

Navigating the Shift: Exploring Challenges of Elementary School Leaders Face in Managing Digital Teaching Practices 511

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Abstract

The quick integration of digital technologies in education has changed teaching and learning processes, creating new challenges for school leaders. This study, titled “Navigating the Shift: Exploring Challenges Elementary School Leaders Face in Managing Digital Teaching Practices,” aims to look at the experiences of elementary school leaders as they manage digital teaching practices within their schools. Using a qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach, the study collected data from selected elementary school leaders through in-depth interviews. The findings showed several main challenges, such as technological limitations and connectivity issues, lack of teacher training and digital skills, increased workload and time pressures, and weaknesses in policy and support systems. School leaders also struggled with keeping students engaged and ensuring instructional quality in digital settings. Despite these challenges, the study highlights the strategies school leaders use, such as ongoing professional development, fostering collaborative learning communities, using available digital resources, and building partnerships with stakeholders. These strategies show resilience and proactive leadership in managing the shift to digital education. The study concludes that effectively managing digital teaching practices requires not only technological resources but also strong leadership, institutional support, and ongoing skill development. It recommends improving training programs, upgrading infrastructure, and creating clear policies to support sustainable digital integration in elementary education.

Keywords: Digital teaching; School leadership; Elementary education; Technological challenges; Qualitative research

INTRODUCTION

Living in the current generation where technology evolved fast. As elementary school leaders, they play an essential role in shaping digital learning education and supporting teachers in adopting digital teaching. By digging deeper into the principal's perspective on the effectiveness of digital teaching at elementary levels, viewing its benefits, challenges, and strategies associated with digital education leadership. It is a must to understand how digital teaching can be effectively implemented and supported in elementary schools.

However, it was important for teachers to keep up with it as they navigated students to learn easily. One way to do it is to use the internet as their resource and it will help to examine how the school leaders support teachers in adapting to digital teaching. According to the study of Gruszczynska, et. al. (2013), for teachers' education to thrive in a digital future, it's crucial that practices, resources, and tools continuously adapt and improve, fostered through collaboration with educators and rooted in classroom contexts. This proves that it is essential to study this problem to find a solution.

Elementary leaders as well as elementary teachers in Bay Laguna are having a hard time pursuing the digital world, as they were used to manila paper and chalk, but it highlighted the need for digital literacy, as it will be their way to keep students interested in learning. The growth it will produce will make teachers better

educators and more effective as it will explore strategies used by leaders to overcome barriers in digital education. It was their struggle to maintain their digital literacy skills that are necessary to support their students' learning needs.

The significance of ongoing professional development for keeping elementary school administrators informed about contemporary teaching methods, technologies and curricular content has been well-established over the past few decades. Digital literacy is here emphasized as a key in negotiating and handling digital teaching work as the focus of the study. The study also considers the obstacles elementary school principals confront with remote learning. More specifically, the study seeks to examine how digital literacy can be used for teacher professional development which will inform a teachers' professional growth and ultimately enhance student learning as it is experienced by elementary school leaders.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive phenomenological approach is one of the primary qualitative research methods and was developed by Edmund Husserl and furthered by scholars such as Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty (Creswell & Creswell, 2022; Spiegelberg, 2012; Tang & Omar, 2023). Through this lens, it is developed from an effort to investigate the similarities between individuals who undergo similar phenomenon or have same concept, that's in order to seize and interpret what the meaning of life is for people sharing in a lived experience. In this research the phenomenological perspective becomes especially relevant since it seeks to explore the lived experiences of elementary school leaders who can enable or stifle digital literacy practices that take place at a digital teaching relationship-based level.

In this study, 6 participants were selected to participate. They came from different elementary schools in Bay, Laguna. The study explored their lived experiences, perspectives, and challenges in relation to the implementation of digital teaching practices. They were categorized as participants if they are qualified to be interviewed through the sample survey. Consent was the top priority of this study as it is not easy for the elementary school leaders to share their experiences.

Purposive sampling has an expanding historical development, and opinions regarding its simplicity and directness are as varied as those regarding its complexity. The aim of purposive sampling is to better match the sample to the goals and objectives of the study, which enhances the accuracy of the research and the reliability of the data and findings. This concept has already been explained in terms of four aspects: confirmability, dependability, transferability, and credibility. (Campbell et al., 2020). This sampling technique is perfect for this study, as the researchers have already distinguished their goals and objectives. This is the right sampling technique to be used for qualitative study that will use specific people to gather data.

