

Assessment of school Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) implementation: Basis for policy formulation

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed at understanding how the Learning Continuity Plan was implemented in the schools in the Province of Palawan, Philippines

Research methodology: It employed Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods utilizing an interview questionnaire to gather needed data from twenty public schools in the province.

Results: The schools' LCP is still on the initial implementation as there are areas of concern that are yet to be fully accomplished. Problems involving funding, stakeholders' collaboration, and institutional policy compliance are detrimental to smooth LCP implementation. Comparably, schools were able to implement collaboration, planning and review, strong communication, and transparency achieving the goals of education amidst problems. It was proven that schools could be resilient in times of a crisis as they could continue education amidst the challenges.

Limitations: Since this study was conducted in the first year of LCP implementation amidst the coronavirus pandemic, the results may only be true to the said time and conditions.

Contribution: This study could be a basis for developing policies for effective LCP implementation

Keywords: *Best practices, Brigada Eskwela, Coronavirus, Learning Continuity Plan, Problems encountered*

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1. Introduction

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that hit the globe has posed great challenges to all industries, especially education (Kooli, 2021a). The widespread closure of schools has affected a great number of students, from primary to tertiary levels (Cahapay, 2020); (Baburajan, 2021). The quality and accessibility of education should not be compromised even during a crisis. As one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SGD) of the 2030 Agenda, the Education for Sustainable Development aimed at providing the people of school age a universal and equitable educational opportunity by working with the stakeholders to lessen the adverse effects of the crisis (United Nations Educational & Organization, 2017a); (UNESCO, 2020b).

Accordingly, quality education is a key to combating the challenges (Kooli, 2017). The balanced conformity of education, which includes outputs, methods, and environment, with defined needs, goals, requirements, norms, and standards is sometimes referred to as the educational quality (Belash et al.,

2015). Thus, clear educational goals that prepare young people to become globally competitive are a must. The teaching-learning goals must also be aligned with the educational goals to provide quality and equitable education to all ([Koc-Damgaci & Aydin, 2017](#)). More so, the ability to select from a variety of learning modalities is critical for student achievement. It involves mixed, modular, and online learning, as well as some face-to-face instruction. When it comes to student perseverance, however, the growth of blended learning was found to have a greater impact. When it came to learning the course information, students thought the mixed approach was superior ([Cruz-Johnson, 2012](#)).

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) has implemented the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) as a response to this widespread educational interruption. The BE-LCP is the department's set of interventions that provide well-determined guidelines to all educational offices and institutions in addressing the challenges brought by the existing health crisis ([Departement of Education \(DepEd\), 2020a](#)). It was developed based on a legal framework that is COVID-19-responsive while also upholding the department's responsibility of ensuring that all citizens have access to high-quality education ([Abril & Callo, 2021](#)).

The implementation of BE-LCP is a clear manifestation of the DepEd's commitment to continue education even with the presence of risks brought by the pandemic or regardless of the changes it brought ([Department of Education \(DepEd\), 2020b](#)). After a year of implementation, the assessment of its effectiveness is fittingly right so that appropriate measures or adjustments can be done. Revisiting the status of LCP implementation would be beneficial to school leaders and teachers as it could be a basis for continuing education in similar situations in the future. At this premise, this study which aimed at assessing the BE-LCP implementation was conducted. This research aims to understand how the Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) adopted by the Philippines' Department of Education fared in its implementation to serve as a basis for formulating policy on the LCP implementation. It specifically sought to answer the questions below:

1. What is the implementation level of the School Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) in the Province of Palawan, Philippines?
2. What are the Learning Continuity Plan's (LCP) best practices for the schools in the Province of Palawan, Philippines?
3. What are the problems encountered by the schools in their implementation of the Learning Continuity Plan (LCP)?
4. What policy can be proposed based on the school implementers' perspective to improve the implementation of the Learning Continuity Plan (LCP)?

2. Literature review and hypothesis development

Pieces of literature and studies were examined to attain the aims of this study which was focused on the assessment of the Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) implementation of select schools in the Province of Palawan.

