we could return to our old position because this experience was very painful for me because I finished my master’s degree and I started one semester for my doctor’s degree for this role as being a school head but they still remove me in my position. I had more experiences also even though most of these were negative but still I do not deserve to return to the classroom teaching.)

After all the experiences in coming back as a classroom teacher, he had this request to the DepEd authorities. He is hoping that next time if there is a similar to what had happened to him they should consult first the person involved so that he can express all his/her side of the situation. They should investigate first before they will make a final decision for that person. As he experienced, the decision was made without asking him personally about it. It was unfair for him because they put him in that situation without considering his abilities in handling the school.

*“Ah ako siguro ma’am pwede guro consultation with the person pwede pangutan-on unsay kakayahan nako? kana ba ang nahitabo man gud sa akoo is na himo ug subjective ang uban. Na himo nga decesive ang uban, na himo nga judgemental ang uban, para sa ing-ani na kahintang na gibutang ko. Unfair para sa akoo nga ilaha kong gibutang diri wala man lang nila gi consider ang gusto nako ma hitabo ang akoang kakayahan.*

Pedro

(I think there is a need for a consultation with the person and ask their capabilities because in my case, it was subjective. After all, others became decisive and judgemental. It was unfair for me that they put me in this kind of situation, and they did not consider what I wanted to happen with myself and my capabilities.)

### AURORA’S NARRATIVE

#### **The Power of Research: Master Teacher School Heads Should Return to Classroom**

Her journey in returning to classroom teaching started when there was a study conducted by one of the supervisors in the DepEd region office. The result of that study stated that all Master Teacher school heads should return to classroom teaching. That was the basis of the division superintendent to return her as a classroom teacher. She did not want to return to the classroom since she became a school head for more than 12 years but as a subordinate, she followed the command and decision of the higher officials. But if ever she could be returned as a school head she would ensure first that in her assignment order it should not be stated that it is irrevocable. She said that she needed to secure her position first before she would accept that assignment order so that it would not be painful on her side.

During the time that she received the decision of the superintendent, she felt sad and hurt. She was hurt in the sense that for 12 years of being a school head, she offered everything to fulfill her responsibilities to that position but in one snapped, everything changed because she failed to pass the principal’s test. That is why she said if she could be back in the position, she would ensure everything so that all her efforts would not be wasted.

*“There is a study from the supervisor of region office that in his study it is stated that the <sup>www.ijrp.org</sup> in his findings that the Master teacher being a classroom teacher should return back to classroom. So that is one of the bases why the decision of the division office superintendent*

*decides that all master teachers should return back to classroom... Yes, it is not my will I'm just obeying the command, the decision of the superintendent. If ever I will return back as school head kinahanglan najud ko mag maniguro. Segurista ko karon kinahanglan nga on my paper as I received my paper being assigned as a school head again it should not there a word of irrevocable in nature. Irrevocable in nature meaning that anytime I will return back as classroom teacher. It should be stated in the paper or the assigned paper that I should be assigned as principal or permanent school head. It not be irrevocable. Ah I'm not a plastic person naman siguro Ma'am no? As a human feeling as a human being my feeling is sa tinuod lang masakitan ka kay 12 years as a school head and all the efforts, all the loyalty, all the ahhh determination to work as a school head. Akong gibuhat tanan unya in just one sa usa lang ka pamilok nawala ang tanan. By this time if ever I will come back as school head I will returned as a school head maniguro napud ko kay dili pud lalim baya nga mag effort ka unya mawa ra ang tanan tungod lang sa kay sa one because of just one reason ngano nabalik ka og school head just not passing the principal's test."*

Aurora

(There was a study of one of the supervisors in the regional office, that in his findings, it stated that the Master teachers who were in school head position should return to classroom teaching. It was one of the bases why the division office and superintendent decides to return all master teachers to the classroom. It was not my will and I was just obeying the command and the decision of the superintendent and if ever I would return as a school head I would ensure that it was written on my paper that I would not return to the classroom anymore. It should be written on my paper that my position as a school head would be permanent. I felt hurt by this situation because I served for 12 years as a school head and all the efforts, loyalty, and determination were offered in that position. I did everything for my work and in just a blink of an eye, everything was gone. And now, if I ever I could return as a school head I would ensure my position and pass the principal's test first so that my efforts would not be wasted at the end.)

At the time when she read the paper that the position is irrevocable she felt like she wanted to quit, she wanted to return to the classroom and would not accept the position. She thought that when she would accept that she would not be promoted since she is not a passer, and when she would have remained as a classroom teacher there was a big possibility that she would be promoted. But as a professional, she accepted it since it was given to her.

*"pagkabasa gyud nako nga ing ato diay ka quiton gyud ko, na ing ato diay kabalikon ko sa classroom teacher, kay maayo man sa teacher classroom ma promote man gyud ka kaysa ato ug dili ka kapasa sa principals' test wala gyud kay chance na ma promote. Ka quiton ko ato ba pero murag ulaw man sa akoang part nga ni dawad ko na mag school heads unya mo balik ra diay."*

Aurora

(When I read the order, I wanted to quit at that time and wanted to return to the classroom because there was a big chance to be promoted there unlike in a school head position because if you would not pass the principal's test there was no chance to be promoted. I wanted to quit when I got the position at the same time, ashamed because I accepted it and would return to the classroom anytime.)

### **Adjustments from 12 Years of Leadership to Reviewing Lessons, Classroom Management Again**

She described her life when she returned to classroom teaching as different. She compared the work of a school head and a classroom teacher, it was mentioned that when she was still a school head she would go directly to her office doing all her paper works without someone disturbing her because when her teachers saw that she was busy on her work they would not interrupt her. When she became a classroom teacher again her focus was in the classroom and did the work of a classroom teacher.

*"Ang akong life? Ahw different gyud sya kay compared sa school head kay ang school head man gyud diretso ka sa office trabho sa mga papers works mga walay some walay magkuan sa imoha... tan aw sa mga teachers ga duko ka wla may maghilabot,, pero katong pag balik na naku sa classroom diretso ko sa classroom unya mag trabaho ko sa mga papers work sa teacher ana na different gyud sya."*

Aurora

(My life was different because when I was a school head, I went directly to my office doing paper works and there was no one bothering me, but when I came back as a classroom teacher,

it was different because I went immediately into the classroom then does the work as a teacher.)

When she returned to teaching the first thing that made her life difficult was the adjustment. She said that it was a big adjustment since she served as a school head for 12 years. She said to herself, that maybe her life was better if she did not accept the position, the more she mastered her work as a classroom teacher. She regretted her decision of accepting immediately the school head position without ensuring that she will not be returned as classroom teacher anymore.

*“Syempre adjust jud ko. Grabe akong adjustment kay for 12 years as a school head ah makaingon gud ko nga maayo pa wala nalang ko nag school head kay the more pa nga na master nako ang akoang pagka classroom teacher ang tanan mga trabaho sa classroom teacher na master pa nako. Mura pa hinoon ko og nagmahay ba nga nganong nag school head ko dapat di ay to naniguro usa ko nga naa koy papel nga gigunitan nga dili ko mabalik og kuan classroom teacher.”*

Aurora

(My adjustment was difficult because I served for 12 years as a school head and I could say that it was better if I remained to be a classroom teacher so that I could master all the work of it. I must ensure before that it was written on my paper that I would not return to the classroom teaching anymore so that I would not felt regret that I became a school head.)

In addition, she said that when she was still a classroom teacher she mastered her lessons cover to cover since her subjects at that time were Mathematics ad MAPEH. But this time she felt the difficulty because she needed to go back to the basics of teaching. She shared, that she studied everything in the lessons of the subjects under her teaching load. This was because she had more subjects to be taught and became an adviser, unlike before she was a floating teacher; teaching only Mathematics and MAPEH.

*“kung sa classroom teacher pako sa una kanang cover to cover master nako ang lesson kay mathematics man akong lesson akong subject nga akong gigunitan. Ahhh mathematics and MAPEH Music, Arts, and PE. Pagbalik nako sa classroom teaching naglisod ko kay nagbalik ko sa basic. I have to study everything sa tanan mga subjects nga akong gigunitan including mathematics and music which is kana kanang master kuna sa una. Maong naka ingon nga maypa wala nalang ko nag school head nag teacher nalang ahh nag classroom teacher nalang ko mas the more I became a master in my subjects I taught... Dili na! kay na apil naman kay adviser naman ko compared atong sa una nga kuan man ko kanang floating teacher, floating teacher teaching mathematics and MAPEH only. Karon tanan na, tanan apil na AP, Music ahhh MAPEH, mathematics, AP mao na sya.”*

Aurora

(When I was in the classroom before, I mastered my lessons in Mathematics, Music, Arts, and P.E. subjects but when I came back it was difficult because I needed to go back on the basic of teaching where I needed to study all subjects including Mathematics and Music which I mastered before. I realized that I should not have accepted the position before and remain to be a classroom teacher for maybe I mastered more all my subjects. I had more subjects taught when I came back because I became an adviser unlike before that I was only a floating teacher teaching mathematics and MAPEH.)

There was a good thing happened when she returned to classroom teaching. She was assigned to the same school before her promotion as a school head. With that, it was not hard for her to revive the relationship she had established before she left and become a school head. There was no gap between them, her co-teachers rely on her expertise. Her school head was also her friend because they were assigned at the same district.

*“okay lang man sila kay mao man jud ni nga school diri man jud ko nagtudlo paghawa nako ayyy pagkuha sa ako nga school head. Diha man ko gikan nga eskwelahan gihapon. Unya pagbalik nako diha ra gihapon ko unya close man ko diha sa mga teachers. Okay raman wala may problema... Oo, wala wala walay gap. Gani naga rely gani na sila sa akoo. Close man mi... Sa akong school head? Aahh wala man kay friend man mi. Daan naman mi friend kay kauban baya mi sa district.”*

Aurora

(When I came back, there was no problem and gap between my colleagues since I came from the same school before. We were still close with one another and in fact, they relied on me. There was no problem also with my school head since we were friends already because we were in the same district.)

She shared also that her coming back as a classroom teacher had an disadvantage on her part because she focused on administrative work and supervision for 12 years, and because of this, she had the difficulty in teaching again because the tasks as a school head were different from teaching. She was worried at first about how she would teach her students inside the classroom.

*“Disadvantages lang gyud kay naka focused ko sa administration and supervision diha ko naka focus within 12 years, unya ang naka disadvantage pag balik nako sa classroom lisod gyud kay lahi man gyud ang teaching.”*

Aurora

(The disadvantage, I was focused on the administration and supervision for 12 years. When I came back it was difficult because the work of the school head was different in the teaching.)

The primary problem she faced was on handling the students’ attitudes since she was assigned as an adviser of grade 5 learners, she observed that majority were misbehaving. That was one of her unforgettable moments because after 12 years of not teaching students there was a great adjustment in managing and facing that kind of student.

*“Ang adjustment nako sa attitude sa mga bata kay ahh kay gibutang dayon ko na adviser. Adviser sa grade 5 nga wherein the all negative attitudes bad attitudes of pupils are in the grade 5 nga gi handalan nako. Mao to ang unforgettable nako kay mga maldito gyud unya syempre adjustment kay for 12 years nga wala nag tudlo adjustment gyud grabe.”*

Aurora

(My adjustment was with the attitude of the children because I was assigned immediately as an adviser of grade 5 wherein all the negative attitudes of pupils were in that section that I handled. It was unforgettable because they were so stubborn and it was hard to adjust for I had not been teaching for 12 years.)

