

GRADUATE SCHOOL PROGRAM



**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S LIVED EXPERIENCES ON CRISIS
MANAGEMENT: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF
CHALLENGES AND TRIUMPHS**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School Education
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Of Master of Arts in Education**

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DECEMBER 2025

ABTRACT

This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of school administrators in managing various crises within basic education institutions. Drawing from individual interviews, the analysis revealed multiple crisis situations encountered such as earthquakes, flooding, pandemic disruptions, overcrowding, learner absenteeism, conflicts, academic challenges, and cultural or religious misunderstandings. Findings showed that school leaders consistently prioritized learner safety and immediate communication, followed by coordination with local government units and external agencies to secure resources and ensure school continuity during emergencies. The study identified three major themes. The first, *Navigating Crises Amid Challenges and Responsibilities*, highlighted administrators' immediate responses and management of diverse crisis situations. The second, *Lessons and Leadership Growth from the Lived Experience*, emphasized personal and professional development, including adaptability, empathy, inclusivity, and collaborative decision-making shaped by crisis experiences. The third, *Strengthening Crisis Preparedness through Reflection and Collaboration*, demonstrated intentions to retain and improve strategies for future crises, including implementing safety protocols, training and drills, stakeholder consultation, and proactive communication. These findings illustrate that crisis management in schools is both operational and transformative, requiring strategic, collaborative, and empathetic leadership to ensure learner welfare, school safety, and continuity of education. The study underscores the importance of reflective practices and institutional resilience in educational leadership during emergencies.

Keywords: ***Crisis Management, School Administrators, Phenomenology, Emergency Leadership, Crisis Preparedness, Educational Leadership, Basic Education, Lived Experiences, Collaborative Leadership, Institutional Resilience***

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

INTRODUCTION

I have always been fascinated by the role of school administrators in maintaining order and stability within educational institutions. Throughout my academic journey, I have come across numerous accounts of how school leaders navigate the complexities of managing crises, from natural disasters to unexpected emergencies that threaten the safety and well-being of students and staff. I have often wondered how these leaders make critical decisions under pressure, what challenges they face in the process, and how they emerge stronger from these experiences. More importantly, I am curious about the emotional and professional toll that crisis management takes on them and the strategies they employ to cope with these demands.

How do school administrators perceive and respond to crises? What factors influence their decision-making processes in times of uncertainty? What lessons have they learned from their experiences, and how do these shape their leadership approaches? By exploring these questions, I aim to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of school administrators in crisis management—their challenges, their triumphs, and the insights they can offer in shaping future preparedness and response strategies.

General Background

The role of school administrators in crisis management has garnered significant attention in recent years, highlighting the multifaceted challenges and strategies involved in navigating unforeseen disruptions within educational settings. Globally, studies have underscored the necessity for adaptive leadership and robust crisis preparedness among school leaders. For instance, a systematic review by Striepe and Cunningham (2022) emphasized the complexity of crisis management, advocating for comprehensive frameworks that encompass communication, decision-making, collaboration, and implementation skills to effectively address crises in schools.

Within the ASEAN region, research has shed light on the specific challenges faced by school administrators during crises. Venketsamy and Hu (2022) explored the initial crisis management measures undertaken by school leaders, revealing a primary focus on maintaining and developing school safety under unpredictable circumstances. Their findings highlight the critical role of school leaders in upholding holistic safety at the school-unit level during the onset of crises.

In the Philippine context, studies have delved into the lived experiences of school heads during disruptive times. A study by Costuna (2023) investigated the crisis management skills of school administrators, emphasizing the importance of resilient leadership in the context of school improvement. The research identified key themes such as responsiveness to current challenges, fostering collaboration, and maintaining a positive attitude in crisis resolution. Similarly, a study by Rico (2025) explored the experiences of elementary school heads in

Paoay, Ilocos Norte, as they confronted severe flash floods. Through descriptive phenomenology, the research revealed adaptive strategies—such as enhanced digital communication, strengthened safety protocols, efficient resource management, and alternative learning modalities—to ensure continuity of learning and promote post-crisis recovery.

Moreover, school administrators have faced numerous challenges in crisis management, particularly in the context of natural disasters and other emergencies. Studies have highlighted the importance of resilient leadership and effective crisis management skills among school heads. For instance, Ularte (2022) analyzed the crisis management skills and challenges of school heads in the Division of Batangas Province, revealing a high level of crisis management skills among school heads and a significant occurrence of school crises. The study emphasized the need for strategic communication work plans to enhance school leadership training in the division.