This study explores elementary school leaders' experiences in managing digital teaching practices. The researcher conducted a survey among elementary school leaders in Bay, Laguna who are encountered the use of digital teaching. To ensure questionnaire validity and reliability, the researcher consulted a qualitative data analyst and digital expert to review and verify the questionnaire. Subsequently, in-depth interviews were conducted with the selected participants with their consent obtained beforehand to gather detailed information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

School leaders are navigating an unprecedented challenge in leading this shift as digital technologies increasingly make their way into elementary schools. In this chapter we explore the complexities of navigations that elementary school leaders experience in their digital space. Based on a detailed analysis of interviews, this chapter presented the main themes that emerged from school leaders' narratives on leading digital change in elementary schools.

The table below shows the summarized and organized data from the six interview questions. This study aims to explore the lived experiences of elementary school leaders in managing digital learning.

Table 1. *Lived Experiences of School Leaders in Managing and Adapting to Digital Teaching Practices in Schools*

THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION	
TECHNOLOGICAL AND RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS	Challenges experienced by participants due to limited technological resources, unstable internet connection, lack of devices, and insufficient support in implementing digital teaching practices.	Limited Devices and Internet Connectivity	P2	“Bilang school leader, nahirapan kaming simulaan na mag adapt sa digital teaching dahil kulang sa gadgets at internet connection. Pero nagtulungan kami ng mga teachers and LGU, slowly but surely we has able to overcome the challenges and naging maayos ang implementation.” “Challenging at the same time is a learning experience ang naranasan naming digital teaching. Kailangan kaming mag adjust sa fast change, lalo na sa training ng teachers at sa support sa kanila	The school leader experienced initial challenges due to lack of gadgets and internet, but through collaboration with teachers and LGU, they were able to gradually overcome these issues and improve implementation of digital teaching. The response shows that adapting to digital teaching was both challenging and a learning experience, requiring the school to adjust quickly to changes, particularly in teacher training and providing continuous support in using technology in the classroom.	514
			P3			

P2 and P3 responses capture both sides of what school leaders went through with digital teaching: challenging, but full of growth. P2 described problems with resources and structure, like limited devices and unstable internet. But also highlighted how working with teachers and the LGU helped fix those problems and make implementation better. P3 focused more on adaptability: quickly changing teaching methods, continuous training, and getting support for using tech in class. Taken together, both responses indicate that although digital teaching began with obstacles, it pushed school leaders and teachers to collaborate more, be flexible, and grow professionally.

Table 2. *Challenges in Implementing Digital Teaching Methods: Internet Access, Facilities, and Policy Factors*

THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
TECHNOLOGICAL AND RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS	Challenges experienced by participants due to limited technological resources, unstable internet connection, lack of devices, and insufficient support in implementing digital teaching practices.	Infrastructure Challenges (Power and Facilities)	P1	"Power outages severely impact digital teaching, interrupting lessons and limiting access to devices and online resources as well as causing delays in the teaching-learning process that could compromise student engagement and continuity of instruction.	She further stated in the interview, "Power interruptions are a major challenge to digital teaching as it interrupts lessons and limits the use of technology." Power interruption affects the continuity of teaching-learning.
THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
TECHNOLOGICAL AND RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS	Challenges experienced by participants due to limited technological resources, unstable internet connection, lack of devices, and	Infrastructure Challenges (Power and Facilities)	P5	"As a principal, implementing digital teaching faces challenges such as limited time due to paperwork and meetings, making	She emphasized in the interview how limited time, unstable internet, inadequate facilities, and policy constraints make it difficult for teachers to implement digital

	insufficient support in implementing digital teaching practices			it hard to support teacher training. Unstable internet and limited facilities, like lack of devices, also affect implementation, so teachers often download materials in advance. Time constraints prevent some teachers from using interactive tools, while school policies can either support or limit technology use. Overall, these factors affect the smooth integration of digital teaching.”	teaching effectively and that these challenges affect their ability to fully integrate technology in classroom.
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P1 deals specifically with power outage, disrupting digital teaching through lesson disruption, lack of devices and online resources as well as impact on engagement and continuity. It centers on a single, specific challenge. P5, however, highlights broader dimensions of the challenges like limited facilities, network instability, policy-related issues. Together, these factors show how digital teaching and day to day instruction get affected overall.

Using Rogers DOI theory, (2023), P1 and P5 stories show that whether schools can adopt digital teaching comes down to infrastructure, support and the obstacles in the way. P1 emphasized power outages as a primary challenge, whereas P5 described broader issues such as weak internet connectivity, limited time, inadequate facilities, and restrictive policies. Identifying these factors offers schools a clearer direction for adopting and sustaining digital teaching.