In dealing with those students, she revealed honestly that she just ignored them because the students now were not the same as the students before, students before were more disciplined. After 12 years of working as a school head, a big difference in the attitudes of students could be observed. She expressed that the students were no longer respectful and the traditional strategies of disciplining them were no longer effective like for example widening the eyes of the teacher to make them keep quiet during the class discussion. She just used flattery words for them to be able to listen and sometimes ignored them so that she cannot do anything that would harm them. She reiterated that it was risky to discipline students nowadays, the important thing was that she was receiving a salary every month.

*“sa tinuod lang ignore nako dili kaparehas tong una ba nga grabe ang disiplina sa mga bata kay lahi baya ang mga bata karon after 12 years lahi na sila. Syempre ang mga bata karon dili na madala ra og sigahan nimo og mata. Dili najud kaparehas tong una gyud kay compared tong una sigahan lang nimo og mata wala na karon dili nana pwede nga strategy. Kanang usahay ignore nalang nako para dili ma hinaykan. Oo, delikado man ang importante nga ang imong sweldo nagpadayon.”*

Aurora

(For 12 years of not teaching, my strategies were no longer effective for today’s students. Students before and now were different since they would not afraid when their teacher would widen their eyes. That was why I would just ignore them unlike before that I was very strict. I ignored their bad attitude so that I would not lose my temper for it was not good for me, the important thing that I still receive my salary.)

As a result of having misbehaved students, her teaching was affected since she could not focus on her teaching instruction. Students’ were just talking with one another during the class and most of them had their learning span of 15 minutes only. After 15 minutes, they had their games. She made mention that perhaps the reason for this was they became grade 1 when they were still 6 years old, at that age they were supposed to be playing unlike before that grade 1 started at 7 years old, more matured compared to this generation.

*“I can’t focus on my teaching the lesson kay mag sige naman ug badlong sa mga bata sometimes I ignore them just to focus on my lesson... Ang kana gyud ang ilahang pagka bata gyud ba mogawas gyud to ilahang pagka mag tabi, kanang dili maminaw kana gyud ana man gyud na sya kasagaran sa attitude sa mga bata kay mga learning span sa mga bata mas dugay na ng 15 minutes. Kay sila gyud usually kuan sa dula siguro kay tungod nag sugod sila sa grade 1 in 6 years old mao ng playing pa baya ng 6 years old unlike sa una na 7 years old matured na gyud ang mga bata.”*

Aurora

(I could not focus on my teaching since I always reprimanded unruly students. I would just ignore them so I could focus in my class because it could not be avoided that their childish

attitude of being talkative and not listening in the discussion would come out naturally. The reason for this because they only had 15 minutes learning span and always wanted to play. And probably they started grade 1 at an early age of 6 that was why they were more in playing unlike before that grade 1 students started in 7 years old.)

### **Moral and Technical Supports: Weapons to Get Back on Track**

She said that most of her co-teachers were her friends, and they established a close relationship with each other. Upon coming to the school, they gave her advice that maybe it was not her time yet and the best time for her will be coming soon. They gave her moral support on what she experienced and told her to be practical, anyway she still received a salary every month though she was back in the classroom.

*A: ahm they give me advices man pud, "sige lang kay basig dili ma nimu time moabot ra imong time." Murag mga moral support mao ra gyud naka kuan sa akoo, sabagay ang akong huna huna nga nganu man diy sabagay sige man pud man ko ug sweldo.*

R: yes, maam!

A: Practical nalang diba?

R: opo

(A: They gave me moral support and said that it was not my time and probably the right time would come to me soon. And I thought the same thing as long as I still had my salary.

R: Yes, maam!

A: It was practical right?

R: yes!)

In terms of her work, her colleagues guided and helped her on the reports that she had difficulty or forgot the way to make it. They were willing to help her especially those teachers who were bound to retire in the service but wanted to remain in the service, they were the people whom she always approached to help her since they were also her friends.

*"halimbawa ug naa koy mga reports dili naku mahibal-an, kalimot naku ug unsaon paghimo, they willing to teach me katong mga co-teachers naku nga gusto na mag retired ug dili pa gusto mag retired na hapit na mag retired, sila man ang akoang gina duolan, sila man pud akong friend pa sa una pud nga nag abot lang gihapon me karon."*

Aurora

(Those co-teachers I had before were still in the school and did not want to retire. They were the people I approached since they are my friends before and now. They were willing to teach and help me with those reports I did not know or I forgot on how to make it.)

As a school head before, she observed different teachers with different classroom strategies and activities, so by the time she came back as a classroom teacher, those strategies that she remembered became a standard for her. According to her, those strategies were good also inside the classroom. One of the strategies she applied was the use of ICT, which was suitable for the students of this generation. She was grateful to those observations and the great teachers because she taught her students effectively in the classroom.

A: Ahm ma remember to naku tong mga na obserbahan nako sa una, aw mao pud to akong gina benchmarks okay pud tong ilahang mga strategy, mao tong akong gina himu karon, gina benchmarks.

R: Yes, maam Can you give some example po maam na kato gyud ang ni kuan, ni tatak sa imoha maam and nagamit nimu inside your classroom?

A: Ang pag gamit ug pag integrate sa ICT into teaching.

(A: I remember those I observed before, I benchmarked also their strategies because there were good.

R: Yes, Ma'am. Can you give some example of strategy that marked on you and you used inside your classroom?

A: The use and integration of ICT into teaching.)

### **Not a Failure after All: From Master Teacher 1 Promoted to Master Teacher 2**

For others, hardship is one of the reasons why they stop from their work or dreams but for Aurora, hardships were motivation for her to continue on where she is now. As she shared, the motivation for her to continue in the teaching field was her

promotion as Master Teacher II aside from that she added, that when she experienced struggles she was motivated to show her best to everyone. She continued her study and aimed to finish her Doctoral Degree to be more motivated in her teaching.

*“ang naka motivate naku ang pagka promote naku ug teacher Master II the more I show struggle the more should I show my best because I promoted Master Teacher II kana lang labi na kay ga iskwela pakog doctoral. The more I be motivated in my teaching pa.”*

Aurora

(I was motivated because I was promoted as a Master Teacher II. And with this, I needed to show my best in every situation I may encounter, especially that I enrolled in a doctor's degree.)

One of her triumphs when she returned to classroom teaching, was her promotion as Master Teacher II. She narrated that one of her targets in returning to classroom teaching was promotion. She was happy because upon her returned she was promoted because, of her 12 years serving as school head, she remembered that she never had been promoted to her position for 12 years. She was happy because there was progress in her position and when she will be retired from the service she would receive a high pension since the salary would be the basis of it.

R: yes, maam success or triumphs?

A: Nga ga balik ko sa classroom?

R: na nakuha nimu in returning as a classroom teacher

A: Kuan na promote as a master teacher 2 nalang. Isa pud na sya sa akong target nganung ni balik ko. Actually nalipay pud ko ani kay pag ingun nga ibalik kog classroom nga nahuna hunaan naku na may ra pud ingani na balik kog classroom kay para pud ma promote ko, 12 years wala gyud ko na promote.

R: yes, maam

A: Master teacher I lang gihapon pag balik naku ug classroom nalipay man ko ba the other side nasakitan ko pero the other side nalipay man ko pud kay balik kog classroom kay para para ma promote pud ko kuan baya ahm pag retired nimo sweldo pud bya ang basihan.

(R: Yes, Ma'am success or triumphs?

A: When I return to classroom?

R: What you get in returning as a classroom teacher?

A: That I was promoted as a Master Teacher II. It was one of my targets why I returned. It was a blessing in disguise that I returned to the classroom for I had been promoted after 12 years.

R: Yes, Ma'am

A: When I came back, I was still a Master Teacher I and eventually, I was promoted into Master Teacher II. I was happy at the same time sad because I was hurt when they return me but still I was happy because I got the promotion since the salary was the basis in the retirement.)

In terms of her teaching, her success was the opportunity to teach again students inside the classroom, which she described as more enjoyable than being a school head. This was when she was a school head, she was always inside the office doing paper works, and she did not have someone to talk to because she was just there alone. While as a classroom teacher, she had her students who were enjoyable to be with because reprimanding those students inside the classroom became part of her routine.

*“Ang success sa teaching maam ang kuan nga nalipay man pud ko maam na nabalik ko kay maka tudlo na pud ko utro, kay enjoy man ang teaching, enjoyed man pud sya compared sa school head nga naara ka permi sa imong office labi nag daghan kag trabahoon labi nag ikaw ra isa didto, wala kay ka istorya samantalang sa classroom ka sige rakag badlong ang mga problema mga wala ra pud, kay sige raman kag badlong sa mga batang badlongon ma enjoy pud ka sa ilahang pagka badlongon ana lang.”*

Aurora

(The success in my teaching was when I came back because I could teach again the students for it was enjoyable compared to being a school head since you are just always in the office working with many paper works alone. Unlike in the classroom you have the students always who could ease problem also.)

As she returned to classroom teaching, she realized that the responsibilities of a school head are heavy. School heads have wide responsibilities since they handle the whole school. Unlike in classroom teaching, teachers just focus on the responsibilities on the four corners of the rooms. She said that her life now is simple than being a school head because before she was so stressed that resulted in headaches. When she was a school head she thought of many things like the attitudes of the students, teachers, and parents who were not cooperative with the projects implemented in the school. Now as a classroom teacher, she felt less stress

because she was just inside her classroom, and she became a Master Teacher II having the same salary as the principal yet with less responsibility to perform.

*“lahi gyud sya kay ang school head in general man ang responsibilities, wide responsibilities man ang gunitan sa school heads ug mag gunit ug iskwelahan. As per classroom teacher, we have only focus on responsibilities on corner of your rooms ana lang simple ra gyud sya gaan ra gyud sya karon gani compared sa una na school head ko na daghan na stress sa school heads, kanang sakit sa ulo... Kanang labad ang ulo kay ang attitude sa mga bata stress, ang attitude sa teachers, ang mga attitude sa parents na dili mag cooperate sa imong mga projects. Samantalang karon dili gyud ko stress kay naa rako sa classroom, gani nalipay man gani ko na master teacher II ko karon the same salary in principal pero naa ko sa classroom gaan ra gyud akong trabaho.”*

Aurora

(It was very different because the responsibilities of a school head were many. For classroom teachers, we only had to focus in the classroom and it was very simple compared to before as a school head that I always had a headache because of the attitude of children, teachers, and parents who did not cooperate with the projects. And now, I am not stressed anymore because I am only in the classroom. And I am happy also that I was promoted as Master Teacher II that has the same salary as the principal but has lesser work.)

### **A Call Not to Return School Heads to Classroom Teachers**

She shared advice to the teachers who are aiming to become school heads someday. She advised them not to accept the position of a school head without a paper stating that they would not be assigned as classroom teacher again if ever they would not pass the principals' examination. This was because the time and effort would be wasted just like what she experienced. She also shared that now there were schools that had a vacancy for a school head because the school head had retired already but she did not accept the chance of becoming a school head again. She said she would not return to being a school head unless she would pass the principals' test so that she would not be worried if she would be demoted from her post.