Education amidst Coronavirus

Covid-19 has a wide-ranging worldwide impact that can be seen in practically every field, including health, economics, and education. Since the outbreak was declared a pandemic in March 2020, there have been multiple daily updates on the virus's impact on the lives of millions of people throughout the world ([Kooli, 2021b](#)). The COVID-19 epidemic has claimed many lives around the world and constitutes a serious threat to public health, food sources, and the workplace ([WHO, 2020](#)).

The education sector is among the severely affected by this health crisis. Coronavirus significantly affected the educational systems which caused the schools, universities, and other educational institutions to closure. Marginalized and vulnerable members of the society such as children, young adults, those who are economically challenged, emigrants and displaced people, and people with disabilities are identified to have suffered a lot in terms of losing access to education due to this health crisis ([Kooli, 2022](#)). Such deprivation of learning could last longer, way beyond this current generation, and would crumble the education and economic progress made through decades of efforts. Additionally, it was projected that in 2021 that school and campus closures affected more than 1.5 billion students in

165 countries and 23.8 million students from kindergarten to tertiary levels may not be able to come back to school in due time as an impact of this pandemic ([UNESCO, 2020b](#)); ([UNESCO, 2021](#)).

In the same way, it is emphasized that the pandemic has had devastating effects on daily life. As a result, schools that look to be closing down have suffered. Students and young children are left at home with limited or no access to educational opportunities ([Kooli, 2021a](#)). More so, a full year of schooling could be missed, implying that a whole class of children could stay behind in their learning eternally. As a result, the crisis and its aftermath have revealed flaws in educational infrastructure, presenting chances to transform school education into a more resilient and robust model. Climate change, technological innovation, and globalization are making these disasters more likely and this current pandemic is not the first or the last time to strike a country or a school ([Asia, 2020](#)).

According to Kuhfeld, who was quoted in [Terada \(2020\)](#)'s study, students will lose three months' worth of reading advances and five months' worth of arithmetic gains on average. The most important message is that pupils are returning to school having degraded at significantly varied rates, not that academic decline is inevitable. Correspondingly, it is said that school attendance seems to be the best way to develop a person's knowledge and skills. Aside from the fact that going to school is fun and develops one's ability to socialize, collaborate and communicate well with others, it actually nurtures and unleashes the full potential of a person needed for him to become a useful member of society. Hence, the longer time spent in school or the instance of skipping school, indeed, has implications for the development of skills ([Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020](#)).

Nowadays, educators face difficulties dealing with the changing circumstances brought on by the pandemic, resulting in significant levels of stress and worry. It was reported that 92.8 percent of teachers experienced emotional weariness, worry, agony, or anxiety as a result of confinement and distant learning. Additionally, inadequate online teaching technology, a lack of teacher instruction, a lack of information, and a diverse home environment are all potential issues that both teachers and students encounter in this trying time in the education ([Espino-Díaz, Fernandez-Caminero, Hernandez-Lloret, Gonzalez-Gonzalez, & Alvarez-Castillo, 2020](#)).

The sudden change in an educational set-up which includes learning modality, style, and needs has caused numerous discussions focusing on how it will adversely affect the lives of those learners who are deemed economically challenged. It is noted that the current situation in education, where schools' various teaching and learning modalities and platforms are adopted, aggravated the differences between and among students specifically in terms of their capacity and access to educational resources needed to continue learning. In line with what many education leaders believed that learning should not be stopped despite any crisis, various steps to ensure continued learning amidst the threat of this health crisis are a must. Designing educational policies that would address the issues of continued learning and health risks should be every leaders' concern ([Magsambol, 2020](#)); ([Kooli, 2022](#)).

Despite lockdowns and community quarantines, every country wishes to maintain and provide high-quality education. As a result, new normal education setups have emerged in the education sector. Under the current educational situation, the scenario presents a significant impediment to each educational leader's decision-making process. It calls for an action that would study the problems and changes that arise as a result of this pandemic to develop and design educational policies and measures ensuring a lesser adverse impact on the education of such crises in the future. Also, understanding the issues that come along with the abrupt changes made to educational setup in responding to the emerging educational needs due to this pandemic is necessary to attain the quality of education that every student deserves. Continued review and analysis of all aspects of education and the changes made, the effects of this educational disturbance and other prevalent factors affecting the school and the students' learning are of importance ([Tria, 2020](#)).