Table 3. *Challenges in Digital Teaching and Their Effects on Teachers and Students*

THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
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Capacity Building and Professional Development	The need for ongoing training/upskilling in digital literacy was emphasized, with respondents noting that this hinders teachers from using tech in the classroom.	Need for Teacher Training and Upskilling	P2 P3	“In Central Elementary School, we have strong management and logistics as it pertains to procuring ICT devices and resources. We also have teachers’ organizations and key teachers, in terms of logistics, who assist in reviewing us and updating what we do policy-wise. They help ensure appropriate dissemination of information to all stakeholders.” “The organizational, we are always guided accordingly. As a teacher and as a school head, we are adapting how to use the technology to make digital teaching more effective by additional by using the internet.”	She noted that efficient logistics and strong coordination of school-level leaders, teachers' organizations, and key teachers support both after the purchase of ICT resources and when policies are implemented on-site. This collaboration assists in ensuring that information is clearly communicated and digital teaching projects are well organized. He noted that the school provides continuous guidance to both teachers and school heads in the use of technology. He emphasized that they adapt and utilize available internet resources to make digital teaching more effective and improve instructional delivery.
THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
Capacity Building and Professional	The need for ongoing training/upskilling in digital literacy was emphasized,	Need for Teacher Training and Upskillin	P5	“Organizational and logistical challenges such as limited time, heavy workloads,	She stated that organizational and logistical factors such as time constraints, heavy workload, poor

Development	with respondents noting that this hinders teachers from using tech in the classroom.	g		poor internet access, and lack of devices can reduce teachers' effectiveness in preparing and delivering lessons. This may lead to less engaging teaching and fewer opportunities for interaction. As a result, learners may become less motivated, participate less, and have lower learning outcomes."	internet access and absence of devices adversely affect teachers' effectiveness in preparing materials for the lesson and delivering lessons. In addition, these limitations also harm interaction in learning spaces, resulting in a decrease in student engagement, motivation, participation and thus learning outcomes.
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P2, P3, and P5 show that schools get support from management, but challenges still exist. P2, and P5 noted that management provides clear guidance and fosters active collaboration among teachers and school leaders. This collaborative effort enables schools to secure ICT resources, adopt technology, and comply with policy guidelines.

P3 emphasizes the persistent realities of digital teaching: heavy workload, no time, weak internet and not enough devices. These barriers hinders teachers adoption of digital practices and limited students opportunities for engagement.

Although P2 and P5 reported strong organizational support and adaptability in schools, the challenges P3 shared still hold digital teaching back from reaching its full potential.

Table 4. *Coping Strategies of School Leaders in Managing Digital Teaching Practices*

THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
Capacity Building and Professional Development	The need for ongoing training/upskilling in digital literacy was emphasized, with respondents noting that this hinders teachers from using tech in	Peer Support and Mentoring Strategies	P4	"We provide teachers the SLAC training to reach these goals. If training is not done at the division level, we carry it out at the school level. For	She explains that the school prioritizes continuous professional development based on SLAC and ICT-related training in order to enhance teachers' digital

	the classroom.			improving teachers' digital competencies our ICT coordinator makes planning, trains them and organize orientation on ICT.”	competencies. This demonstrates a more proactive approach of training provided at both the division and the school level to ensure that even in terms of external support being limited, capacity building is ensured. So, here again we see the involvement of the ICT coordinator in planning, training and orientation which not only demonstrates a systematic process but also exhibit team work to enhance teachers teaching efficiency in terms of digital teaching.
THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
Capacity Building and Professional Development	The need for ongoing training/upskilling in digital literacy was emphasized, with respondents noting that this hinders teachers from using tech in the classroom.	Peer Support and Mentoring Strategies	P6	"At Masaya Elementary School, we support teachers with limited digital skills through job-embedded “Echo-Training” and Learning Action Cells (LAC), where tech-savvy mentors simplify tools like Google Classroom for their peers. These supports are highly effective, especially for new hires, as they provide a low-pressure	She highlights structured and collaborative support systems in place to improve teachers’ digital skills, which include echo-training, Learning Action Cells (LAC), and mentoring through “tech buddies.” Job-embedded strategies ensure that teachers don’t have to put themselves under pressure and slowly build their confidence to integrate the technology into their teaching. In this context, ICT coordinators and

				environment to master DCP hardware and interactive multimedia. By pairing new teachers with “tech buddies” and an ICT Coordinator, we successfully build the foundational confidence needed to move from traditional methods to digital instructions.”	experienced teachers take the frontal role in a smooth transition from traditional to digital instruction by introducing all stakeholders in effective use of technologies for a specific educational deliverable.
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Continual professional development was also identified by school leaders as a major coping strategy - P4 and P6. The formal and implementation of the SLAC training are clearly highlighted in P4, where the ICT coordinator took a leading role in planning, training, and organizing ICT orientations. This reflects a clear, step by step approach to developing teachers' digital skills. So even if the division doesn't offer training, schools, and teachers still find ways to build capacity on their own.