*“Advices to them na do not accept the work of school heads or do not accept school heads kung wala moy papel na gi gunitan nga nag pa matood na dili namu mabalik sa classroom. Kay sayang ang panahon, ang efforts sa ingun nako bitaw sa karon naa may mga bakante na mga school heads siyempre naa namay mga nag retired. Mobalik ko ug school heads, one ang naga oppose sa akoa ang akong mga pamilya nganong mo balik ko sa school heads diha nako mo balik ug ma pasar na nako ang exam sa principal exam or maka dawat nako og papel na dili nako maka balik sa classroom. Kay sayang ang efforts, sayang ang panahon akong huna huna nga dili na pud ko mo balik og school head og tama pud tong ilahang gi ingun na dili pud ko ma pasar sa exam sa principal ug tama pud nga dili nako mabalik sa classroom teacher.”*

Aurora

(My advice to them is to not accept the work of a school head if you do not have the paper proving that you would not return in the classroom teaching so that your time and efforts would not be wasted. There was a vacant position of school heads since many of them retired already. I could go back on that position but my family opposed it and said that if I would return I should pass first the principal's exam or I would get a paper saying that being a school head is permanent so that my efforts and time were not useless and in my mind, I realized that it was correct.)

Another piece of advice she shared is for the school heads who wanted to return to being classroom teachers. She said that if they were already in the position and there were no decisions that they needed to return to being classroom teachers they should not come back. As she said, it would be a hard experience when they return to being classroom teachers, so they should stay in their position.

*“Kuan school heads naman gyud ka, ug dli man ka desisyonan na mo balik di man gyud ka mo balik kay lahi man gyud maglisod naman lage ani nalang ang ako siguro advice before ka mo dawat o tama ba o makuha ba nimu ang mga requirements kay ug dili ayaw nalang ma o rani ang akoang advice sa mga gusto mag school heads.”*

Aurora

(If the higher officials will not decide to return you to classroom then do not return, because it is hard to experience. My advice, before they accept it they should think if it is right or do they have the requirements already to become a school head.)

To avoid problems like what she experienced, she suggested that if there are vacant positions for school heads, they should follow the right process and standards so that nobody will be hurt. Since in the end, they are the ones who will take

responsibility for it, so in the start they should do the proper procedure to avoid conflict. They should ensure that the school head who will be assigned in a certain school have the standards, skills, and abilities, it is not like they appoint someone that in the end, they would just return them on the classroom teaching easily. It was sad and hurtful on her side that she did not want others to experience.

A: Ang akong recommendation siguro nga dili nila ibutang sa, nga iassign sa school heads ang wala ka pasar

R: Yes, maam. moagi gyud ug proseso!

A: moagi gyud sila ug proseso, ug principal unit test nga passers gyud, una nila ibutang sa ma school head kay para dili pud ma disappointed ang teacher.

(A: My recommendation is they should not assign teachers as school heads if they did not pass the qualification or exam.

R: Yes, ma'am, they should undergo process!

A: They should undergo the process and they should pass first the principal unit test before they assign them as school heads for the teachers not to be disappointed at the end.)

### AMANTE'S NARRATIVE

#### No Money, Bigger Responsibility: Roots of Stepping Down

Amante shared that the reason why he returned to being a classroom teacher was because the responsibilities of a school head assigned to two schools were not for him. A school head has big responsibilities and obligations to carry on his back since the scope was the whole school community. Another one was the accomplishment report for every school that if ever it was a failure it was also their accountability and the school that was assigned to him cannot stand alone that time since there were no MOOE given to them, that was why he stepped down as a school head and returned to being a classroom teacher. Additionally, the travel expenses from their house to school were also quite expensive, and besides he is the breadwinner of their family he needs to support them. Aside from that, he needed also to support his sibling for his/her medication.

*“para sa akong being school head install sa duha ka school nganung ning hawa ko as being school head sa rason nga dili pa kay ko ka kuan sa akong dako kaayo na obligasyon man gyud, responsible man gyud mahimo kang school heads tungod kay the whole man gyud ang imo man gyud obligasyon or responsibilities nimo ang school dili lang ang school kundi ang mga teachers kundi tanan nga pwde nga aw unsa kana bitawng tanang unsa ni accomplishments, failure naka salalay sa imoha. Una nag step down ko kay tungod kay ang traveling expenses plus dili pa kayo stable or dili pa maka stand-alone ang school kay wala pamaay kaugalingon nga school MOOE... Then the third is ang financial status naku kay tungod ako ang breadwinner sa amoa kay sa among family aside ana kay murag naa man gyud ko sa kuan ato nga time na kinahanglan nako akong support sa akong manghud kay tungod sa iyang personal na medication.”*

Amante

(As a school head assigned to two schools, I resigned because of the wide obligations and responsibilities not only in the school but also to the teachers. All the accomplishments and failures were also your accountabilities. Another reason was the school cannot stand alone since it has no own school MOOE. And lastly, was because of my financial status. I was the breadwinner in our family and at that time I needed to support my younger sibling with his/her medication and the travel expenses going to our school were quite expensive.)

#### Back to Where He Started: Travails in Teaching in the Hinterlands

In returning to classroom teaching, he asked his direct supervisor to return him in the classroom but to the school where he started as a teacher. This school was located in one of the hinterland areas of Davao del Norte. He wanted to start again his journey as a classroom teacher in that school because he could not forget his experience when he was assigned in that school, the sacrifices and hardships just to bring education to the IP Community. He shared that no amount of money can suffice the experience he had in the hinterland. One of his best experiences in returning was the warm welcome of the community and their support to the school and teachers. He added that it was not easy to teach in a school that has no internet connection and no gadgets but the happiness he felt that time was genuine and pure because he witnessed the simple living of the people in that community.

*“sa pag balik naku nga classroom teacher nga nag request man gyud ko sa atoang supervisor nga ug pwde mo balik ko sa \*\*\*\*\* elementary school para didto na pud ko manukad sa akong new journey, kay maka hinumdom gyud ko nga dili naku malimtan nga ang among experience dili gyud ka bayran ang among experience sa bukid kay tungod sa ka layo sa hardships. That community kung unsa ang ilahang mainit nalang supporta sa school ug sa teachers. So una na sya sa kining akong mahinumdoman pag balik naku as a classroom teacher nga dili gyud diay lalim na ma assign ka sa mga lagyo o mga bukid nga walay internet connections then*

walay gadgets kining genuine na kalipay or pure gyud na kalipay simple living sa mga tao nga maoy makapalipay sa *imoha*.”

Amante

(As I came back as a classroom teacher, I requested our supervisor If I could come back to \*\*\*\* Elementary School to start my journey there. I remembered that the most unforgettable experience in teaching at the hinterland that even money could not buy were the distance, hardships, and the support of the community for the school and the teachers. It was not easy to be assigned in far-flung places where there were no internet connections and gadgets it was only the genuine and pure happiness that symbolize the simple living of the people there.)

Moreover, he shared that in the first few days of being a classroom teacher again he had this new inspiration, new hopes, and new beginnings. He thought that his hands can give hope to those children in the hinterlands to learn new things and impart new knowledge to them.

*“new inspiration, new hopes, new beginnings sa classroom teacher... Tungod kay naa sa akong kamot ang murag ang pag asa na maka learn sila ug unsay new learning maka learn sila ug new terms kanang maka impart kog pag tulon an sa mga kabataan.”*

Amante

(It was a new inspiration, a new hope, and a new beginning for me as a classroom teacher because I felt that it was in my hands the hope for the children to learn new things and new lessons.)

The first challenge he experienced in returning to classroom teaching was the travel going to the assigned school. The school could not be accessed by any type of vehicle that was why they needed to walk.

*“Kay ug mo ingun man gyud ug kanang kalisod maam kay siguro nalisdan ko kay layo ang among station sa pag baktas padulong sa among station mao nay usa sa mga nalisdan naku nga mga pag balik naku as a classroom teacher.”*

Amante

(When I came back as a classroom teacher the difficulty, I experienced was the travel going to our school since it was far and we need to walk just to arrive there.)

He added that in the school year that he returned to the classroom, he experienced evacuation because of armed conflict in the community. He expressed that he could not forget that experience because they were evacuated in the other area for 1-2 months. They stayed in that area together with students and the people of the community. Since it was almost the end of the school year, they practiced their graduation ceremony even though they were not in their place.

*“in terms pud nga sa pag balik naku didto nga ang community namakwit ang mga tao sa Kapatagan tungod atong sa arm conflict between sa mga pikas ug sa cafgu so ato nga time nga na strand me didto sa kapatagan almost 1 month or 2 months me nag stay didto apil ang mga kabataan so mao ng di gyud namu malimtan maam nga nag bakwit ang among mga kauban... Kuan lang man to sya maam pag pahuman naman to sya by march naman gyud to sya maam... So among kuan ato more practice lang gyud me ato para sa among graduation.”*

Amante

(When I came back I could not forget the experience in arm-conflict that resulted in the people in the community evacuated on the other sitio. We stayed there for 1 or 2 months together with the children in the community. And that happened at the end of the school year in March so what we did was to continue the practice for the graduation.)

One of the difficulties he experienced in returning to classroom teaching was handling students specifically IP children. The language barrier was a factor since he could not speak Ata-Manobo Language. It was hard for him since he could not express himself because the students also could not understand him well. But time went by, he needed to adapt to the language and culture of the Ata-Manobo Tribe, and eventually, he imparted the needed knowledge and learning for those students.

*“in teaching situation maam so far siguro na lisod ko pero sa pag handle sa class ahm we know IP children kanang lisod kayo sila ihandle kay una una kay language barrier maam unya kuntahay dili ka kabalo mo kuan unsa na manobo sa mga bata so dili ka maka emphasize, you have to adapt the new culture kung unsa, kung asa ka na assign para maka impart pud ka sa mga lesson sa mga bata.”*

Amante

(I had difficulty in handling the class since they were IP children and the challenge was the language barrier. If you do not know how to speak a Manobo language you could not express

what you wanted to tell them. You need to adapt the culture wherever you are assigned to impart the lesson to your children.)

At first, he was culture-shocked, since everything had a different meaning. The Bisayan language has a different meaning from the Ata-Manobo language. He needed to be very careful so that it would not cause any misunderstanding or misinterpretation between his students and the IP community. He gave examples like the hair in Bisaya when translated to Ata-Manobo it is 'Bol-bol' and if Bisaya people heard that word it was not appropriate to be spoken in the public. So he expressed that it was hard to have this language barrier because they have a different way of understanding words.

*"Ma culture shock ka maam ka kay kung unsa ang ilahang definition sa ilahang terms ahmm parehas pud atong buhok sa ilaha unya sa atoa kay bol-bol so murag ing-ana ba lahi lahi ug pag sabot... Ahmm lahi man gyud ug pag sabot sa ilaha so usa na sya sa bantayan kung ma assign ta sa kuan ip community kay lahi ang ilahang pag sabot ug lahi pud ang ilahang interpretation."*

Amante

(I was culture-shocked when it came to the definition of terms. For example, in our language, we call it 'hair' while for them they call it pubic hair it has different meaning. We needed to be careful when we would be assigned to the IP communities because they had different understanding and interpretation.)

### Facing the Trials in Classroom through Gained Experiences

One of the adjustments in returning to classroom teaching was the pedagogy, but for Amante, it was not that hard since he acquired lots of teaching enhancement before his promotion as school head. He also added that as a teacher there was a need to prioritize the profession and adopt the necessary things in the school. He mentioned that there were no changes since the knowledge that he acquired during his college days was still applicable when he returned to the classroom.

*"So far sa akoo Ma'am wala man koy adjustment natural man gyud na... Nagatrain man ta as teacher ahh ipag tigbabawaw ang imohang profession you need to adopt hmm Ma'am kining pag mo ingun tag changes wala may ma usab ana wala may kausaban kay mao raman gihapon na siya gi studyhan."*

Amante

(So far, I had no adjustment because it was natural for us to teach. We were trained as a teacher so we needed to do our work for it was our profession. And if we say about changes, there is nothing to change because what we studied before are still the same.)