Learning Continuity Plan in the Philippines

Due to disruptive events, such as the present pandemic, which affect the operations of schools, a framework that will govern and serve as the basis for policy planning and decision-making in the form

of learning continuity plans must be prepared carefully. Whether expected or not, any distraction affecting the teaching and learning processes such as coronavirus could pose an adverse effect on all the key players in the education ([Citrix, 2015](#)). With this, the country's delivery of education has changed greatly as well. Teaching and learning had to be done remotely using modular, digital, or other means. As a major response and commitment to protecting the lives of learners, teachers, and other school personnel, the Philippines' education department came up with a framework within which teaching and learning will continue at schools in the event of possible closures ([Montemayor, 2020](#)).

In this regard, the Philippines' education bureau, which is committed to continuing to provide quality education, is continuously exerting effort to come up with an effective approach to win this battle against the impact of covid-19. This resulted in the issuance of the DepEd Order 12, series of 2020, entitled "*Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for School Year 2020-2021 in light of the Covid-19 public health emergency*". Although the Basic Education – Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) developed by the DepEd prescribes various actions that could be implemented in the field, schools reserved the right to identify appropriate actions best suited for the needs of their learners, the health conditions of their locality, and their resources. [Departement of Education \(DepEd\) \(2020a\)](#). BE-LCP is explained as:

"The BE-LCP stands on the principles of protecting the health, safety, and well-being of learners, teachers, and personnel, and preventing the further transmission of COVID-19, ensuring learning continuity through K-12 curriculum adjustments, alignment of learning materials, deployment of multiple learning delivery modalities, provision of corresponding training for teachers and school leaders, and proper orientation of parents or guardians of learners, facilitating the safe return of teaching and non-teaching personnel and learners to workplaces and schools. Taking into consideration the scenarios projected by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases in the Philippines (IATF-MEIDP) and linking the BE-LCP to DepEd's pivot to quality and into the future of education, under the framework of Sulong EduKalidad and Futures Thinking in Education" ([Departement of Education \(DepEd\), 2020a](#)).

The LCP, which is designed to be implemented in the schools to avert the effects of the present health crisis, is the comprehensive response of the DepEd to the pressing needs of schools and their clientele relative to covid-19. The afore-mentioned plan is the result of several consultative actions. There were conversations with education stakeholders, including members of the house and senate basic education committees, executives from the department's various sections and field offices, and the general public. A series of online surveys of more than 700,000 respondents, including parents, learners, and teachers, were also undertaken to assess their readiness for remote education. A deeper examination of data on basic education and the epidemiological situation was also considered. In creating the framework, the inputs from the conversations, surveys, and analyses were combined ([Cahapay, 2020](#)).

The DepEd's Secretary guaranteed that the BE-LCP will be responsive to the context and available resources of schools and students across the country. She went on to say that parents, instructors, and students should be aware that the LCP can be contextualized to meet the requirements of community learners. Local Government Unit (LGU) officials and school heads played important roles in the implementation of this LCP as they need to collaboratively work with the purpose of ensuring of delivery of quality education in a safe and healthy manner. Also, all school stakeholders must work hand and hand to properly determine and implement the best-suited learning modality that effectively meets the needs of the teachers and the students' ([Hernando-Malipot, 2020](#)).

Distance learning presents various challenges that while normal operations are interrupted, these challenges gradually become complex for stakeholders both internal and external. Thus, developing learning continuity plans must focus on keeping practices simple, and emphasis on instructional and operational facets be given much consideration ([University, 2020](#)). Developing distance learning solutions is a comprehensive response to unanticipated interruptions in educational processes due to school closures. These techniques are guided by a concern for fairness and inclusion, as well as the need

to ensure that distance learning is planned and delivered in a way that does not worsen existing educational and social inequities. However, both current mitigating needs and long-term goals should influence the development of more complete distant learning techniques. Beyond the immediate response to the crisis, the initiatives to scale up distance learning across all levels of education are instructive. After the COVID-19 pandemic has passed, they may establish the groundwork for longer-term aspirations of creating more open, inclusive, and adaptable education institutions ([UNESCO, 2020b](#)); ([Kooli, 2022](#)).