P6 also emphasizes teamwork and peer support through LAC sessions, echo training, and tech buddy pairs. Tech-savvy teachers guide new staff in using platforms like google classroom. Both examples show that school leaders push for training, mentoring, and collaboration to help teachers feel more confident and skilled in digital teaching.

P4 and P6 experiences illustrate how DOI theory, the SAMR model, and the TPACK framework intersect. Together, they explain how school leaders help teachers adjust to digital teaching.

Table 5. *Organizational and Administrative Challenges Encountered by School Leaders in Digital Teaching Practices*

THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
Organizational and Administrative Challenges	The difficulties experienced by the participants in managing and organizing digital teaching practices within the school.	Time Constraints and Workload	P5	“Limited time due to paperwork and meetings often leads to competing administrative demands, making it hard to support	She frequently face heavy administrative workloads, such as paperwork and meetings, which limit their availability to focus on instructional leadership. As a

			P6	teacher training and professional development effectively.” “Heavy workloads and multi-task responsibilities reduce teacher effectiveness and limit time lesson preparation.”	result, support and monitor teacher training and professional development are often reduced. Heavy workloads and multi-task responsibilities is a factor for the teachers effectiveness.
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A recurring theme in both responses is the organizational pressure placed on leaders and teachers. Excessive paperwork and multitasking consume time that should be devoted to teaching, planning, and instruction. Because of this, teaching quality declines and students receive less support.

Table 6. *Policy and Logistical Support Systems in Managing Digital Teaching Practices*

THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
Organizational and Administrative Challenges	The difficulties experienced by the participants in managing and organizing digital teaching practices within the school.	Policy and Logistical Support Systems	P2	“We have strong management and logistics systems, while teachers’ organizations actively assist in reviewing and updating policies to ensure effective implementation of educational programs and support for digital teaching practices.”	She emphasized the active participation of teachers’ organizations, contribute to the continuous improvement of school policies and educational programs.
			P6	“We are always guided	

				accordingly and continuously trained in adapting how to use the technology effectively in teaching and school-related tasks.”	The continuous guidance and training programs helped teachers and school leaders improve their adaptability and confidence in using technology for instructional and administrative purposes.
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Workload and paperwork eat up the time leaders and teachers need to guide training and digital teaching. Nevertheless, strong leadership, clear policy directions and logical support from P2 and P3 enabled a successful shift toward technology use.

For digital teaching to work, schools need to balance heavy workloads with solid support from leadership and clear policies.

Table 7. *School Leaders' Adjustments in Decision-Making Practices in Response to Digital Teaching Challenges*

THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
Collaborative Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement	Collaborative leadership provides improved coordination and alleviates the burden of school leaders with digital teaching practices being more effective and sustainable through a collective effort and shared responsibility.	Collaboration with LGU and Stakeholders	P2	“Hindi ako basta-basta nagdedecide na iimplement na agad ang digital teaching activities. Instead, chine-check ko muna kung meron bang available resources at kung handa na ba talaga ang mga teachers. Madalas nakabase ang mga desisyon ko sa actual situation ng school.”	She employs a more conservative and context-driven approach when deciding whether or not to implement digital teaching activities. Rather than immediately put in the practice, decisions are weighed out against available resources and whether or not teachers are ready to implement them. It points to a move away from prescriptive measures of effectiveness in favor of situational leadership — where what you do is rooted
			P3		

				“Sa mga challenges, meron na akong coordination sa mga teachers, ICT coordinator at LGU para masolusyonan agad at maging practical ang ma address ang needs ng school, lalo na ang digital teaching.”	in the real conditions and needs of the school. He issues concerning online teaching through a lot of collaboration and coordination with teachers, ICT coordinator and LGU. This triangle shows the participation and solution orientation of a leader who shares responsibility for decision-making and, as mentioned above, does not act quickly but practically in order to implement all that needs to be implemented, especially when it comes to digital teaching at schools.
THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
Collaborative Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement	Collaborative leadership provides improved coordination and alleviates the burden of school leaders with digital teaching practices being more effective and sustainable through a collective effort and shared responsibility.	Collaboration with LGU and Stakeholders	P1	“Maingat na akong nagdedesisyon-laging data-driven at collaborative. chine-check ko muna ang needs ng mga teachers at kung paano ba talaga ang condition ng school bago ako magdedesisyon.”	She engages in thoughtful, evidence and data driven, and collaborative decision-making. It shows how crucial it is to assess teachers’ needs and the state of the school itself before deciding. It reflects a more data-driven and rationale-based form of leadership that aligns decisions with the

					needs of teachers and the school.
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The response from P1, P2, and P3 seemed to indicate an important change in the decision-making practice of school leaders when facing the challenge of digital teaching. P2 highlights that care and consideration are given: implementation follows careful assessment of resource availability; educator preparedness determines gradualness of the roll-out. This reflects that leadership is becoming more suited to the specific needs and realities of each school site.