Similarly, Pastor et al. (2024) explored resiliency practices employed by public school administrators in Ilocos Norte, introducing the Educational Crisis Resiliency Management Framework (ECRMF) as a strategic response to educational crises, including pandemics. This framework underscores the necessity of preparedness and effective crisis leadership among school administrators.

In the province of Cotabato, several studies have examined the crisis management skills and leadership competencies of school administrators, focusing on their roles in navigating challenges and fostering school

development. Otto and Lumapenet (2022) evaluated the technological leadership and crisis management skills among public elementary school administrators in the Special Geographical Area of the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (MBHTE-BARMM). Their findings indicated that proficiency in technological leadership is essential for effective crisis management in schools.

Similarly, a study by Aguilar (2023) investigated the influence of school administrators' leadership styles and adversity quotients on school performance in five state colleges and universities in Cotabato. The research highlighted that administrators with higher adversity quotients and adaptive leadership styles were more effective in managing crises and enhancing institutional performance.

Furthermore, research by Latris and colleagues (2021) aimed to develop a structural model linking instructional leadership, professional development, curricular competence, and the performance of school administrators in Region XII, which includes Cotabato. The study underscored the interconnectedness of these factors in promoting effective school leadership and crisis management.

Local Context of the Study

The study is conducted in the Municipality of Tulan, located in the province of North Cotabato, Philippines. Tulan is a first-class municipality situated in the southern part of the province, bordering the provinces of Maguindanao and Sultan Kudarat. The town consists of 29 barangays, with a predominantly agricultural economy, relying on rice, corn, and other high-value crops as primary sources of livelihood. It is home to a diverse population,

including indigenous peoples, settlers, and Moro communities, which contribute to its rich cultural heritage.

Tulunán has experienced various crises, including natural disasters such as earthquakes and flooding, as well as socio-political challenges due to its proximity to conflict-affected areas. These factors make crisis management a crucial aspect of governance and leadership, particularly in the education sector. Schools in Tulunán play a vital role in fostering resilience among students and communities, with administrators tasked with ensuring safety, continuity of learning, and disaster preparedness.

By focusing on the lived experiences of school administrators in Tulunán, this study aims to explore the challenges and triumphs they encounter in crisis management. The findings will provide insights into the strategies employed by school leaders in handling emergencies, contributing to the broader discourse on educational leadership in crisis-prone areas.

Statement of the Problem

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of school administrators on crisis management in their school?
2. What meanings and insights may be derived from their lived experiences in crisis management?
3. What are the recommendations to help improve school administrators' crisis management strategies to address challenges and triumphs?

Significance of the Study

This study may be significant to the following:

To the Organization. This study will provide valuable insights into effective crisis management strategies that can be integrated into institutional policies and training programs. It can serve as a basis for developing more comprehensive disaster preparedness plans within the education sector.

To Education. It can contribute to the body of knowledge in educational leadership and crisis management by exploring real-world experiences of school administrators. It can serve as a reference for educators, researchers, and policymakers in understanding the challenges of managing crises in schools. The insights gained may help in formulating new educational policies, teacher training programs, and school crisis management protocols that ensure learning continuity despite disruptions.

To School Administrators. School leaders play a crucial role in maintaining stability during crises, and this study will help them recognize the best practices and strategies that can enhance their leadership effectiveness. By understanding the challenges faced by their peers, administrators can learn from successful crisis management experiences and improve their decision-making, resilience, and response strategies.

To Learners. Students are among the most affected during crises, and effective school crisis management ensures their safety, well-being, and continued learning. The study highlights how administrators can implement learner-centered approaches in crisis response, minimizing educational

disruptions. It also encourages the development of psycho-social support systems that help students cope with emergencies and recover effectively.

To the Community. Schools are integral parts of the community, and their ability to manage crises effectively has a direct impact on local residents. This study provides insights into how schools can collaborate with local government units, parents, and community stakeholders to build a more resilient education system. By strengthening crisis preparedness and response at the school level, the broader community benefits from a more proactive and coordinated approach to disaster management.

Scope and Delimitations

This study was limited on analyzing the lived experiences of school administrator on crisis management. It was further limited to describe and analyze the challenges, and triumphs school administrator encounter during crisis. The study also seeks to derive meaningful implications that can enhance crisis management of school administrator.