Furthermore, the BE-LCP seeks to provide high-quality distant learning using digital and printed self-learning modules, radio, television, and the internet. Because not every part of the country has access to the internet, the DepEd has chosen teachers who have been educated as teacher-broadcasters by the country's finest journalists to give courses via DepEd TV and other partner networks that will carry DepEd TV episodes. With more than 100 teacher-broadcasters and 72 production team members, the DepEd TV production team aims to produce 220 episodes per week covering all the subject areas by January 2021. The DepEd Commons, the departments' online learning platform accessible to all students from both public and private educational institutions, was also upgraded to serve more students. The DepEd tapped other government agencies particularly the Department of Information and Communications technology and the National Telecommunications Commission for support to ensure that its online learning portal will be readily and easily accessible to all ([Montemayor, 2020](#)).

As the pandemic is yet far from ending, evaluating and adjusting the LCP is quite necessary to address the emerging effect of covid-19 and the ever-changing needs of the learners and other school stakeholders. In line with this, the DepEd also released a "Monitoring and Evaluation Framework" to help school personnel refine and improve their school LCP to give the best for its learners. The said framework would let the schools assess their LCP whether it reaches the DepEd's goal of providing access to quality education to Filipino learners amid the pandemic. The framework was established to assess LCP implementation based on "*leadership investments, management systems, partnerships, and external relations*" to make sure that it effectively and efficiently responds to and addresses the needs of the learners, especially during this time of pandemic ([Department of Education \(DepEd\), 2020b](#)). Indeed, the LCP is considered the major response of the DepEd to make learning continues even during the pandemic while ensuring the safety of all school personnel ([Cortezano, Catapang, & Cortezano, 2021](#)).

Despite comprehensive planning, designing LCP and implementing it could still face challenges, thus, it is imperative for constant review and improvement. Obstacles to learning continuity plans created by the disasters such as natural calamities, storms, fires, and pandemics must be overcome so that the learning activities of students can continue. One limitation of learning continuity plans is the need for social distancing, making limited face-to-face interaction nearly impossible ([NUADU, 2020](#)).

Different challenges that confronted the implementation of LCP were enumerated by [Pimentel-Tibon \(2020\)](#). The first challenge is said to be in connection with the implementation of various learning modalities as not all learners are capable of learning alone or with lesser or no supervision. Still originating from the learning modality is the issue in the production of learning materials needed in the selected modality of learning. The second challenge identified is the need for substantial financial resources to support and fund the LCP implementation. Collaboration with and support from various organizations and stakeholders' would be necessary. And the third identified challenge was the quality of learning the students get and whether they reach their full potential given that there is little interaction between them and their teacher and fellow students.

Similarly, in his presentation, [Malaluan \(2020\)](#) provided updates on the LCP implementation's progress and challenges encountered. It was reported that the Philippines government, through its Congress, is strongly supporting the DepEd's LCP implementation. Aside from government support, the department has also received support from various partners as evident in its forged partnerships with numerous individuals and organizations. As previously mentioned, the LCP implementation is also prone to challenges. The pressing challenge encountered in the LCP implementation, as reported, is the

development of quality learning materials such as Self-Learning Modules (SLMs), Learning Activity Sheets (LAS), and Weekly Home Learning Plans. Another problem encountered is the fact that learning at home is not free of distractions which makes students unable to focus on their studies and doing the required activities.

3. Research methodology

The implementation level of the School Learning Continuity Plan (LCP), the best practices, and the problems encountered in its implementation was determined and identified in this research which employed a combination of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods.

It involved twenty (20) public elementary and secondary schools in the Province of Palawan, in the Philippines. Purposive sampling was utilized in determining this research's respondents. Permission to conduct this study was sought from the Schools Division of Palawan. After which, the assistance from the Office of Public Schools District Supervisors was asked for easier collection of data.

An interview questionnaire was utilized in gathering the required information for this study. It was partially adapted from the LCP Implementation Monitoring Tool developed by the City Schools Division of Dasmariñas, Philippines. The questionnaire was composed of four parts and the first part is composed of 17 statements with five areas of concern particularly *Curriculum Delivery, Framework and Operational Plan, Funding and other Resource Requirement, Partnership and Linkages*, and *Pertinent Issuances used as Legal Basis*. Meanwhile, Parts 2 to 4 are composed of structured interview questions on the school's Learning Continuity Plan's (LCP) best practices, problems encountered in the implementation of the School Learning Continuity Plan (LCP), and the proposed school policy for LCP implementation.