Aside from the acquired training he had before, he survived the challenges and difficulties he encountered with the help of his co-teachers. As he said, they were all 100% supportive of him. When he decided to return to the classroom, they were very happy for him because they have a boy colleague in their school since they are all girls.

*"Yes ma'am, hundred percent ang ilahang pag support sa akoo ahh nako as a classroom teacher mas nalipay sila nga naa silay kuyog or kauban nga lalaki so dali ra kay mag adjust maam."*

Amante

(Yes Ma'am, they supported me hundred percent as a classroom teacher. They were happy because they had a male colleague, so it was not difficult for me to adjust.)

Furthermore, his learning from being a school head served as his guide to grow more in the teaching field. He made that also as a basis to sow the hard work of a school head especially those school head that was also a teacher at the same time. For him, that was a tough work. That was why, he made that as a guide that the lives of school heads were not easy.

*"Gi himu naku na sya nku na guide para mo grow kog samot, gi himu naku nga dili diay lalim na mahimo kag school head and the same time teacher."*

Amante

(I used it as my guide to help me grow more and realize that being a school head and at the same time, a teacher was not easy.)

He added, that, in terms of teaching, he also learned from being a school head that the methods of teaching were dependent on the abilities of learners. This is because children have their differences and capabilities in understanding the lessons,

some were fast learners and others were slow learners and there are also hyper or very active in the class that's why he emphasized that the teaching method to be used must equate on the capabilities of children you were teaching.

*"in terms of teaching ma'am ahm kuanang kuan ma'am depende man gyud na sya sa ability xa mga bata nga naay genius, naa pud sobra kayo ka kuan ahm unsa ni hyper so depende na sa imong deal sa mga bata."*

Amante

(In terms of teaching Ma'am, it depends on the ability of the children and to you as a teacher on how you handle them since there is a genius and there are also super hyper children.)

### Stepping-down as the Right Decision: A Reflection

Despite all the challenges and hardships, he experienced, he was still successful in returning to classroom teaching. He had chosen the right decision in stepping down as school head because he saw that he was more capable and effective in the teaching field since his IP students were able to learn how to read. The time he returned, he was assigned in the lower grade levels, the Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3 in which he targeted that at the end of the school year they will be able to learn how to read not 100% but at least there was an improvement with their reading abilities. He was thankful to the Lord that at that time there were only few of his Grade 2 students who could not read. And with this result, he considered himself successful.

*"Siguro maka ingun ko nga tama gyud ang akong desisyon nga nag step down ko as a school head kay siguro sa teaching nga area didto nako ma ingun nga effective na maka kuan sila makabalo sila ug pag basa kung unsaon ug makabalo sila kay tungod pagbalik naku as a classroom teacher na assign man ko sa grade 1 and grade 2, 3 ang akoang target kay maka basa gyud sila dili man hundred percent na makabasa sila pero atleast dunay percentage na makabasa kalooy sa Ginoo akoang grade 2 dunay gamay nalang makabasa ang uban ana makabasa na."*

Amante

(Maybe I could say that my decision was right in stepping down as a school head because in teaching, I could say that I am effective in terms of how I teach them to read and make them learn faster. As I came back as a classroom teacher, I was assigned at grade 1, grade 2, and grade 3 and my main target was to teach them to read. They were not even a hundred percent readers but at least they could read a little. And glory to God that most of my Grade 2 learners were already readers.)

With that success, he was motivated to continue in the field of teaching and it was his dream as a plane teacher to be transferred to his own locality and serve the children there. In this manner, he will not walk for many hours just to arrive at the assigned station and crossed rivers many times. He also aimed to end that kind of hardship.

*"ang akong dream lang gyud naku as a plane teacher ma transfer ko sa among pinuy-an ari sa among locality para dili na pud kayo me mag hago ug tudlo labi na diri sa among bukid ma assign unya mo baktas paka ug pila ka kilometers unya ma ulan mo baktas ka pa kining mga unsay tawag ani mo kuan ka pa sa mga sapa ang akong lang gyud kay mo balik sa akoang locality para ma serve naku nga deserving diay ko nga classroom teacher."*

Amante

(My only dream Ma'am as a plain teacher at that time was to be transferred to our locality so that it would not be hard for us to teach especially, that we were assigned in the hinterland. With that, I would not walk kilometers and cross the river many times on rainy days. That is why I wanted to transfer to my locality for me to serve and to be a deserving classroom teacher.)

He realized that as a school head, his one foot was already buried in the ground because of the heavy responsibilities. The things that happened in the school reflected the leadership of the school head aside from the accountabilities the school head possessed.

*"Ang realization naku ato Ma'am kung former school head man gyud ka ang imohang pikas tiil man gyud naka lubong na nganung naka lubong na tungod kay dako man gyud ni sya nga responsibilities sa school heads kay labi na ug unsa imohang tapokanan sa imohang school kay mo reflect sa imoha."*

Amante

(My realization Ma'am, when you are a school head your other foot was already buried on the ground. It was because of the big responsibility, especially that what would happen to the school would reflect on you.)

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### Right Process: An Advice to Others, a Call to the Authorities

The best advice that he gave to the teachers who wanted to become school heads was to check their willingness in accepting the responsibilities and obligations of the leader of the school. They must consider that the responsibilities are not easy because the school relied on the capabilities of the school head in managing and leading the school. Being a school head was not a joke because you carry the name of the school.

*“akoang ma advice lang sa mga teachers nga mo aspire as school head ahh huna-hunaa gyud maka daghan nga ang school heads dili sya ingun tang gamay lang na responsibilidad dako ang iyahang saklaw o responsibilidad tungod kay mo ingun tang school head sa imoha nakasalalay ang school ang name sa school so mao ng bringing the name of school dili pud sya ingun nga ti-aw mag school heads lang ka to impress ang kuan diha ma’am ang willingness na kanang mo serve.”*

Amante

(My advice to those teachers who aspired to become a school head that they need to think that being a school head, we could not say that they have fewer responsibilities instead they have bigger responsibilities and scope. Also, the name of the school depends on their performance that is why it is not easy and it is important that they needed to have the willingness to serve.)

Another piece of advice for the school heads who wanted to return to being a classroom teacher, that they should ensure themselves that they will love teaching learned the strategies to teach the students and to love and care for them. They should also ensure a good relationship with their co-workers.

*“kung gikan kag school heads siguro ilove cguro nimu ang teachings and I love nimu ang estratihiya kung unsa on nimu pag love sa mga bata maayu siguro ang imohang dealing towards teachers.”*

Amante

(When you return from being a school head, you should love teaching, and you should love the strategies like how you love your students and how you would deal with your co-teachers.)

Because of what he experienced, he gave recommendations for the DepEd authorities to make sure that the person they wanted to appoint as school head has a heart or willingness to accept the challenges and responsibilities of a leader. He added, they should follow the guidelines to see if the abilities are fit with the role of being school heads. As he experienced that they just scouted and appointed him to become a school head and with that, he was forced to accept that position. Additionally, that position should follow the process of ranking to see who is the most potential for that position to avoid the same case that happened to him.

*“Siguro recommendation naku salaon sa kuno ang willingness sa isa ka teacher na mo aspire siya as school head. Salaon sa unya sa deped nga naa silay guidelines na mo suit sa abilidad as school head... Kuan raman to sya maam murag gi appoint lang man to sya maam kay wlaa man to gi agi nga screening murag gi appoint lang nga kana school head ka murag scout lang nga mo school heads ka kay unang una na pugos raman pud ko ato... moagi gyud ug ranking.”*

Amante

(My recommendation that they should screen properly the willingness of a teacher who aspires to become a school head and the DepEd should set the guidelines that suit the abilities of the position. In my case, I was scouted only to become a school head without proper screening and ranking. I was forced to accept the position for they assigned me immediately.)

## MARIA’S NARRATIVE

### Teaching as Calling: Deep Reason for Returning

For some teachers, teaching is their calling. Just like Maria, the reason why she returned to classroom teaching was to teach little children. Aside from the distance from their home to her assigned school, she also wanted to serve on her barangay or locality.

*“It is my passion to teach little children as well as of course the college no? Okay so, aside the distance in our home to the school where in ah I really wanted to be serving in our in my own place or barangay.”*

Maria

(It is my passion to teach little children as well as the college. And aside from the distance from our home to the school I wanted to serve also in my place or barangay.)

Dealing with people who are older than her was not her thing. She had this experience that the former school head of the school that she took over get mad at her for she made the school beautiful and improved. She stated that when she was the school head, she made the school better than before. The barangay captain said he would donate the 5 hectares of the lot for the school

because he was happy with her leadership, but she said to the barangay captain that the former school head wanted her to be out of the school.

*“And I have reasons you know because I really don’t know to deal with people that is older than me. And besides I have experience such a school head and in barangay so in fact as if I had shared with you that the yon na no naging kasalanan ko lang is just to make that school beautiful. Sabi ng barangay captain sabi niya noon na that he will be giving that 5 hectares for me.”*

Maria

(I really did not know how to deal with people older than me and I experienced that with the former school head of my assigned school and in barangay there. With my stay there, I made the school beautiful and the barangay. The captain offered the 5 hectares of the barangay lot for the school.)

It was good for her to be out in that school because the division office decided to give her another assignment which is very near to their house. The officials also considered that she did not want to continue as an administrator because of her first experience as a school head.

*“Okay and besides naman I have a new assignment where very near here in our place. I don’t want an administrator so ayoko nadala na talaga ako because of the experience I have in having supposedly a school that should be na hinandle ko na school.”*

Maria

(I have a new assignment, and it is very near here in our place. And I did not want to be an administrator anymore because of the experience I had encountered before in a school I handled.)

Furthermore, it was still an achievement for her even though she was out of that school because the time she left, the whole school was crying. The learners and parents cried because they were very supportive to her when she was still the school head. They even said that they would make a rally for her not to be out of that school and also the barangay captain told that they would give the 5 hectares of barangay site for the school for her not just to leave. She never accepted the idea of the parents and the offer of the barangay captain because she did not want to bring her life into a risky situation. She decided to return to being a classroom teacher in the school that she taught before her promotion as a school head.

*“So it’s really achievements para bang talaga yong nangyari when I out from the school that time the school cried so ibig sabihin learners really cried and the parents grabe ang suporta nila sa akong ma’am possible you will not out from this school we have to really support with you mag rally so ayoko sabi ko when the barangay captain said I will be giving the lot for this school site ah five hectares of barangay site. I will giving you for the school yun ang sabi ng kapitan. No kasi I will not be ah yun bang gagawin ko ang life ko na maging risky... I need is okay I will be out then you must be okay ah kailangan ibalik ako sa school ko.”*

Maria

(What happened was still an achievement. When I about to leave the school, everyone was crying, and this means that they really supported me when I was their school head. The parents said, they would rally for me not to be out of this school but I rejected their idea. Also, the barangay captain said that he would really give me the 5-hectare lot of the barangay, but I still rejected it. I wanted my life away from the risk of staying there so, I needed to return to my old school.)

When she was about to leave, she talked to the learners from grades 1 to 6 but at that moment she did not know that there was a memorandum issued that she would be transferred to another school as an administrator and not as a classroom teacher. She said that she did not have any idea that someone issued a memorandum for her. She narrated, at that time she was teaching Filipino subject to the grade 5 students she saw a white butterfly flying inside the classroom. She said that the butterfly followed her, and her student told her that the butterfly had been following her earlier before she noticed it. The husband of the former administrator of the school approached her asking if they could put something on some part of the school because they wanted to maintain the other parts of it. In that conversation, they were just calm and they were only asking for permission.