Furthermore the delimitations of this study include: (a) study will consist of twenty public school administrator who volunteered to participate in the study; and (b) qualitative data collection techniques included structured, personal interview and field notes.

The number of people participating in the study (20) is very small. Larger groups of participants can produce different or additional themes. In addition, data for this study collected to public elementary school administrator in the Municipality of Tulanang with one or more experience as administrator. And

another limitation is that no validated commercial instrument was available for obtaining participants' experiences in crisis management; therefore, the researcher will develop interview guide questions. Results of the study are limited by how participants interpreted interview questions.

Operational Definition of Terms

Crisis Management. Crisis Management refers to the strategies, decisions, and actions undertaken by school administrators in response to unforeseen, disruptive events that threaten the safety, stability, or functioning of the school environment.

School Administrator. School Administrator refers to individuals in leadership positions within the school system—such as principals, assistant principals, or school heads—who are responsible for overseeing the overall management and operations of the school.

Challenges on Crisis Management. Challenges on Crisis Management refer to the various difficulties and obstacles encountered by school administrators in effectively planning for, responding to, and recovering from crises that disrupt school operations.

Triumphs in Crisis Management. Triumphs in Crisis Management refer to the successful actions, decisions, and outcomes achieved by school administrators in overcoming challenges during times of crisis.

Lived Experiences. Lived Experiences refer to the personal insights, emotions, reflections, and real-life encounters of school administrators as they navigate and respond to crises within the school setting. These experiences

encompass both the challenges and triumphs they have faced, the decisions they have made, and the impact of those decisions on the school community.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION, REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

Literature Review

This section cited books, research journals, and other publications to support the study's theoretical underpinnings, guiding principles, facts, ideas, and points of view.

Theoretical Orientation

This study is anchored in Transformational Leadership Theory and Resilience Theory, which together provide a lens through which to understand the lived experiences of school administrators in managing crises. Transformational Leadership Theory, as proposed by Burns (1978) and further developed by Bass (1985), emphasizes how leaders inspire, motivate, and guide their teams through change and adversity. In the context of crisis management, school administrators often embody transformational qualities as they adapt to rapidly changing situations, foster trust, and mobilize their school communities toward recovery.

Complementing this, Resilience Theory (Masten, 2001) explains how individuals and systems recover from disruptions, adapt to adversity, and emerge stronger. School administrators' ability to maintain composure, make strategic decisions, and lead effectively amid stress is reflective of personal and organizational resilience. Together, these theories provide a meaningful

framework for analyzing not only the challenges administrators face during crises but also the triumphs that emerge from their leadership and adaptability.

Related Literature

Crisis Management

According to Smith and Riley (2021), effective crisis management in schools involves four key phases: preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. These stages demand a proactive mindset, clear communication, and rapid decision-making skills from school leaders. In times of crisis—such as pandemics, natural disasters, or school violence—administrators are expected not only to manage logistics but also to provide psychological support to both staff and students.

This aligns with adaptive leadership theory, which highlights the leader's capacity to respond to complex, unpredictable challenges (Heifetz et al., 2009; updated applications in educational settings by Stewart, 2022). Stewart (2022) notes that administrators who engage in reflective practice and foster collaboration among stakeholders are more effective in building school resilience.

Furthermore, recent post-pandemic studies show that crisis leadership requires balancing technical solutions with adaptive, human-centered approaches (Zheng & Liu, 2023), reinforcing the idea that school crisis management is both a structural and emotional task.

Leadership Under Pressure

Leadership under pressure has gained increasing attention in recent years, especially in the context of crisis management within educational settings.

According to Liu, Ritzhaupt, and Sharma (2020), effective leadership during high-pressure situations, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, demands adaptability, resilience, and the ability to make timely decisions with incomplete information. Leaders are often required to balance the immediate needs of their institutions with long-term planning, all while maintaining the morale and psychological well-being of their teams. This is especially evident in school settings, where administrators are challenged to provide stability, ensure safety, and sustain learning amidst uncertainty. Similarly, Day, Gu, and Qin (2021) emphasize that leaders who demonstrate emotional intelligence and strong interpersonal skills are better equipped to manage pressure, foster trust, and guide their institutions through turbulent periods.