P3 points out that teamwork with teachers, ICT coordinators, and LGU officials is essential. When responsibilities are shared, schools can handle urgent needs and find real solutions to problems in digital teaching.

Table 8. *Influence of Digital Teaching Challenges on School Leaders' Roles and Decision-Making*

THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
Collaborative Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement	Collaborative leadership provides improved coordination and alleviates the burden of school leaders with digital teaching practices being more effective and sustainable through a collective effort and shared responsibility.	Shared Responsibility and Teamwork	P4	"Digital teaching challenges added to my own work. I have to make rapid decisions, whether that means filling resource gaps and or supporting teachers. I also became more collaborative with LGU and stakeholders to address issues on the spot."	She explains that digital teaching challenges have increased the burden on the school leader, who needs to make quicker and more responsive decisions. It likewise marks a shift to robust coordination with the LGU and other stakeholders to urgently resolve resource and implementation gaps. The leader displays a more dynamic and responsive approach to leadership in dealing with new challenges.
THEME	DESCRIPTION OF THEME	SUB-THEME	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER OBSERVATION
Collaborative Leadership	Collaborative leadership provides improved	Shared Responsibility and	P3	"I learned to be more flexible and adaptive as a	He demonstrates the ability of school leader to become

and Stakeholder Engagement	coordination and alleviates the burden of school leaders with digital teaching practices being more effective and sustainable through a collective effort and shared responsibility.	Teamwork	P1	school leader.” “With these challenges, I took a more hands-on role and was very involved in monitoring teachers and about them,” I also emphasize communication and coordination to determine that decisions flow from the needs of both teachers and students.”	increasingly flexible and adaptable in responding to digital teaching. It demonstrates an evolution in leadership style that embraces more responsive and situational decision-making to effectively address changing needs and school demands. The response shows that the school leader took on a more hands-on approach to leadership in light of the challenges presented in teaching digitally. It points to active engagement in tracking teachers’ effectiveness and providing support when necessary. The greater emphasis on communication and coordination reflects decision-making driven by the needs of teachers and students, leading to more responsive leadership and inclusive governance.
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Digital teaching challenges have changed what leadership means for P4, P3, and P1. P4 identifies expanded, more complex responsibilities and the need for timely decisions across LGU levels, along with increased collaboration to address resources constraints. P3 stresses flexibility and adaptability as core to responsive leadership. P1 favors active leadership characterized by greater oversight of teachers and stronger coordination to ensure decisions align with the needs of both teachers and students.

These findings reveal more responsive and proactive school leaders. Faced with digital teaching

challenges, they have adopted flexible roles characterized by rapid problem solving, continuous support and broader stakeholder involvement in decision making.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing from the study's findings, the following conclusions are presented: School leaders encountered significant challenges in managing digital teaching practices. The six themes identified — technology and resource constraints, teacher capacity building, administrative issues, stakeholder collaboration, adaptive leadership and decision-making, and impacts on teaching and learning — reflect the lived experiences of school leaders in digital learning environments. Despite these challenges, the implementation of digital teaching in schools remains a complex and demanding responsibility for school leaders. Spotty internet, frequent power outages, and not enough ICT tools and resources made it tough to roll out digital teaching. School leaders stayed flexible, tough, and adaptive in responding to what their schools needed. By working with teachers, ICT coordinators, the LGU, and other stakeholders, they found quick fixes and kept learning going. The study also found that trainings like SLAC, LAC, mentoring, echo-training, and ICT orientation really helped boost teachers' digital skills and confidence with tech. School leaders shifted to being more adaptive and data-driven when deciding. They didn't just follow policies — they also looked at what was actually happening in school, what resources were available, and if teachers were ready. For digital teaching to work, you need strong leaders, teachers who keep getting trained, everyone working together, and the right tech. What school leaders went through shows that being adaptable and innovative is what keeps education quality high today. As a central element of digitalization, school management is essential for the successful implementation of digital teaching and ensuring that there are no discrepancies between policy expectations and appropriate conditions at schools.

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed: School leaders are encouraged to further strengthen their collaborative and adaptive leadership practices by actively involving teachers, ICT coordinators, local government units (LGUs), and parents-teachers associations (PTAs) in the early stages of planning digital teaching initiatives. Teachers should be fully engaged in continuous professional development programs like SLAC, LAC, and ICT training that can further develop the digital competencies of teachers contributing to better delivery of instructions in a technology-driven learning space. Education authorities may consider allocating funding and policy to develop the digital infrastructure needed (stable internet), supply various ICT devices, and implement training programs for teachers and school leaders. Support of Local Government Units and Parent-Teacher Associations for the same - further providing ICT resources, supporting technology access to teachers and students, as well as internet connection support will continue to go a long way in ensuring schools have ICT accessibility and Internet infrastructures necessary for digital learning. Researchers in the future can expand this study by implementing it among higher school levels teachers. Looking at their experiences they deal with specialized subjects, greater student independence and complex instruction at that level, exploring their stories will add more depth to the understanding of digital teaching.