*“ang nangyari when time that I will be leaving I was talking those learners from grades 1 to 6 pero hindi ko parin alam na that I was issued a memo na I will be going to another school same the I will be the administrator to another school. So sabi ko no, pero wala talaga akong ka alam alam they have some issued some memo, I mean somebody issued a memo for me wala akong kaalam alam na ang pangyayari there is yun pala. So it was then na I was there para bang ang school kasi may taas-taas so I was teaching there filipino I think grade 5 alam mo the thing there nangyari may natagpuan akong butterfly puti, alam mo sinundan niya ako sa taas, was that having my class okay so, maam kanina payan sabi nila parang sige lipad-*

lipad so it was then na may mag kapatid na para bang husband of the administrator before is nakiusap na sakin they have put something things parts of the school, sabi ko better atleast kunti lang ang imaintain it was na may pag-uusap actually di kami nag away basta nag paalam *sya*.”

Maria

(On the day that I would be leaving, I was talking to those learners from grades 1 to 6, but I did not know that there was a memo issued that I would be going to another school. I was teaching Filipino in grade 5, and during that time I found a white butterfly, and it was following me then my students saw that, and said it was already there before I noticed it. Then a sibling came into the school, and I think one of them was the husband of the former administrator. They wanted to put something in the part of the school and I agreed at least there were few things to maintain, and actually we did not fight that time, they just asked permission.)

After that, when she was on top of their building, she saw policemen and one of them was her former student in college. They were talking about the plan for her safety. She also said that she would not risk her life, she did not want to be a hero for that school. That afternoon, she did not know that, that was her last stay in that school. When the DepEd officials came she was crying so hard not because of the position but because of the students. The time that she talked to the learners, they also cried, for the students did not want that she would leave the school. Accordingly, they would stop coming to school once she would be out. She replied to them that they should not make her a hindrance to learn. They should go to school and they should finish their studies for her. The moment she decided to go, her sister fetched her with a motorcycle, then the children were running after her because they did not want her to leave.

*“I was there yun nga sa taas ng building kita ko yung magkapatid na pulis ata yun kasi naging estudyante ko college, they were talking wala lang ako kasi yun pala they have some plan para ganun para ma avoid ako sa danger. Kaya nga sabi nila I will not put my life into risk kasi if I had to accept this ayokong maging hero. Then yun they were talking I rebuke the butterfly if you are good you must to stay but if not in Jesus name you go away, naglipay gud yung butterfly nag lipad *sya* nawala thatafternoon pala diko alam na that was the last, the last out from that school, yung nga thank you lord and beside pagpunta ng yung nag assign sakin I was cring then so hard not because of that position but im cring because of the children learners. When I talk with grade 1to 6 they will be cried and they will say maam were not going to shool anymore no no , do not make it ah what we called this magiging hendransa yung pag aaral just because of me , no your coming to school instind you must have finishis the study... so that moment that I decide my sister kasi shes petching me nag motor lang gyud *sya* nga nag etch sa akoa you know what really the children hinahabol kami because they don't want that I'm not that in that school so yun talaga hinabul talaga kami maam please stay.”*

Maria

(I was on the top of the building and I saw the two policemen who were my former students in college. They were talking and I had no idea that they had plans to prevent me from the danger. They said, I could not risk my life and accept that I am not a hero. And then I rebuke the butterfly I saw earlier. That afternoon, was my last stay and I thank the Lord when the person who assigned me there was approaching me. I was crying so hard, not for the position but for the children. When I talk to grade 6 students, they said they would not go to school anymore and I replied that I do not want it instead I want them to go to school and finish their studies for me. When my sister and I were leaving with a motorcycle the children were chasing us because they did not want me to leave the school.)

She was about to have her class in college when people from the division office asked to talk to her. They waited for her until 9 in the evening. Her sister accompanied her to the house of the division officer because she had no knowledge of driving a motorcycle. When she arrived at the house of the officer, she looked for the division officer immediately. She was informed that the officer was in the police station because the husband of the former administrator assigned was shot dead.

*“Then may mga position then sila sa division tapos ang nangyari were talking that moment pero I will having my class, so somebody said that came to the house let us talk okay. Pero you have to wait kasi 9 pa mag end yung class ko. We went there with my sister cause I don't know how to drive so we reach there sabi ko where is your mom? sabi ng anak, maam yung mama ko is naa sa pulis station so sabi ko why? because the husband of the administrator before shot dead, oo pinatay that moment na umalis ako, umuwi ako I did not go to I mean to pulis station, mga 11 siguro sabi niya joyce you must be careful.”*

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 Maria

(Some people who had positions in the division approached me but that time I had still a class until 9 in the evening so they said I would go to their house and talk. When my class ended my sister and I drove there and when we arrived I asked the daughter of the personnel. The daughter said that her mother was in the police station because the husband of the former administrator of the school where I was assigned before was shot dead. The husband was killed after I left the school, and the division personnel warned me that I needed to be careful. When I heard the news we went straight to our home.)

She said that she was not guilty of what happened to the husband of the former school head of that school because according to the people around that the relationship within the family and with the barangay was not good already. It was then, that the husband was shot dead on the day she left the school, it could not be avoided that somebody would think that it was her who hired a killer. She said that she would not be using her money, or her power to kill somebody, it never crossed her mind.

*"Hindi man din ako naging guilty na nangyari yun sa husband niya cause according to the, hindi rin maganda yung ano nila sa family. I mean within the family, within the co-barangays, parang may mga alitan ba. So ang akin lang tinapat nila nung umalis ako, so hindi maiwasan na they will have to take baka gipa patay ni ma'am joyce, in Jesus name! baka gipa patay ni ma'am joyce kay daghan siyag kwarta, no! it's not, I will not be using my money, my power for that na pumatay ug tao, kahit isa ka pitik sa akuang utok, hindi yan sumagi sa utak ko."*

Maria

(I was not guilty of what happened to her husband because according to them they were not in good terms with their family and with the barangay, so there was already an issue around them. My only concern that they made sure that I was not there. It could not avoid that someone would say that I was the one who paid just to kill him because they thought that I could do that since I had money. It was not me and I would not be using my money and my power just to kill someone. Even a small idea about it never appeared in my mind.)

She honestly shared that she just accepted the offer to become a school head because she did not want to be called picky about the work. She just accepted everything including the place where she would be assigned. Some asked why she studied for a master's and doctor's degree yet did not want to be a school head. It was her prayer to return to the classroom because at that time her husband was working in Cebu. For 24 years of being married, they never experienced living in the same house because of their work. She was not able to take good care of her daughter because she was a busy woman. She decided not to aim higher position since she was also teaching in college, she was compensated and she did not want her family to be in danger.

*"I'm not aspiring kung hindi ko tanggapin noon yung offer sa akin it might they say ah grabi maarte so accept lang nang accept kung saan ka ma assign accept lang nang accept yun na nga that I really studied also from the masteral to the doctoral degree. Kasi sometimes teacher, why is it that you keep on studying and then you don't want position? I am contented with my life and besides yun ang mga prayer ko noon kasi my husband is working in cebu and I was married 1997 but don't you know that 24 years never yung tinatawag naming na husband and wife na nag ipon talaga kanang even my daughter kasi namatay yung sister ko ayaw nya sa yaya or even the maid kasi yun na nga I am so busy woman, sabi ko besides enough na kasi in teaching also college compensated man din ako."*

Maria

(I was not aspiring at that time and if I would not accept the offer they might say that I was too picky with the work so I just accepted it since I studied also from the master's to doctor's degree. There were times that other teachers would ask me why I kept on studying but did not aim to have a position. My answer, I was contented with my life and besides, it was my prayer before because my husband was working in Cebu and I was married in the year 1997 but for the 24 years we never experienced staying and living in the same house even my daughter. I was so busy and I realized it is enough to be a classroom teacher because I am also compensated as a college instructor.)

### **Coming-back as a Science Teacher: More of 'Ups' than 'Downs'**

When she returned to her previous school, she was happy because it has a newly designed curriculum. The school has a special science class (SPED) and the regular class. She was once handling a special science class of 14 learners and according to her, it was easy to teach them because of its class size so she could have an individual interaction inside the classroom. She could focus on each of her students and give the best instruction and attention.

*"So its nice in our school because we have new design curriculum we have special science the sped and the regular class. So I am handling science so therefore I will be the special science class at ang pinaka maganda don because I was once a teacher of 14 pupils 14 learners lang and beside ang daling magturo. You have there na you can contact all those learners talaga halos ma one on one mo talaga to have there."*

Maria

(It was nice that our school had a newly designed curriculum which had the special science class and the regular class. So I was handling science before so therefore I would have the special Science class. It was a good experience for I was teaching 14 pupils only and it was easy because I could interact and teach the learners individually.)

In addition, when she returned to her previous school, her former grade level section was already given to another teacher, it was not good to remove that teacher because she has returned to the school. She said that as a master teacher, she did not have things to do while other teachers were straining their voice just to teach their students. Sometimes she took over the grade 6 students, since the teacher was old already, she was helping her in teaching the students. Sometimes too, she pulled-out those non-readers in the class and she taught them reading. This time she felt guilty about going to school and not working, so she took the initiative that time. At least those non-readers could read a little at the end of the day.

*“So hayahay kaayo ko pag dating sa new school, kasi yung grade 4 ko, may nag handle na, alangan naman tanggalon nimu siya. Ang ginagawa ko, would you imagine, july, august, September, October, October! Kalagitnaan ng October, then after that to march, my god, master teacher walang ginagawa, unya ang teacher 1 ato namamaos na mag teach sabi ko, minsan sa ano ko sa nag hahandle ng grade 6 na medyo may katandaan na rin, ako mag turo. Tapos sabi ako mag turo, tapos ang ginagawa ko noon pull-out your non readers then I will be the one to do it na mag pabasa, yung ang ginawa ko. Di ta ma konsensya from pasok pa hanggang hapon wala kang ginawa no, so yun na, atleast yung mga non reader kahit papaano, laro lang kami kahit papaano they have read.”*

Maria

(I was so blessed when I arrived at my new school because there was already someone who handled my grade 4 section before, so it was not good if I would replace that teacher. For July, August, September and, half of October, a master teacher like me had not done anything while other teachers were straining their voices in teaching. With that, sometimes I handle the grade 6, especially those under the advisory of the older teacher. And also, I initiated to pull out those non-readers in the class and teach them to read, and through that, I would not feel any guilt anymore because I had done something that could help those non-readers.)

Moreover, she chose to become a classroom teacher because in handling learners, she could request them to do something for her. She jokingly said that it was happy to make some requests to your students inside the classroom. It was also the reason that she was contented with being a classroom teacher. If ever she would have a chance to return to being a school head she would not accept it because as a master teacher she could also become an officer-in-charge of the school whenever her principal is out.

*“I choose to become a classroom teacher because in handling learners, you do this, you do that, you get things, utos ka na lang ng utos you know, yun na ang mga instances na ayoko na, I am contented, I just wanted to become a classroom teacher, as a classroom teacher also kung master teacher is just like nman pareho lang sa principal because you will become an OIC of the school whenever the principal is out.”*

Maria

(I chose to become a classroom teacher because in handling learners you could also command them to do things. So those were some reasons why I do not want to be a school head anymore because I am contented now. I just wanted to become a classroom teacher and a master teacher so that I could become an OIC of the school whenever the principal would be out.)

### **No one is left behind: Empowering the Brilliant, Lifting the Needy**

In her experience in teaching those students who belonged to the special science class, she was amazed because they were good. Aside from, that she also encountered students who were not that good. She said, if they wanted to belong in the special Science class they should get an average of 85 so that they would not be transferred to the regular class.