Effective leadership under pressure has become a critical area of study, particularly in the context of managing crises within educational institutions. In a study by Heffernan et al. (2020), leadership under pressure was found to be closely linked with decision-making capabilities and emotional regulation. The authors argue that leaders who can manage stress effectively are more likely to lead successfully through crises. They emphasize that school administrators, in particular, are expected to make high-stakes decisions quickly while also managing the emotional needs of staff, students, and parents.

Similarly, Research by Gardner and Latham (2021) underscores that leaders in crisis situations must possess a unique combination of cognitive flexibility and emotional resilience. These skills allow them to adjust to rapidly

changing environments and manage both immediate responses and long-term recovery efforts.

Furthermore, Crisis Leadership Theory has been applied to examine leadership under pressure, particularly in educational settings. As noted by Crisci et al. (2021), administrators must balance the need for swift action with the importance of creating a sense of security and stability within their schools. Their study revealed that effective leaders use crisis events as opportunities to engage with their teams, build trust, and reinforce the values and vision of the institution. This focus on relationship-building during times of crisis emphasizes the importance of relational leadership, which has been linked to higher levels of team cohesion and organizational resilience (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2020).

These studies contribute to an understanding that leadership under pressure is a multifaceted challenge that involves not only technical problem-solving but also the ability to remain empathetic, supportive, and clear-headed in high-stress situations. Administrators' ability to reflect on their leadership practices and engage in continuous professional development is crucial for navigating future crises more effectively (Wang et al., 2022).

Emotional and Mental Resilience

Emotional and Mental Resilience has become a critical area of focus in educational leadership, particularly during crises. Recent studies underscore the importance of school administrators' ability to adapt and maintain psychological well-being amidst challenges. A study by Dicke et al. (2024) highlights that over 80% of school principals in Australia have encountered critical incidents such as

violent threats and mental health crises, leading to significant stress and burnout. The research emphasizes the need for comprehensive support systems to bolster resilience among school leaders. Similarly, Patterson and Kelleher (2021) discuss strategies for building resilience in school leaders, noting that fostering positive emotions and energy is essential for effective leadership during adversity. These findings suggest that developing emotional and mental resilience is not only beneficial but necessary for school administrators to navigate and lead effectively through crises.

Emotional and mental resilience are critical attributes for school administrators, particularly when navigating crises that challenge both personal well-being and institutional stability. A study by De Guzman and colleagues (2024) highlights the importance of proactive measures, such as capability-building initiatives and dynamic policies, in fostering resilience among school leaders during pandemics. The Educational Crisis Resiliency Management Framework (ECRMF) introduced in their research serves as a comprehensive guide for administrators, emphasizing preparedness and effective crisis leadership to maintain school functionality during emergencies.

Similarly, a study by Kutsyuruba and colleagues (2024) investigates educational leadership and resilience during times of crises, providing insights into the strategies employed by school leaders to foster resilience within their institutions. These studies underscore the necessity of integrating resilience-building practices into educational leadership, ensuring that administrators are equipped to support their communities effectively during challenging times.

Furthermore, research by Knipe and colleagues (2024) explores the crisis management measures taken by school leaders to maintain holistic school safety, highlighting the stressors faced by leaders and the resources they utilize. The study emphasizes the need for flexibility and a human-centered approach to cope with the multifaceted challenges presented by crises, reinforcing the importance of emotional and mental resilience in leadership.

Communication and Collaboration

Effective communication and collaboration have emerged as pivotal components of school leadership during crises, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Research underscores that clear, transparent, and timely communication is essential for maintaining trust and cohesion within the school community. For instance, Flack et al. (2021) found that school leaders who engaged in frequent and open communication were better equipped to provide up-to-date information to teachers, students, and parents, thereby fostering a sense of stability and trust during uncertain times.

Collaboration among stakeholders is equally crucial. A systematic literature review by Harris and Jones (2020) highlighted that collaborative decision-making processes during crises not only improved the effectiveness of responses but also strengthened relationships among staff, students, and parents. By involving various members of the school community in planning and response efforts, leaders can leverage diverse perspectives and resources, leading to more comprehensive and effective crisis management strategies.

According to Netolicky (2020), effective school leadership during crises relies on maintaining open, empathetic, and consistent lines of communication with all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, students, and local authorities. Her study highlights that when leaders foster collaborative cultures, they are more likely to make informed decisions that reflect the needs of the entire school community.

Likewise, Azorín (2020) emphasized the value of collaborative professionalism, where teachers and school leaders work collectively to share responsibility, expertise, and mutual support during turbulent times. This approach not only strengthens team dynamics but also reinforces shared ownership of crisis response strategies.