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Appendix A.

Republic of the Philippines
Laguna State Polytechnic University
Province of Laguna



March 2, 2026

EDITHA M. ATENDIDO, CESO V
Schools Division Superintendent
Department of Education - Division of Laguna
Sta Cruz, Laguna

Dear Madam:

Greetings of peace!

I respectfully write this letter to request a Permit to Study in connection with my ongoing thesis writing as part of my Master of Arts in Education program.

The completion of my thesis is a significant academic requirement aimed at contributing to the improvement of educational practices and institutional development. This opportunity will greatly enhance my professional knowledge and skills, which I intend to apply to improve my performance and contribute more effectively to our school and division. I assure you that my studies will not, in any way, interfere with my duties and responsibilities. I will continue to fulfill all my obligations and maintain satisfactory performance in my current position.

In this regard, I humbly seek your approval and support for the issuance and signing of my Permit to Study.

Thank you very much for your time, consideration, and support. I look forward to your favorable response.

Sincerely yours,


GIRLIE B. MALOLES

Approved/Disapproved:

EDITHA M. ATENDIDO, CESO V
Schools Division Superintendent



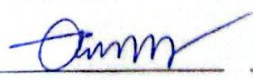
Republic of the Philippines
Laguna State Polytechnic University
 Province of Laguna



**COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION
 GRADUATE STUDIES AND APPLIED RESEARCH**

CERTIFICATE OF QUESTIONNAIRE VALIDATION

This is to certify that the Questionnaire to be utilized on the research study
 "Navigating the Shift: Exploring the Challenges Elementary School Leaders Face in
 Managing Digital Teaching Practices" prepared by Girlie B. Maloles was content validated
 by the following group of specialist/experts in their field.

Name	Signature	Date
Adviser: <u>DR. CECILIA Q. VELASCO</u>		<u>2/18/24</u>
Subject Specialist: <u>DR. DELON A. CHING</u>		_____
Statistician: <u>ALLEN E. PASIA</u>		_____
Technical Editor: <u>DR. JULIE FE D. PANOY</u>		_____
Dean: <u>DR. EDILBERTO Z. ANDAL</u>		<u>2/20/2024</u>



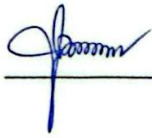
Republic of the Philippines
Laguna State Polytechnic University
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Name	Signature	Date
External Validator: <u>RONALYN P. PABRO, EdD</u> Teacher III		<u>02-24-2026</u>
External Validator: <u>KATHRYN U. QUILAO, EdD</u> Master Teacher II		<u>02-26-2026</u>
External Validator: <u>CHRISTINE DL. VILLEGAS, EdD</u> Teacher III		<u>02-26-2026</u>



Republic of the Philippines
Laguna State Polytechnic University
Province of Laguna



February 20, 2026

To: The Principal

Greetings of peace!

I Girlie B. Maloles, Teacher I of Maitim Elementary School. I am currently enrolled at the Laguna State Polytechnic University, San Pablo Laguna taking Master of Education Major in Educational Management.

I am writing to respectfully request your permission to conduct interviews for my study entitled "Navigating the Shift: Exploring the Challenges Elementary School Leaders Face in Managing Digital Teaching Practices."

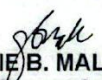
The target participants for this study will be six elementary principals at Bay Laguna.

We would greatly appreciate your approval to conduct the interview with the identified participants. Rest assured that all information gathered will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used solely for the purpose of this study. Attached is the copy of the research instrument for your ready reference.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at girlie.maloles@deped.gov.ph should you require any further information or clarification.

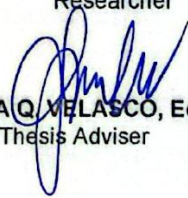
Thank you very much for your kind consideration and support.

Sincerely yours,


GIRLIE B. MALOLES
Researcher

Noted:


EDILBERTO Z. ANDAL, EdD
Dean, CTE-GSAR


CECILIA Q. VELASCO, EdD
Thesis Adviser



A. Participant Qualification Question

Your participation will be appreciated. In relation to the **Republic Act 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012)**, I assure you that I will keep your personal information. The data you will provide is a big help in developing my research study entitled "**Navigating the Shift: Exploring the Challenges Elementary School Leaders Face in Managing Digital Teaching Practices.**"

Full Name:

School:

Instruction: Kindly shade or check your answer.