*“You know, those experiences I have when I’m teaching those children who belong to special science class, magagaling na talaga yan sila. I have in teaching is, ang dami naming ano yung mga experiences na may studyante talaga na they are not that good, mao na akuang gina ingun sa ilaha, isa lang ang ano ko sa ilaha na special science class, dapat ma belong sa special science class because you know when they took the examination siguro chumamba lang parang mga ganun. Pero naman the system is there if they could not reach anymore 85 with your average they will be transferring to the regular class yun lang.”*

 Maria  
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(Those experiences I had when I was teaching the special Science class was a proof that they were already good. I had also the experience to have students who were not that good. That was why I said to them that they belong to the special Science class because they were able to pass it. We have a system, if they could not reach an average of 85 they would be transferred to the regular class.)

It was easy for her to return to the classroom teaching again because she, when being a school head before, had also a teaching load. There were no adjustments in her pedagogy because she never left the teaching field. She engaged her students in the new trends in teaching and the use of computers inside the classroom. It was timely for them since they have internet connectivity in the school. She shared that last year her students were not really good because she integrated ICT into the class. She mentioned that it was not hard to teach students, especially that she had the gadgets and internet connection in school. She wondered why some teachers are saying that it was hard to teach students when in fact it was very enjoyable. It was not hard for her to teach because teaching is her passion and her forte.

*"It's just very easy, from that being a classroom teacher to an administrator is, being an administrator is still teaching, I'm still teaching so nothing to adjust, nothing become hard, specially not that, you have to engaged from the computer, it's very for us, lalo na kung sa connectivity ng internet, just last year yung mga pupil ko ang galing galing nila kasi yung nga engaged tayo na we have complete in my classroom nothing to really sabihin mo na ang hirap hirap mag turo, hindi! sabi ko bakit yung iba they have to comment such kind of in fact ang saya kaya mag turo. So yun ang pagtuturo hindi sakin mahirapan ako na mag balik because most my forte it was my passion to teach children."*

Maria

(My transition from being a classroom teacher to an administrator was easy since I was still teaching when I got promoted as a school head. With that, nothing was hard, especially that we engaged in the computer and it was very easy for us for we had internet connectivity. Just last year my pupils were really good because we were all engaged and we had completed things in my classroom. There was no reason to say that teaching is difficult. I was wondering why others would say that while in fact, it is enjoyable to teach. So for me teaching was not difficult when I came back because, it is my passion to teach the children.)

As she mentioned, those non-readers who were pulled-out from the class were not her advisory, she was then extending help to her co-teachers to teach and handle those children. It was an initiative from her to pull out non-readers from grades 1-3 and usually those students were from the regular classes. It was a matter of help from her that in her own little way, she could help those children and teachers as well. She felt sad for those children also that was the reason she helped them. The time that those children could read, the parents went to her and thanked her for helping their children. It was like a crown for her that those children learned to read because of her help though it was hard to teach them.

*"Those non-readers they were not my pupils, yun na nga no, sabi ko, wala akong advisory so it was then na hindi man din pwedeng kunan mo yung mga teacher ng subject. It's just an initiative of the time na yung mga grades 1 to 3 pull out yan if you don't know how to read, usually those pupils were from the regular class, it's just a matter of helping those school teachers also in a way na may pupils na non-reader ako na ang naga help para naman kahit papaano because we have our own way diba. Ako na mismo ang naga help sa kanila just because parang na aawa karin, so the time na, ma'am makabasa na akoang anak thank you, those are sa mga teacher para bang yun na ang magiging crown natin no, kahit papaano we can have those hard learners, I mean hard to learn hard to read or even di makabasa."*

Maria

(Those non-readers were not my pupils. I had no advisory and it was not right if I would replace someone for me to have a class. It was just an initiative from me to pull out the non-readers from grades 1 to 3 in the regular class. I was helping other teachers in a way of teaching those non-readers in their classes. I was the one who initiated the help because we had also our own way of helping the students. Students students were able to read their parents and teachers messages of gratitude. Those words for us teachers were like our crown because we helped those learners who had difficulty in reading and learning.)

She said, in handling those learners who had difficulty in reading, they keep teaching them until they learned. We should keep on going to help them so that they could achieve something in their lives, and in the end, they could also learn how to read.

*"When you say that learners are really hard you know, specially yun ang pinaka ano natin na as a teacher the difficulties of reading really para bang keep on going tayo to help them so they can have something na ma achieve din nila sa life nila na makabasa talaga."*

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 Maria

(The difficulties of the teachers included teaching students who had a problem in reading. To help them, we should keep on going so that they could also achieve something in their lives.)

It was a disadvantage also for her to have these learners inside the classroom. She had this experience last year to teach a student who had a problem with his/her learning ability. She was teaching English to the grade 3 students where that child belonged. The child was afraid of her, so it was decided that when she would be in grade 4 she would be transferred. When she gave her students a task in Araling Panlipunan to memorize the regions in the Philippines that time her students were just ten so she adopted the other top 10 students in the regular class because she did not want to teach a class with a small number. Her students became 20, and she realized that that child who was afraid of her need to put him/her on that group of students so that he/she can adjust with her. As her observation, the child was trying hard to understand her and she was amazed by the act of that child because of the courage of his/her courage to memorize the activity given to them. And it was a big achievement for her, that child who was afraid of her before and has this difficulty to understand learned from her. And the mother of that child told her that her child loved her because he/she was learned.

*“Yun lang kung disadvantage is there are really learner na hindi masyado maka catch up but you do something para kahit papaano they will learn. In fact this experience last year, ano siya under Psychology something wrong with the ability of the child I suddenly with them, I am also teaching English in grade 3 so that child really is para bang takot siya sa akin. Sa pag grade 4 niya lilipat siya because he was scared, but the time when the student learner I give them in aral pan to memorize the region and kasi mga ilan lang sana sila na pupil ko pero just have balance yung mga learners ko from the regular class. Yung mga top 5 ba nila or top 10 inadopt ko yun kasi hindi ko lang gusto na konti lng yung mga bata so inadopt ko yung mga top 10 kasi naging 20. Yung 20 nila na learners from the regular class inadopt ko sila. So hindi lang last year kung sino yung mga bright doon in other class in the regular class inadopt ko sila pero that learner that I have told you is that ano sya jan talaga sa regular, sabi ko nuon hindi siya pwede dito that my judgement pero that time dun na siya talaga siya sa akin he really try hard magets niya yung ako, bumilib talaga ako because yun na nga yung bang courage niya to really memorize to that region kasi sabi ko you should know your region, know your as a Pilipino dapat alam mo yung location mo, alam mo lahat ng mga lugar kaya sabi ko this is it para bang sa akin is achievement for that learner na natutu talaga sya sakin there who say I love maam yun ang sabi ng mama niya na talagang he really learn.”*

Maria

(The disadvantage was that the learners could not easily catch-up on the lesson, but as a teacher, you would do something for them to learn. In fact, I experienced last year teaching a child that had a problem with his ability in learning. At that time, I was also teaching English in grade 3 so that child was scared of me. It was decided already when he would become a grade 4 he would be transferred because he was scared of me. That time I wanted to teach more students that was why I adopted the top 10 students in the regular class so they became 20. And the task that I gave to them was to memorize the regions in the Philippines so that they would know also where they came from. That time I judged that certain student who had a problem in learning that he was not deserving to be included in that class. But the child was trying his best to understand me and I admired him because he had the courage and memorized that activity I gave to them. And I realized that it was an achievement for me and for that child. With that, the mother of the child told me that her child said that he loved what I did for him.)

### **A Matter of Support: Reflections on the Value of Unity for the Benefit of the Children**

As she came back, she received a lot of support from the parents and as well as from the students. She said that when you are a leader you are dealing with the parents and with the learners as well. She added that to show the support of her students, they went to school every day and they did not want to be out from her class. It was a really big success for her having students who were very eager and willing to learn from her. Before being a school head, he had many students who were always absent but now as she returned, they were always present since there were also rewards of conditions for them.

*“When you are a leader you are dealing also the teacher, you are dealing with the parents, dealing with the learners so also I have it in my pupils, the support they have you can really see that. Of course coming to school every day they don't want to be out from the class, they don't want to miss the class, so that really, will be a big support for me, no!, kasi nuon, hala absinot mana siya.*

Maria  
www.ijrp.org

(When you are a leader you are dealing also with the teachers, parents, and learners. I thought that time, that I needed also to give that kind of support to my pupils. My pupils were also supportive with me in a way that they would come to school every day and did not want to miss any class. It was a big help because before they were always absent in the class.)

Her realization in returning to classroom teaching was the worth and happiness of teaching the children every day. She wanted to have face-to-face now than having a modular printed delivery mode of teaching so that she could see students inside the classroom. She had only has a daughter and that is not enough, that is why she felt she wanted to engage with the children. She was once a college instructor for 16 years in the evening and the daytime, she dealt with the young ones. Her happiness with the children is different that is why she chose to be a classroom teacher again than being a school head.

*"The realization is that I'm happy daily with the children, mas gusto ko face to face nga kasi although I have just one baby girl but its not enough na para bang nagiging ano ako sa mga bata engage to the children and infact early because I was ones of college intractor for 16 years ang ganda kaya from day time deal with young ones sa mga bata, in the evening at nakikipag deal karin sa mga student di rin mahirap mag turo kasi your just a facilitator diba."*

Maria

(The realization is that I am happy every day with the children. I want to have a face-to-face class because I have just one baby girl but I want as well to be engaged more with the children. I was once a college instructor for 16 years, and it was really good from day time to deal with young ones and in the evening I am dealing with the college students, and it was not hard because I was just a facilitator.)

With that, she was motivated to continue in the teaching field because she wanted to see her students become professionals someday. She said, she always challenged her students to become professional and would come back to her to show their achievements in their lives. She shared that she always reminded her students that if they would fail, they would be in jail, they would have killed someone, indulge in drug addiction, and other vices, as a teacher, she would also feel like she is a failure. She mentioned that she had these students before who are now in their practice teaching and she was happy that few made her their role model. They emulated also how she disciplined her students before and the way she handled her classroom.

*"The motivation of course, I really want to see, kasi naman sa experience ko, kasi I always challenged them that I want you to become professional someday, somebody would come and say ma'am I am now a teacher, now ma'am I am doctor, lawyer, I have that pupils na, para bang ansaya ko kasi I am always telling them that if you will not be a successful someday diba kung ma preso mo, maka patay mo, whatever, drug addict kayo, para bang as a teacher ano nga ba ang nagawa ko para sa batang to, bakit naging pasaway. In fact naa koy mga pupils noon na nag anha na sa school nag practice teaching and I'm so happy may nakikita ako na ginagaya panga ako na how the way i discipline with the children the way everything, para hala kuhang kuha mo yung gusto ko maging as a learners so that's it."*

Maria

(My motivation would be, I wanted to see and challenge them to become professionals someday. I wanted somebody would come to me and said that they are a teacher, a doctor, or alawyer. I told them that if they would not be successful and if they would be a prisoner, they would have killed someone, they become a drug addict, as their teacher, I would ask myself what have I done for them why they would have ended like that. I had students before and came in the school as a practice teacher, I was so happy because I also noticed that they emulated me on how I disciplined the children like they get what I wanted for my students.)