The mean and percentage were employed in treating and analyzing quantitative data gathered particularly the implementation level of LCP in the province of Palawan, Philippines. Meanwhile, coding and thematic analysis were employed in treating the gathered qualitative data which includes the school's best practices, the challenges encountered, and the proposed school policies relative to the LCP implementation.

4. Results and discussions

Implementation level of the School Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) in the Province of Palawan, Philippines

Table 1. Implementation level of the School Learning Continuity Plan (LCP)

Areas of Concerns	Mean	Percentage	Interpretation
1. Curriculum Delivery			
a. Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) in print or digital format (whichever is applicable in the context of the learner) were made available during the quarter.	2.00	100	Full Implementation
b. A suggested time frame was provided by the teachers to learners on their assigned tasks through the Weekly Home Learning Plan (WHLP). Flexibility in finishing each module was accorded to learners with respect to their learning needs, characteristics, and level of understanding to ensure mastery of the learning content.	1.90	95	Full Implementation
c. Timely and appropriate monitoring of learning progress and feedback mechanism using various accessible touch points such as text messaging and audio/video calls were utilized.	1.75	87.5	Initial Implementation

d. Learning facilitators (family members or any trained stakeholder within the community) provided support to the learners in the absence of a classroom teacher.	1.45	72.5	Initial Implementation
e. Instructional Supervision and Technical Assistance for Teachers including LAC Session schedule, Performance Evaluation and Tools were available.	1.80	90	Full Implementation
2. Framework and Operational Plan			
a. Packing, Distribution, Retrieval Schedule, and Arrangements of LR's were available.	2.00	100	Full Implementation
b. Distribution and Retrieval Schemes of Learning Resources observing minimum health standards and safety protocols were still in place.	1.95	97.5	Full Implementation
c. DRRM Task Force with corresponding Terms of Reference is listed.	1.70	85	Initial Implementation
3. Funding and other Resource Requirement			
a. School Improvement Plan and Annual Implementation Plan were revisited and adjusted	1.80	90	Full Implementation
b. School Operating Budget (Mandatory Operational Expense and LCP Implementation Expense) was being utilized as per BE-LCP	1.85	92.5	Full Implementation
c. Local School Board/Special Education Fund per municipality including realigned fund intended for various learning modalities was approved.	1.75	87.5	Initial Implementation
4. Partnership and Linkages			
a. List of partners (parents, community/ barangay, other stakeholders) for the quarter were identified	1.75	87.5	Initial Implementation
b. Document showing areas of support provided with amount of donations (if any) for the quarter	1.75	87.5	Initial Implementation
c. Number of partnerships established	1.50	75	Initial Implementation
5. List of Pertinent Issuances used as Legal Basis			
a. Legal Basis and DepEd Issuances were compiled	1.80	90	Full Implementation
b. Issuance of Memorandum and other correspondence to ensure safe and conducive learning environment by adhering to DOH, IATF and DRRM safety protocols and measures.	1.75	87.5	Initial Implementation
c. List of DRRM Task Force with corresponding Terms of Reference	1.70	85	Initial Implementation
Weighted Mean	1.78	89	Initial Implementation

Descriptions: 90% and above - Full Implementation (FI); 58%--89%--Initial Implementation (II); 26%--57%--Installation (I); 25% and below -Exploration (E)

Source: Processed data

Table 1 shows the level of implementation of the school LCP with five areas of concern. To determine the level of LCP implementation, the partially adopted LCP Implementation Monitoring Tool developed by the City Schools Division of Dasmariñas, Philippines was utilized. Using the scale: 0 – Not Evident, 1 – Partially Evident, and 2 – Completely Evident, the participants were asked to rate whether the seventeen (17) indicators are evident or not during LCP implementation. It revealed that LCP in the schools in the Province of Palawan, Philippines is in its initial implementation (\bar{x} = 1.78; % = 89). Noticeably that “Partnership and Linkages” and “List of Pertinent Issuances used as Legal Basis” are the areas of concern with most of the indicators are partially evident. As for the areas of concern – “Curriculum Delivery”, “Framework and Operational Plan”, and “Funding and other Resource Requirement”, most of the schools also indicated that the required indicators are completely evident. These findings imply that schools have made an effort to ensure the learning continues and be delivered with its learners as they identified and adopted the most suited learning modality based on their learners’ needs and capacity, they have properly planned and executed a Weekly Home Learning Plan for the students to be guided as to what learning area to focus on per schedule, and even capacitated teachers through Learning Action Cell sessions. Although the pandemic has forced DepEd to abruptly review its curriculum and come up with a list of Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs), school personnel, as required by their duties, made learning resources readily available and implemented a module distribution and retrieval scheme compliant with the government-imposed health regulations and standards. Evidently, the schools are working well in implementing their planned actions pertaining to the school’s Framework and Operations aspects.