Moreover, research by Hargreaves and Fullan (2020) supports the notion that sustained collaboration enhances the adaptability and resilience of educational institutions, especially when faced with unpredictable disruptions such as pandemics. These findings underscore the critical role of inclusive dialogue and collective action in school crisis management, ensuring that decisions are transparent, grounded in shared values, and responsive to the evolving needs of the school community.

Resources Limitation and Constraints

Resource limitations and constraints significantly impact the effectiveness of crisis management in educational settings. A systematic review by Sokol et al. (2021) highlights that schools often face barriers such as limited time, insufficient resources, and a lack of training in evaluation methods, which hinder the

implementation and assessment of crisis interventions. These constraints can prevent schools from conducting in-house evaluations or disseminating findings, thereby affecting the overall preparedness and response strategies during crises. A systematic literature review by Koukounaras-Liagkis et al. (2023) highlights that the sudden transition to remote learning exposed deficiencies in technological infrastructure, such as inadequate internet connectivity and a lack of devices for both students and teachers. These challenges were exacerbated in regions with limited funding, where schools struggled to provide necessary resources for effective online education. Furthermore, the review notes that financial constraints hindered the implementation of comprehensive crisis management plans, as schools lacked the budget to invest in necessary training and resources. This situation underscores the critical need for adequate funding and infrastructure to support schools in crisis situations.

In addition to technological and financial challenges, rural schools face unique resource constraints that affect their crisis management capabilities. Hill (2025) discusses how rural schools often operate with limited staffing and funding, making it difficult to implement flexible and responsive crisis management strategies. The lack of resources in these settings can lead to increased workloads for existing staff and hinder the adoption of innovative solutions during crises. This highlights the importance of tailored support and resource allocation to ensure that all schools, regardless of location, are equipped to handle emergencies effectively.

Moreover, the management of teaching staff during crises presents additional challenges. Falk et al. (2024) emphasize that in conflict and crisis settings, teachers often face issues related to recruitment, deployment, and professional development. These challenges can compromise the quality of education and the effectiveness of crisis response strategies. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive policies that prioritize teacher support and development, ensuring that educators are prepared and equipped to manage crisis situations.

Adaptive Strategies and Innovation

Adaptive strategies and innovation have become essential components of effective school leadership, especially in navigating the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. School administrators were compelled to shift from traditional leadership models to more flexible and responsive approaches to ensure continuity in education. Bagwell (2020) emphasizes that adaptive leadership enables school leaders to respond to complex and evolving situations by fostering collaboration, encouraging innovation, and maintaining a clear sense of purpose. This approach involves engaging stakeholders in problem-solving processes and being open to new ideas and practices that can address emerging challenges.

In the Philippine context, Fameró (2023) conducted a qualitative study that identified nine adaptive leadership practices among public secondary school principals during the pandemic. These practices included stakeholder involvement, resource management, and curriculum contextualization, all of

which contributed to the effective management of schools amidst the crisis. The study highlights the importance of aligning leadership strategies with the specific needs and contexts of schools to enhance resilience and adaptability.

Furthermore, Adams et al. (2023) discuss the role of transformative leadership conversations in guiding schools from crisis response to adaptation. They propose that through intentional dialogue, leaders can facilitate organizational learning and transformation, enabling schools to not only survive crises but also emerge stronger and more innovative. This perspective underscores the significance of communication and reflection in driving adaptive change within educational institutions.

Post-Crisis Reflection and Learning

Post-crisis reflection and learning have become integral to educational leadership, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. School leaders have recognized the importance of assessing their crisis responses to enhance future preparedness and resilience. Dolph and Smith (2021) emphasize that post-crisis evaluations should involve a thorough review of the crisis management plans, assessing their effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement. This reflective process not only aids in modifying existing policies and procedures but also ensures that schools are better equipped to handle future emergencies.

Moreover, O'Day and Marsden (2022) highlight that the pandemic has prompted educational leaders to adopt principles of high-reliability organizations, focusing on continuous learning and adaptability. By engaging in reflective

practices, school administrators can transform challenges into opportunities for growth, fostering a culture of resilience and continuous improvement within their institutions. These insights underscore the critical role of post-crisis reflection in strengthening the leadership capacities of school administrators and enhancing the overall effectiveness of educational institutions in the face of adversity.