### **Aiming Higher: A Message to Colleagues, Education Leaders**

She advised those teachers who wanted to shift from teaching to being a school head that they should pursue first their schooling. So that when they would be in the administration they would reach the promotion of being principal 1 to principal 4. To the young ones also, they should finish their schooling because now you would not be an administrator if you do not have the degree and you could not pass the principal's test. She expressed that an administrator could not become one without a degree and without passing the principal's test. Today is different, it requires you to finish a master's degree and even a doctoral's degree.

*"If I have advice to them okay siyempre you have to pursue first your schooling and me my boss before how many boss I have sana ma cope up nila or sana makuha nila yung pagiging principal 1, 2, 3, 4 because my school is achiever, achiever talaga ang school... okay sa mga young ones keep on, noon di ba diritso na parang ganyan basta lang kay. Iba baya din yun ang pagiging administrator ngayon kasi you know kasi ang daming of course ang daming advice that I have then is go to masteral degree or even na ano may nakatapos na ng pagdoctor na sige na pursue!"*

www.ijrp.org  
 Maria

(If I would advise them, of course, they have to pursue first their schooling. I am hoping that they would achieve the principal 1, 2, 3, or 4 because my school head is an achiever. And to the young ones, just keep on going because unlike before, it could be easy to become a school head but it is different now. I have a lots of advice for them but for now, I want them to have master's degree or even finish their doctor's degree.)

For her, she was given a chance by the division to handle another school but she decided to reject it. It depends on the teacher if he or she wants to accept the challenge and responsibilities of being a school head tasked by the DepEd authorities. After all, she used her money just for the school. Especially if the school is big, the school head could not avoid to do something or get something out from his/her pocket. And there were also teachers who asked for snacks, so it was not easy for her. So it is not just for the DepEd to decide but also for the person involved in that situation to think and decide for her own good.

*"It depends nayan sa nagmamay ari because yun na nga diba I was given the chance to handle another school but ako na ang nag ano, depende nayan sayo as teacher na nag balik kasi that is our choice... depende din sa kanila kasi if I really have to accept that challenge of another school ayoko na dala na talaga ako sa nangyari kakapoy mag administrator kahit sarili mong pera ang gagamitin nila magastos. All those things so not just ano natin sa deped it's a for them to ano nalang."*

Maria

(It depends on the school heads if they really want to come back as teachers, because in my case, I was given a chance to handle another school but I refused it. So it depends on the person or the teacher since it is his or her choice. It would depend on them also if they really would accept the challenge of being a school head. But for me, I do not want it anymore, I do not want to experience the same as before, for it was very tiring to be an administrator for even your own money could be used for the school expenses.

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## DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the discussion, conclusion, implications for practice and recommendations for future research based from the narratives during the data analysis. As this study indicated, it aimed to discover the untold stories of public elementary school heads returning to being classroom teachers on their experiences and realization in order to find out what constructs may be developed from the findings.

### Experiences from Being School Heads Returning as Classroom Teachers

#### Anita's Experiences from being a School Head to a Classroom Teacher

The findings revealed that Anita's reasons to return to classroom teaching was because of her husband's health situation; that her husband needed proper care and guidance that was why she chose to return as a classroom teacher especially that the area was also near their house. Another challenge was handling small children especially Grade 1 students since she served as a school head for more than 20 years. Additionally, making lesson plans, instructional devices and activities for today's students was a trial for her since she did not practice it for many years. Moreover, due to her age as a retireable teacher, she was having trouble of delivering well the lessons and the difficult of using technology inside the classroom as well as for her paper works. Furthermore, the difference of the students before and now was difficult for her since she cannot do any corporal punishment at this time to discipline students. Also, adjustment in time to cover all the work of being a classroom teacher was another problem. And finally, having a good relationship and support from the colleagues made her survived in the teaching field.

The experiences of the participant are congruent with the idea of Madsen (2016) that the longer a school head stays in administrative work, the harder it is going to be back into teaching since they are more into leading not in teaching students. Moreover, children are very different today than children before, they are more involved with gadgets and lack of parental interaction (Luckwaldt, 2020). Returnees have difficulty in technology since it is moving quickly with the new apps, websites and devices are being made available all the time. Training for teachers is however far less frequent and often not seen as a particularly good investment (Peachey, 2016).

Justice (2018) supported the claim that in the transition back to the classroom, school head should consider all sorts of technical works and responsibilities, major and minor: handling assignments, the subject matter need to teach, the level of teaching that are appropriate to the students and the correct teaching ways that are suitable to the needs of the students.

#### Pedro's Experiences from Being a School Head to a Classroom Teacher

Pedro returned to classroom teaching because of the decision of Division officials in order to protect him from the danger he might encounter in his assigned area before. He experienced enormous adjustments with his colleagues because of his arrogant attitude developed during his comeback. Moreover, Pedro became a dominating teacher inside his classroom because it was not his will to return in the teaching field. Furthermore, he followed classroom programs to teach and do all his work as classroom teacher. In teaching students, he was still in the traditional form of teaching ways and strategies. The theories that he practiced for some years were not applicable when he returned to classroom teaching. Also, he was a strict teacher and even with his co-teachers because he adopted the attitude of being a school head in the classroom and school. Another was his co-teachers would adjust for him having an arrogant behavior. Seeing his students singing his music and playing a musical instrument was a great

success for him in returning to classroom teaching. And finally, being with his family every day especially his daughters motivated him to continue in the teaching field.

Elliot (2014) supported that former principals could not avoid their authoritative side, it comes-out naturally out of frustrations when they are in a situation that the people surround them could not give what they need. These teachers could not contain their emotions in some situations that sometimes, they overpower their current principal. Moreover Raja & Khan (2018) mentioned that the former school heads being traditional teachers may have encountered difficulties in returning to classroom for their teaching methods and skills remain theoretical.

Additionally, they still teach through traditional teaching method. They still teach through traditional teaching method because they do not make an active effort to incorporate modern methods of teaching to their style. Furthermore, arrogance is one of the most unpleasant and ineradicable manifestations of human nature. Former school heads could be arrogant in returning to classroom since they were naturally resistant to the feedback that does not align with their own personal view. They could develop such attitude and had the superiority over their colleagues and other people in school (Milyavsky et al., 2017).

#### **Aurora's Experiences from Being a School Head to a Classroom Teacher**

Aurora returned to classroom teaching because of the findings of a research that all master teachers' school heads should return to classroom teaching if they are not principal's test passers. For that reason, she had adjustments as being a classroom teacher now and regretted being a school head for 12 years. Additionally, she needed to study again every lesson she gave to her students because she no longer mastered everything. Moreover, being assigned immediately as a Grade 5 adviser with different attitudes and behaviors of students and cannot do any corporal punishment was a challenge to her also. She had difficulties disciplining unruly students and as a result, she could not focus more on her lesson and teaching process inside the classroom. With that, she ignored those children to have less stress and she could focus more on her teaching and learning process of her students. She was able to incorporate her learnings from the different observations before as a school head and she adapted the use of ICT as a teaching strategy.

Aurora's relationship with her co-teachers had no gap because they relied on her, and in fact, they chose her as the president of the faculty staff in their school. Her co-workers helped her and gave her advice on what she experienced when she came back as a classroom teacher. Also, she had difficulty in her return since the work of the classroom teacher was different from the school head because in teaching she would face only the students and parents. With that, she still found success in her return in the classroom she was happily promoted to being Master Teacher II and receiving a salary similar to that of the principal. Another, Aurora found it enjoyable commanding her students inside the classroom. She was motivated to continue in teaching field because of the struggles she experienced in her comeback. With more challenges, she was more eager to show her potentials in teaching.

The result supported with the claim of McClean (2019) that master teacher shall be maintained in the classroom and shall not be assigned with duties of an administrator. Regret feels bad for former school head because it implies a fault in personal action, self-blame is a component of regret (Connolly & Zeelenberg, 2017). According to Bayar & Kerns (2015), it has found out that most returned teachers faced undesirable behaviors of students in classroom. Therefore, there was no way to avoid these behaviors when teaching. And it has found out that ignoring was one of the most used strategies in order to overcome undesired behaviours in classroom. Moreover, Cohen (2016) mentioned in his study that returned classroom teacher have to cope up with two changes. First, they have experienced global technological change and the introduction of new technologies into the education system. Secondly, they have to cope with the new generation of pupils. Additionally, Principals have a clear set of accountabilities, which distinguished their work from other employees in the Teaching Service and the education community and are set out in detail in the contract of employment.

#### **Amante's Experiences from Being a School Head to a Classroom Teacher**

Amante chose to return to classroom teaching because for him he is not fit being a school head. He was not emotionally and financially ready for the responsibilities of school head. In the first few days of his life as a classroom teacher he described his life with a new hope, new inspiration, and new beginning to learn and impart knowledge to the students. Teaching the IP Learners in the hinterland challenged him because of the distance and language barrier. He was culture-shocked with the different meaning of their language and it needed to be cautious to avoid misunderstanding. It was a big help for him having those previous trainings he had before his role as a school head because it gave him a basis in his teachings. His knowledge also as a school head was his guide to grow in the teaching field. Aside from that, he established good relationship with his co-teachers since he is a versatile person. His co-teachers were very supportive with him they were happy that he returned to the school as a classroom teacher. Furthermore, the most challenging encounter in teaching again in the hinterland was the armed conflict in which they needed to evacuate their place in order save their lives. Nonetheless, he still experienced success in his return, he never regretted his decision to resign as a school head besides, he was able to teach the learners how to read in the IP community. Finally, his motivation to continue to teach was part of his dream to be transferred in his locality and served the students there.

Based on the responses, the former school head had also difficulty in language barriers in the classroom and make it difficult for students to understand. Teachers fail to create engaging lessons and struggle to connect to their students on a one to one basis (Ministry of Education, 2015). Trainings and seminars are formal and informal means of helping teachers not only to learn new skills but also develop new insights into pedagogy and their own practice, and explore new or advanced understandings of content and resources (Alestre, 2016). Colleagues are great source of support throughout the teaching career. Developing positive and professional relationships with the colleagues is critical in surviving and thriving in the teaching career (Thomas, et al., 2015).

#### **Maria's Experiences from Being a School Head to a Classroom Teacher**

Maria chose to return to classroom teaching because of her love for teaching and the conflict in the school she was assigned before. As a classroom teacher now, she was able to incorporate ICT or technology in her teaching. Additionally,

teaching students who were struggling was difficult for her since she was assigned to the special science class. Moreover, she was extending help to other teachers; teaching students who were non-readers, so that the burden of her co-teachers would be lessen. Having students who were non-readers really affected the teaching inside the classroom in the sense that they needed to cope up with other students in the class. Furthermore, with her colleague, there was no problem in terms of their relationship since they were her co-teachers before and they were very supportive with her. With the challenges, she still experienced success in her return in which she was able to teach a student who had a problem with learning abilities. And it was a success for her teaching again students since it was her passion in life. With that she received full support from her students, in fact they came to school and attended classes. They did not want to miss any class with her. And finally, as a classroom teacher her motivation to continue in teaching is to see all of her students become professionals someday.

The experiences of the participants are congruent with the idea of Munroe (2014) in which some former school heads who returned to classroom teaching voluntarily because they missed working with children and for others it was involuntary since they were sliding down from their position. Moreover, adopting new educational technology is a time-consuming process. Support is highly needed by the students from school employees and teachers who would access to the resources for them (Johnson, et al., 2016). According to Teacher Career Pathways (2016), master teachers are highly skilled educators with a passion and drive to improve the instructional quality of the schools by extending their impact and help as teachers to the students and co-teachers. Furthermore, teaching again students is a passion that could make a difference in students' lives and achievement. Passionate teachers are accomplished individuals based with who they are, what they know, and how they teach. Passionate teachers are always in the effort of professional development because they constantly aim at students' success (Serim, 2017).