Learning Continuity Plan’s (LCP) best practices of the schools in the Province of Palawan, Philippines

Table 2. School’s best practices in the LCP implementation

Themes	Core Ideas and Supporting Quotes
Collaboration	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> Participants consider maintaining collaboration among and between the stakeholders would be a best practice in the implementation of the LCP in the school as all the members of the school community must do their part in achieving all the educational goals stated in the LCP.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “I think the school had only 1 plan for SLCP connected to the programs /strategies of each teacher that suited to the needs of the learners. It's a collaborative effort of all teachers, stakeholders, and PTA.” “Support from stakeholders is continuous.” “Consultation with the stakeholders, Solicit support from the stakeholders.” “Partnership/link with stakeholder for the augmentation needed for printing SLMs.” “Strong relationship with stakeholders.” “Strengthening partnership and linkages.”</p>
Planning and Review	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> Planning and constant review of the school LCP would lead to its effective implementation since LCP must be aligned with the needs of the school and its clientele.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “Monitoring and Evaluation of school Projects and Programs.” “Quarterly revisiting of SLCP for the status of implementation.” “Regular Review of the plans.” “Review and plan adjustments are done.” “Planning, Implementation of PPA's & Constant Monitoring of certain PPA's” “School had only 1 plan for SLCP connected to the programs/strategies of each teacher that suited to the needs of the learners.” “Early Collaborative planning, fund allocation prioritizing production of both printed and digital modules.”</p>

Strong Communication	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> As per the participants, a clear and open lines of communication ensure smooth LCP implementation in the school.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “Intensify communication to all concern including stakeholders.” “Open communication and serving with dedication and commitment.” “Parents orientation & motivation done thru virtual & face to face.” “Orientation of Stakeholders.”</p>
Transparency	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> Transparency on the school affairs contributed to the success of LCP implementation in the school as it motivates stakeholders to take part in its implementation.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “Transparency liquidation of school funds” “Constant communication with stakeholders. Creating an action plan for every project. Proper documentation in every activity done.”</p>

Source: Processed data

Table 2 presents the respondents’ responses to the questionnaire on the school’s best practices in the implementation of LCP. The participant’s responses to the interview were coded and classified according to themes. Four themes emerged from the participants’ responses, namely (1) collaboration, (2) planning and review, (3) strong communication, and (4) transparency. Indeed, collaboration with the school stakeholders - external and internal, and maintaining strong and open communication with them could lead to better implementation of every school project or activity such as the Learning Continuity Plan. Based on the following participants’ responses, the collaboration among school stakeholders is evident: “*Support from stakeholders is continuous,*” “*Consultation with the stakeholders, solicit support from the stakeholders,*” “*Partnership/link with stakeholder for the augmentation needed for printing SLMs,*” “*Strong relationship with stakeholders,*” “*Strengthening partnership and linkages,*” “*Intensify communication to all concern including stakeholders,*” “*Open communication and serving with dedication and commitment,*” “*Parents orientation & motivation done thru virtual & face to face,*” and “*Orientation of Stakeholders.*” More so, being transparent and conducting planning and review of the LCP implementation contribute to its implementation success. According to some of the responses, “*Transparency liquidation of school funds,*” could be a best practice of the school that would motivate stakeholders to enjoin them in their LCP implementation. Furthermore, participants’ responses like “*School had only 1 plan for SLCP connected to the programs/strategies of each teacher that suited to the needs of the learners,*” “*Monitoring and Evaluation of school Projects and Programs,*” and “*Quarterly revisiting of SLCP for the status of implementation*” articulated the need for having a good planning process, and constant review and evaluation to ensure effective LCP implementation in the schools. It is indeed necessary to anchor the school LCP to the DepEd’s vision and mission, just like what [Cortezano et al. \(2021\)](#) have said, to have an effective and smart plan of action to deliver the kind of education our learners need.