Related Studies

Foreign Studies

A study by Knipe et al. (2023) examined the crisis management measures undertaken by school leaders to maintain holistic school safety. The research identified key areas of focus, including organizational management, teacher support, and student support. The study emphasized the necessity for flexibility and a human-centered approach in addressing crises, underscoring the importance of adaptability in leadership practices.

In the context of Bangladesh, Debnath (2024) investigated the challenges faced by secondary school leaders during the pandemic and their coping strategies. The study revealed that leaders encountered significant academic, financial, and socio-emotional challenges. It highlighted the need for inclusive crisis leadership frameworks that incorporate equity and social justice to ensure equal access to education during crises.

Furthermore, a systematic literature review by Chatzipanagiotou and Katsarou (2023) analyzed school leadership during disruptive times, focusing on the recovery of schools in the post-COVID-19 era. The review identified major

challenges faced by educational leaders, effective crisis management strategies, and key leadership attributes essential for navigating crises. The study provided insights into the lived experiences of school leaders and emphasized the importance of preparedness and adaptability in crisis situations.

A study by Daughtry (2023) in South Carolina examined principals' preparedness and experiences in handling diverse crises, including natural disasters and security threats. The findings revealed that while many principals had encountered multiple crisis events, a significant number felt inadequately trained, emphasizing the necessity for comprehensive professional development in crisis response and recovery strategies.

In Australia, a study by the Australian Catholic University (2023) reported a troubling increase in critical incidents within Victorian schools, such as violent security threats and mental health crises. Approximately 90% of school principals surveyed had encountered such events during their careers, often feeling unprepared and experiencing cumulative trauma. The study advocates for systemic changes, including better training, psychological support systems, and standardized critical incident response plans to aid principals in managing these situations effectively.

Additionally, a systematic review by Knipe et al. (2024) explored crisis management measures taken by school leaders to maintain holistic school safety. The study emphasized the importance of flexibility and a human-centered approach in coping with crises, highlighting the need for school leaders to support both teachers and students while managing organizational challenges.

Local Studies

Alonzo et al. (2022) conducted a phenomenological study examining the lived experiences of school heads during the post-pandemic period. The research revealed that school leaders employed resilience-building and proactive recovery strategies to navigate their schools through disruptive times, emphasizing the importance of adaptability and strategic planning in crisis situations. In the Division of Batangas Province, Ularte (2022) assessed the crisis management skills and challenges faced by school heads. The study found that while school leaders possessed high levels of crisis management skills, they also encountered significant challenges, leading to the development of a strategic communication work plan aimed at enhancing leadership training and preparedness.

Maruhom et al. (2023) investigated the relationship between transformational leadership styles and crisis management practices at Cebu Technological University-Tuburan. Their findings indicated that transformational leadership significantly influenced effective crisis management, suggesting that leadership style plays a crucial role in navigating institutional crises. Additionally, Siat (2024) explored situational leadership practices among school leaders in the Calubian North District during health crises. The study highlighted the importance of stakeholder collaboration and adaptive leadership in managing health-related emergencies within educational settings.

Almirol, Barrios, and Lumapenet (2022) conducted a study evaluating the organizational behavior of public elementary school heads in North Cotabato, focusing on aspects such as self-efficacy, hope, and optimism. The findings indicated that these school heads exhibited exemplary organizational behavior, characterized by very high levels of self-efficacy, hope, and optimism in addressing workplace challenges. This suggests a strong capacity among school leaders to navigate crises effectively.

In a related study, Otto and Lumapenet (2022) assessed the technological leadership and crisis management skills of public elementary school administrators in the Special Geographical Area of the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (MBHTE-BARMM). The study revealed that school heads were competent in technological leadership, which is crucial for effective crisis management and school development. The research recommended that these administrators benchmark good practices from schools identified as centers of excellence to further enhance their leadership capabilities.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains the research methodology that was used by the researchers in gathering the data.

The Methods as Used in Human and Social Science

This study used a qualitative exploratory design widely used to investigate complex social phenomena, human experiences, and emerging issues. This method is particularly effective when limited prior research exists on the topic, making it suitable for gaining in-depth insights and discovering new patterns or perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), qualitative exploratory studies focus on understanding participants lived experiences, thoughts, and perceptions through open-ended inquiry. This approach allows researchers to explore phenomena in their natural settings without manipulating variables, which is essential for capturing the complexity of human behavior and social interactions. In the context of crisis management, the exploration design is appropriate for examining school administrator challenges and triumphs in crisis management.