### **Lessons Learned from the Experiences from Being a School Head Returning to Being Classroom Teacher**

#### **Anita's Lessons Learned from Her Experiences**

Different experiences gave different learning in life. Anita learned that teaching again students and seeing them learning from her brought happiness in her return to classroom teaching. With that, she realized that in order to give the best education for today's learners, she needed to cope up with 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching in which she needed to learn to use gadgets and technology inside the classroom. Additionally, there were realizations in the responsibilities being a school head and classroom teacher. The school heads hold bigger responsibilities wherein the accountability is the whole school while teachers focus only in the four corners of the classroom in which the main targets are the learning process of the students. From her experience as a former school head and a classroom teacher at present, she realized that before aiming for the position of a school head, a teacher must collect first achievements to be fit with the position, like studying graduate and post graduate studies. Most of all, she calls the attention of the DepEd authorities to know the sentiments of school heads who returned to being classroom teacher like her. She hopes that if a former school head is on the verge of retiring, they would be given works that are not difficult especially those who are not good in computer or any technology.

The idea agrees to the view of Ghavifekr & Rosdy (2015) that previous researches proved that the use of ICT in teaching will enhance the learning process and maximize the students' abilities in active learning. This is similar to the claim of Williamson (2015) that principals are the consummate multi-taskers. They are asked to do many things, and do them well. They are involved in every aspect of their school's operations from management of the day-to-day routines to working with staff and parents to implement shared vision, while classroom teacher will manage the classroom in a manner that meets the individual needs of each student in the class.

The results further supported that master's degree can help to prepare teachers to manage staff, develop budgets, evaluate, and develop curriculum, and handle education policy issues. Pursuing a relevant degree advanced degree in education is one of the most important steps that can take in becoming a principal (Bradman University, 2019). Finally, the older teachers' physical health is not as good as younger teachers' and this relates to work stress it results to reduction of workload to the older teachers (Bajorek, 2014).

#### **Pedro's Lessons Learned from His experiences**

From his first-hand experience, he learned that it was good that he knew the different leadership styles, in which he applied these as a teacher inside the classroom. With that, he realized that as a dominant teacher it was an disadvantage in his return in which he adopted his characteristics of being a school head. Moreover, in pursuing the position of the school head, he learned that a teacher must be a master's degree holder or even a doctoral degree holder, the earlier the better so that they could reach a higher position someday. Also, it is important to learn about the different theories in education so that they would know on how to apply them in the field. Furthermore, he learned that it is painful in the side of the school head to be out from their position without investigating or asking the involved persons. With this learning, he is requesting the DepEd officials regarding the issues that they should investigate first before deciding the best for the person to give justice to their abilities as a former school head.

Young teachers becoming principals give many opportunities to transform lives of others being successful and give colleagues a great perspective on how to strengthen their own teaching. They have more opportunities coming to them and develop their leadership skills in an early age to be skilled in managing the whole school (Sterrett, 2017). To further aid the result, Doyle (2019) mentioned that those teachers who were removed from the position without investigation felt the pain of the experience, they felt rejected, unwanted, and unappreciated as a person. Emotional shock is a normal reaction for them since they would go back on the basic teaching and start from the bottom again.

The principal's responsibility is to ensure quality teaching of teachers and learning of students in the classroom as well as the whole operation of the school. However, in Asia many principals are not prepared and ready for this new role and new focus of work. There are no trainings and seminars that could help them in their work in the school (Sindhvad, 2019).

#### **Aurora's Lessons Learned from Her Experiences**

Aurora learned that the works and responsibilities of a classroom teacher and school head are a way different from each other since the former focuses only inside the classroom and the students while the latter has a big and stressful work in which the whole school is his or her accountability. Additionally, she realized that it is a big responsibility in returning to classroom after 12 years as a school head. Moreover, being away from the work of the school head, she appreciates the less stressful work and she is now enjoys the salary the same with the principal because she was also promoted as Master Teacher II in a teaching position.

All the observations and learnings she had before as a school head were applied and these strategies could help her learners in this generation. She learned that if a teacher is offered to be a school head he/she must be sure that the paper stating that their position is not irrevocable and they must pass the principal's test first to avoid disappointments like what she had. But above all, the right process in hiring school heads must be exercised in the department to avoid this thing to happen to other people.

The result of this study revealed that principal's work needs communication and interpersonal skills to make it more rewarding and successful. During a regular day, it is common for principal to meet with and speak to teachers, parents, and students about variety of topics. While as a teacher, constant communication with their students, each other, and their students' parents, engaging in disciplinary actions, giving suggestions about teaching methods, and relating progress reports are important in the teaching. A career like being a principal is somewhat similar in teaching, but on a much larger scales (Teaching Certification, 2015).

It is further supported by Ferguson, et al., (2017) that administrators have high cost of stress than classroom teachers in terms of responsibilities. School heads are the glue that holds everyone together in the school. School heads have various areas of responsibilities including human resources, financial resources, educational activities of students and teachers, external relations, well-being of students and teachers, and teaching students. Meanwhile, classroom teachers are responsible for lesson of the students inside the classroom. Their duties include assigning activities, grading sheets, and documenting student's progress.

#### **Amante's lessons learned from his experiences**

The responsibility of being the school head is as crucial as one-foot is buried on the ground because of the big responsibilities placed in one's shoulder, unlike classroom teachers, it was mainly the students, and the lessons to be prepared. In returning to classroom teaching, Amante was able to enhance his abilities as a teacher and ensured the learning of the students inside the classroom. Additionally, he realized that he is more suitable in the field of teaching rather than in the administration. With his experiences as a former school head, he learned that it requires deep thinking to weigh if they are fit to be in that position or not before deciding to accept the challenge and responsibilities of a school head to avoid conflict at the end. Moreover, as a classroom teacher, he learned that in returning to classroom teaching one must have the love for teaching, for strategies, for the students and for co-workers. With this, the right process in filtering the deserving person for school head position must be executed. The DepEd authorities should ask them if they are willing to accept the work and challenges of being a school head.

The result of the study is the same with the idea of Gunduz (2019) that it is the responsibility of classroom teachers to prepare lesson plans and educate students at all levels. Their duties include assigning homework, grading tests, and documenting progress. As for school heads, it is their core responsibility to ensure quality teaching and learning in the classroom. This further supports the study that principal's responsibility is to ensure quality teaching and learning in the classroom. However, in Asia many principals are not prepared and ready for this new role and new focus of work (Sindhvad, 2019). Moreover, love for the work of classroom teacher has a big significant in education, it maximizes its transformational power in the classroom settings. Additionally, it brings connection, understanding and care to every party involved in the love relationship. Touched by love, the classroom is no longer a place for mere information transfer, but a human phenomenon in which both educators and students grow and develop as a result of learning and teaching through love (Migliazzo, 2014).

#### **Maria's lessons learned from her experiences**

Maria learned that being with the children inside the classroom is her happiness than being a school head. It is her calling to teach the students and not serving as an administrator. Additionally, being a classroom teacher at present, she learned that handling slow learners in a special science class was one of the difficulties in her return to teaching. Moreover, as a former school head, she learned that those teachers dreamed to be school head must study first and acquire master's or doctor's degree especially the young ones to have more chances to reach higher positions in the department. With her experiences, she learned that it depends to the persons or to the school heads if they chose to continue in the administration side or return to the teaching field.

The calling implies a deep-seated belief that teaching is the only profession that make sense to pursue than being a leader. It is a lifelong passion for supporting teaching students in the community (Lynch, 2015). The findings are congruent to the idea of Vasudevan (2017) that in teaching slow learners, a teacher needs to give them additional time and help to adapt in the education. Positive reinforcement technique should be used as much as possible for them to be able to catch up with others. Earning master degree is the first step toward transitioning into school administration. Administrators must understand the real classroom experience as well as leadership, curriculum development, and how to best engage students and parents (Tucker, 2014).

The results are aligned with the theory of Biddle and Thomas' (1995) Role theory, which is defined as any set of behaviors that have a socially agreed purpose and an accepted code of norms. This theory agreed with the findings since the former school heads change what they used to do to conform to the role of classroom teachers. They were able to change and adjust themselves to do their new work and responsibilities especially in teaching students, relationship with colleagues and other work related with the classroom teachers. The concept of action of Argyris and Schon (1978), which a linked set of proposals, is a logical chain of reasoning that explains how change leads to improved practice. This agrees with the results of the study in which the action of changing their role from being school heads to classroom teachers has led them to refresh some of the practices (traditional or modern) teaching in the classroom.

## Implications for Teaching Practice

As a researcher, I believe that this endeavor could benefit the persons especially the public elementary school heads who returned to being classroom teachers of the Division of Davao del Norte. Their experiences would open the minds of the authorities to address the needs and situation. Former school heads call the support of the Department of Education for more sustained efforts. Their overall perspectives are in narrative form which are presented through the segment titles with their stories. This study provides an avenue for all the people involved better understand the sentiments of these teachers who were once school heads.

In the light of the findings of the study, the Department of Education Officials may follow the right process in assigning teachers in school head positions in which there are standards and qualifications. They may evade appointing teachers in the position without acquiring first the qualifications to avoid negative impact to the school head who may return in the classroom teaching eventually. They may also conduct re-orientation to the former school heads who returned to teaching on the nature of work as classroom teachers at present, their scope and responsibilities, and to the new teaching strategies that can be applied in today's generation. They may provide also activities that will redeem the characters of the former school heads in teaching and their relationship with the school environment. They may consider this study to find solutions regarding the challenges shared by the the participants involved.

The School Administration may conduct seminars, in-service training, and Learning Action Cell (LAC) to the returned classroom teachers specifically in the emotional stress in coming back as classroom teachers, they may provide technical assistance in lesson planning, and the different teaching strategies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching specifically in the use of technology and building the character and relationships with colleagues. Seminars and workshops would help them acquire knowledge on how to teach and handle students in the classroom effectively.

Former school heads who returned to being classroom teachers should perform sincerely their responsibilities as classroom teachers, they should also exert effort to learn new trends in methodologies and strategies in teaching students of this generation. They should provide good relationships towards their colleagues and school heads to have a good environment for workin. Also, they may encourage the Department of Education to give solutions to their concerns, and they may provide them trainings that would maximize their learning and adjustment in the teaching field.

Finally, students who would become the learners of the returned classroom teachers should be informed that they may help them realize and appreciate their efforts. This would encourage them to strive harder for their learning, knowing that their teachers are striving also to cope up with the needed teaching strategies and adjustment for their favor.

As a researcher, I am grateful and thankful to my participants who shared honestly their stories, experiences, and perspectives during the interviews. I am also thankful to my gatekeepers who helped me contacted my participants. Importantly, to my school head who allowed and understood my concerns throughout the duration of my study.

Along the conduct of this study, I really experienced how it felt to be a researcher. I took all the necessary measures to make this research a successful one with the help of my adviser. It is indeed a demanding and tiring task because it required time, patience, and perseverance to be able to gather quality and relevant data that would support my study especially that we are now in the pandemic situation. Utilization of online platforms was done also in this study.

Notwithstanding, this endeavor enabled me to become aware on the experiences of public elementary school heads returning to being classroom teachers. As a teacher also, I can say that being aware of the new trends in teachings strategies would help the children to be more active and manageable inside the classroom. Finally, this journey has helped me realized some points of view in my life as a teacher that whether you are a school head or a classroom teacher, you are a valuable individual in the eyes of the children and the community in general.

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