Problems encountered by the schools in their implementation of the Learning Continuity Plan (LCP)

Table 3. Problems encountered in the LCP implementation

Themes	Core Ideas and Supporting Quotes
Financial Insufficiency	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> Lack or limited financial resources is detrimental to the implementation of the LCP as it requires sufficient fund to perform planned actions.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “Process on the download of fund for SLMs, and changes on the requirements for fund liquidation and other supporting documents.” “Funds for the activities indicated in the SLCP “ “Lack of funds” “Late budget”</p>

	“Financial constraints”
Bulk of reports	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> The number of reports needed to submit to higher office has contributed to the challenges of LCP implementation as it pre-occupies the school personnel instead of focusing on the implementation process.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “Too much or lot of reports to comply.” “Too much work for teachers because of ancillary services. ASAP Reports”</p>
Limited Stakeholders’ support	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> The cooperation and support of all stakeholders, both internal and external, are essential in the LCP implementation. The lack of support would mean difficulty in implementation of planned actions.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “Lack of partners or poor engagement of identified stakeholders” “Parents lack of interest to cooperate” “Lack of partners.” “Some parents at not cooperating”</p>
Limited Instructional Resources	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> Instructional materials and resources are with immense importance in this time of crisis, hence, lacking or limited instructional resources would mean failure to properly implement the MCP.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “Lack of resources and facilities” “Unavailability of some learning resources” “The ultimate problem we encountered was the insufficient fund for the reproduction of modules.”</p>

Source: Processed data

Challenges or problems are inevitable, hence, identifying them and solving them is a must to avoid bigger problems. The respondents were asked to answer a questionnaire on the problems encountered by the schools in the course of their LCP implementation which are shown in Table 3. These were categorized into four themes namely (1) Financial Insufficiency, (2) Bulk of Reports, (3) Limited Stakeholders’ Support, and (4) Limited Instructional Resources. The participants identified said problems as they encountered them during the implementation of LCP in their respective schools. This finding is in accordance with [Pimentel-Tibon \(2020\)](#)’s identified challenges in line with LCP implementation, which include the issue of providing substantial and additional funds. More so, due to the sudden shift of learning modality, where most schools in Palawan, Philippines opted to adopt Modular Distance Learning, funds for the reproduction of printed learning materials drastically increased.

The provision of readily available and downloadable learning materials and the efficient downloading of funds from the central office to the schools are relatively important as these are seen to have caused problems in the LCP implementation of the schools. This is in accordance with the report made by [Malaluan \(2020\)](#) that the development and quality assurance of learning materials was seen to be a challenge in LCP implementation. Another pressing problem identified was the numerous reports being required for submission which adds to the burden on school personnel. Despite the schools’ effort to tap its stakeholder for support, it turned out that it is still a challenge as there is little support gained from external stakeholders, as some responses say, “*Lack of partners or poor engagement of identified stakeholders,*” and “*Parents lack the interest to cooperate*”. Despite the challenges encountered in the LCP implementation, it is a great means to ensure the delivery of basic education among learners even in the presence of a crisis. As Cahapay (2021) said LCP is not only a short-term solution but a long-term one to achieve DepEd’s call for inclusive education.

Proposed school policies to improve the implementation of the Learning Continuity Plan (LCP)

Table 4. Proposed school policies to improve LCP implementation

Themes	Core Ideas and Supporting Quotes
Increasing fund allocation	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> Allocation of enough funds for the well-identified needs should be one of many actions that can contribute to the enhanced LCP implementation.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “The DepEd should allocate enough funds for the reproduction of modules.” “Additional fund must be provided” “Updated liquidation & downloading of funds must be at least one week after the liquidation.”</p>
Enhanced Collaboration among stakeholders	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> Maintaining strong network or relationship with the stakeholders would be one of the means of achieving the school or educational goals. Thus, enhancing stakeholders’ cooperation should be forged and maintained.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “Reemphasize the implementation of adopt-a-school program” “Improve the networking” “Intensify partnership with stakeholders through identifying possible partners and set meetings to present project proposal.” “Tap more stakeholders”</p>
Effective planning, and implementation	<p><i>Core Idea:</i> Efficiency and effectiveness are crucial in work and goal achievement. This would mean that to achieve effective LCP implementation, effective goal setting, and execution of plan through time management, monitoring and evaluation should be done.</p> <p><i>Supporting Quotes:</i> “I suggest having some quarterly or semiannual adjustment of the SLCP if needed during the FY.” “Thorough monitoring, evaluation, and plan adjustment in every quarter of the school year / calendar year.” “Adjusted time frame so that all activities will be implemented” “Time management and plan all activities ahead of time, ask other donations for stakeholders.” “Proper time management, Deep commitment to duties” “Plan, Implement, Revise, Monitor, Assess and Dream, Work, Believe”</p>