1. Are you currently working as an elementary school leader (principal) in Bay, Laguna?
 Yes No
2. What is your age?
 50 years old and above
 Below 50 years old
3. How many years have you worked in government or for a school?
 20 years in service
 Less than 20 years
4. Tell me about yourself after how many years do you have an experience of as school principal?
 3 years or more
 Less than 3 years
5. Do you have experience administering digital tools for teaching in your school?
 Yes No
6. Do you endorse and would like to adopt strategies in digital pedagogy?
 Yes No
7. Would you be interested in doing a long-form interview? Can you talk about your experience with digital literacy and how it was integral to boosting your professional career?
 Yes No

Navigating the Shift: Exploring Challenges of Elementary School Leaders Face in Managing Digital Teaching Practices

GIRLIE B. MALOLES
THE RESEARCHER

Research Questions

The study will delve into the challenges faced by the elementary school leaders in Bay, Laguna. This will also find the strategies used by the elementary school leaders to overcome barriers in digital education. The researchers will develop a website that involves professional development through digital literacy. The **central question** of the study is:

What is the essence of elementary school leaders' experiences that facilitated efficient strategies to overcome barriers in digital education?

Corollary Questions

1. How do elementary school leaders in Bay, Laguna perceive the impact of digital teaching on students' learning engagement?
2. What are the key challenges elementary school leaders in Bay, Laguna encounter in managing digital teaching practices?
3. How do these leaders address issues related to teacher readiness to digital competence?
4. What strategies have school leaders implemented to support effective digital teaching?

Rationale

The study will focus on the lived experiences of elementary school leaders (principal) in Bay Laguna, investigating how digital literacy contributes in managing digital teaching practices. By examining the experiences of teachers, this research seeks to know the ways in which digital literacy can be harnessed to support teacher professional development and improve their students' learning outcomes. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) has implemented various programs to promote the integration of technology in education; for instance, the Public Schools E-classroom Project, officially known as the DepEd Computerization Program (DCP). These initiatives aim to promote the effective use of technology in the classroom. However, elementary teachers are having a hard time cooperating with this due to limited access to technology, inadequate training, and lack of support. In parallel, Masyhura (2022) stated that implementing digital literacy in elementary schools requires a strategic approach, including training, resource development, and infrastructure enhancement.

Theory/Model

The theory of Diffusion of Innovation (DOI), the SAMR model, and the TPACK model are three complementary frameworks that form the basis for this study by offering a framework to provide insights into digital teaching in elementary schools. DOI theory helps us understand how innovations, like digital teaching practices, are adopted by teachers and describes some contextual factors influencing adoption (relative advantage, compatibility and complexity) (Rogers, 2003). The SAMR model looks at the depth of technology integration in instruction, from replacing traditional tools with technology to transforming the learning experience (Puentedura, 2014). The TPACK framework explains the relationship between technological, pedagogical and content knowledge necessary for effective teaching in a digital environment (Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Koehler et al., 2014). By combining these frameworks this study examines the complex factors that influence how school leaders manage digital teaching practices by creating a culture and climate conducive to adoption, supporting effective integration of technology in pedagogy and developing teacher capacity in digital pedagogy.

QUESTIONNAIRE VALIDATION SHEET

Name of Validator: _____
 Highest Educational Attainment: _____
 Position Held: _____
 Field of Specialization: _____
 Signature: _____

Purpose:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to validate the study entitled, **“Navigating the Shift: Exploring Challenges of Elementary School Leaders Face in Managing Digital Teaching Practices”**

Directions:

Please read each of the questions. For each item, please indicate whether the item/guide question is Essential, Useful but not Essential, or Not Necessary.

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS

The following are based and arranged according to the objectives of the researchers.

FOR BAY, LAGUNA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEADERS

Research Objectives	Interview Questions	Follow-up Questions	Indicate whether the item/guide question is Essential, Useful but not Essential, or Not Necessary.
Explore whether leaders believe that digital learning significantly changed the way in which students became engaged in learning.	Can you describe your experiences as a teacher in supporting digital practices in your school? How can you support teachers in using tech in class? What role do policy, training and school support play in encouraging the use of technology in class — from simply tracking attendance to offering innovative learning experiences? What can you say about digital teaching? 1. What are the lived experiences of school leaders	What challenges do you encounter in supporting digital practices? What tools do they need at your school? How can you lessen or address these problems?	

	in navigating digital teaching practices?		
Determine the key issues you face in sustaining digital teaching practices.	2. What challenges do you face in implementing digital teaching methods and how do factors such as internet access, facilities, or school policies impact their implementation? 3. How do organizational and logistical challenges in digital teaching impact teachers' effectiveness and student learning?		
Consider how leaders address this in relation to teacher readiness and digital competence	4. How well do teachers utilize digital tools, and how extensively can they implement digital learning practices? 5. What types of school supports at your school are in place for teachers with limited digital skills (job-embedded training, opportunities to learn from other colleagues) and how effective do you feel these supports have been at helping teachers, particularly new ones?		

Find out what leaders are doing to elevate digital teaching	6. How are you helping teachers to use digital tools, and how do programs from departments influence the way these tools are used? 7. How do you track and assess digital teaching? 8. What organizations, parents or schools have you partnered with that have helped support digital teaching in your school? 9. Is there any advice you would like to give to principals who are considering using digital tools and strategies in their own schools? 10. Based on your experience, what would you change or do to improve learning in elementary schools — and with which approaches, policies or tools?”		
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Remarks/Recommendation:

 Name and Signature of the Validator

Overall Rating:

Please check (/) appropriate rating.

☐ Approved to be used as presented

☐ Approved to be used with revisions as indicated.

☐ Disapproved, the researcher must make another questionnaire.

Interview Guide Question

Dear Participants,

Good day, and welcome to our interview. Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences for my study entitled, “Navigating the Shift: Exploring Challenges of Elementary School Leaders Face in Managing Digital Teaching Practices”

I am Girlie B. Maloles, a graduate student of the Master of Arts In Education Major In Educational Management at Laguna State Polytechnic University, San Pablo City. Laguna. Assisting me in this research is my Thesis Adviser, Dr. Cecilia Q. Velasco.

This study is performed in accordance with the ethical standards and respects rights of every participant. Your name will be treated confidentially following ethical research standards and the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). For accuracy and documentation purposes, the interview will be audio-recorded and is estimated to take about 20-30 minutes. Your recording will be kept strictly confidential and used only for analysis. Reporting will be done with participant's code numbers not names. Your responses will be treated with great respect and only used for academic research.

And please know, there are no right or wrong responses. You may also use the Filipino language in expressing your thoughts. Please share openly about your experience! You also have every right to simply be silent in response to any question that makes you uncomfortable or even end your interview at any time with no penalty.

Let us now begin.

Warm-up Questions

- 1.1 Can you tell us a little about yourself, your experience as a principal and how long you have been teaching?
- 1.2 How would you describe your experience in integrating digital technologies into instruction at your school?
- 1.3 Can you elaborate regarding your career development and how your teachers have applied digital teaching methods?

Primary Questions

- 2.1 Can you describe your experiences as a teacher in supporting digital practices in your school?
- 2.2 What challenges do you encounter in supporting digital practices?
- 3.1 How can you support teachers in using tech in class?

3.2 What tools do they need at your school?

4. What roles do policy, training and school support play in encouraging the use of technology in class — from simply tracking attendance to offering innovative learning experiences?

5.1 What can you say about digital teaching?

5.2 How can you lessen or address these problems?

Corollary Questions:

6.1 What are the lived experiences of practices? School leaders in navigating digital teaching practices?

6.2 Can you cite specific examples how a change in your participation, motivation or learning methods led to change for students?

7. What challenges do you face in implementing digital teaching methods and how do factors such as internet access, facilities, or school policies impact their implementation?

8. How do organizational and logistical challenges in digital teaching impact teachers' effectiveness and student learning?

9. How well do teachers utilize digital tools, and how extensively can they implement digital learning practices?

10. What types of school supports at your school are in place for teachers with limited digital skills (job-embedded training, opportunities to learn from other colleagues) and how effective do you feel these supports have been at helping teachers, particularly new ones?

11. How are you helping teachers to use digital tools, and how do programs from departments influence the way these tools are used?

12. How do you track and assess digital teaching?

13. What organizations, parents or schools have you partnered with that have helped support digital teaching in your school?

Closing Questions:

14. Is there any advice you would like to give to principals who are considering using digital tools and strategies in their own schools?

15. Based on your experience, what would you change or do to improve learning in elementary schools — and with which approaches, policies or tools?

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name : GIRLIE BEGALME MALOLES
 Address : Brgy. Tagumpay Bay, Laguna
 E-mail address : girlie.maloles@deped.gov.ph
 Mobile : 09203105324

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

Post-Graduate : Master of Arts in Education
 Major in Educational Management
 Laguna State Polytechnic University
 San Pablo City Campus
 San Pablo City, Laguna
 2022 - 2026

College Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
 San Pablo Colleges
 San Pablo City
 2000 - 2003
 2004 – 2008

High School San Pablo City National High School
 San Pablo City, Laguna
 1996 - 2000

Elementary Corazon Marino Azcarate Elementary School
 San Pablo City, Laguna
 1990 – 1996

ELIGIBILITY Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET)
 Lucena City
 December 15, 2008

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Teaching Experience : Maitim Elementary School
 Maitim Bay, Laguna
 January 2010 – date