Source: Processed data

As LCP is being implemented by the school, their firsthand encounter and information on how it should be implemented are essential in formulating possible actions to further improve the LCP implementation. Such informations presented in the above table were taken from responses of this research’s respondents. As shown in Table 4, this research’s participants believed and proposed policies for the improvement of LCP implementation. The proposed policies are categorized into three themes: (1) Increasing fund allocation, (2) Enhanced Collaboration among Stakeholders, and (3) Effective Planning and Implementation. Since the sufficiency and availability of funds are believed to play important role in LCP implementation, it is just right to increase the allocated funds for education since it was discussed previously that financial insufficiency is one of the emerging problems encountered by the schools in their LCP implementation. Additionally, enhancing stakeholders’ collaboration and engagement in the school affairs must be done so that full implementation of such will be achieved. This finding is in connection with [Abril and Callo \(2021\)](#) recommendation found in their study that collaboration of all the school stakeholders in implementing the LCP to address the challenges brought by the present health crisis. Furthermore, stakeholders – the local government unit (LGU), the school personnel, parents, and others must work collaboratively and set clearly their respective roles in the implementation of the LCP ([McBurnie, Adam, & Kaye, 2020](#)). Also, lastly, planning or setting goals

smartly, and effective execution of planned actions would be a great means to ensure effective LCP implementation.

5. Conclusion

This study's main purpose is to understand how the Learning Continuity Plan is being implemented in the schools in the Province of Palawan, Philippines, and determine the best implementation practices and the challenges they encountered during its implementation to come up with a policy that would improve its implementation.

After the first year of its implementation, there are areas of concern in the LCP that is still not achieved by the school, particularly in the area where forging of partnership and linkages, and compliance to legal basis and issuances. Hence, the partial or initial implementation status of LCP implementation in the schools. Correspondingly, schools did well in curriculum delivery, planning and designing school framework and operational plan, and preparation of funding and other resource requirements. This could be interpreted that schools in the province could properly and fully implement LCP plans or actions that may be affected by internal factors, while those that require external support cannot be easily achieved or implemented.

Since the school LCP was crafted in response to the coronavirus, problems or challenges in its implementation are understandable. It can be noted that problems that stemmed from insufficient funds, limited external support, and the increase of reports being required are affecting the school's LCP implementation. On the other hand, the school's resiliency is evident at this time as schools were able to come up with and apply various practices that are beneficial in facilitating smooth LCP implementation. This includes collaboration, planning and review, strong communication, and transparency. Relative to the raised challenges and encountered problems with its implementation, the schools deemed it necessary to increase the fund allocation, strengthen the collaboration among internal and external school stakeholders, and carefully plan and properly implement all the actions to continue education amidst crises such as a covid-19 pandemic.

Based on the findings, the LCP implementation played a significant role in fulfilling the mandate of the Department of Education which is to continue providing quality education to Filipino despite a crisis. Although in its first year of implementation LCP is not fully implemented, it is still considered a success as it provided a concrete basis for review and enhancement program. The DepEd must consider the encountered problems in its implementation, as well as the identified best practices to have unified or contextualized learning continuity plans to be implemented.

Limitation and study forward

This study is focused only on determining the implementation level of LCP in public schools in Palawan, Philippines, and identifying the schools' encountered LCP-related problems, and school's LCP best practices. Thus, examining other factors affecting LCP implementation is a must. More so, since the study was conducted in the first year of LCP implementation and during the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, the environment, and the time element might affect the study findings, hence, a similar study may be conducted.

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