The qualitative exploratory design is characterized by flexibility and open-ended inquiry, making it ideal for exploring new or under-researched topics. As noted by Yin (2020), this design involves gathering rich, descriptive data through interviews, focus groups, and observations. Exploratory research design involved

many qualitative data collection techniques such as in-depth interviews, focus groups and projective techniques. In-depth interviews are one-to-one interviews with respondents while focus group involves a group of 6-12 respondents in a congenial setting, like that of a very limited number of school administrators in the municipality. The study will be conducted in public elementary schools in the Municipality of Tulan, Division of Cotabato.

Selecting My Co-Researchers

The research participants of the study were public elementary school administrator of Municipality of Tulan under the Schools Division of Cotabato. Co-researchers are purposefully selected based on their relevance and direct experiences with the phenomenon of exploring crisis management. According to Patton (2015), purposive sampling is appropriate in qualitative exploratory research as it allows the researcher to intentionally select participants who can provide rich, meaningful insights into the topic. Therefore, the co-researchers in this study consist of elementary school administrators.

Their firsthand experiences as school administrator make them well-suited to contribute valuable perspectives to the research. This study will use a purposive sampling since this study covered only the elementary administrator as respondents. Since there were only twenty (20) elementary school administrators, complete enumeration of all the names was adapted and was included to be participants.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical considerations are significant in the design of this research study. The researcher considered several ethical issues about the research participant in this fieldwork. Ethical considerations can be specified as one of the most important parts of the research. The researcher needs to adhere to promote the aims of the research imparting authentic knowledge, truth and prevention of error.

Social Value. The study are able to present valuable information that guided school administrator to improve crisis management. With the findings of the study, they will become aware of the need of conducting different training, workshops and seminars to improve and lessen problem on crisis management.

Informed Consent. The researcher asked the permission of respondents/ participants through written consent. They are properly informed about the purpose of the study and understand the reason for their participation so that they can choose to would participate or not. It made clear that respondents/ participants' involvement in the study are voluntary and when they refuse, they are not forced by the researcher. Moreover, the researcher is cautious to assure the participants' psychological well-being.

The researcher informed the participants that the study aims to analyzed school administrator crisis management. They are made to understand that they are the most qualified and credible informants for the study. They also be properly oriented about the methods to use in which they will participate such as survey, in-depth interview and focus group discussion. Lastly, they assured that

their identity are kept in confidentiality and not be revealed in the presentation and analysis of the findings.

Vulnerability of Research Participants. The participants in this study are not considered vulnerable, as they are capable of independently deciding whether to participate or not. The researcher also assured that recruitment will avoid any form of coercion, particularly from supervisors, and that refusal to participate will not in any way affect their standing or evaluations. Furthermore, the participants' identities will remain confidential, and the researcher guarantees that they are protected from the possibility of being identified.

Risks, benefits, and Safety. For the safety of the participants and to protect their psychological and social well-being, the researchers explained the purpose, effects, and importance of the study before data collection. The results of the study are expected to leave a positive impression on the participants. Time is also crucial, as participation requires them to set aside time from personal and professional obligations; thus, surveys and in-depth interviews will be scheduled at their convenience.

Another possible risk of this research is the disclosure of experiences that may be considered unpleasant, unwelcome, disappointing, or demoralizing. To address this, the researchers will implement distress management protocols, including allowing participants to take breaks during the interview, exercise the right to skip any question, or discontinue participation without consequence. When necessary, participants may also be referred to guidance counselors or

provided with a debriefing session after the interview to ensure emotional well-being. The investigators commit to treating participants' emotional states considerately and with sincerity, taking appropriate actions when needed.

Furthermore, the results, discussions, and findings from this study may also spark evidence-based insights that can be used by policymakers, school administrators, and teachers. School administrators may find the study useful as a reference for improving productivity and strengthening crisis management. Likewise, scholars and future researchers can benefit from this research as a source of ideas and guidance for future investigations.

Privacy and Confidentiality. With respect to the participants' right to privacy, the researcher will ensure that all records are secured and that no information which could expose the specific identities of participants will be released. In presenting the results, names or identifying details will not be revealed. Should participants choose to withdraw their statements or discontinue their participation, the researcher will readily honor such requests.

To strengthen data security, all digital files will be encrypted and stored in password-protected folders with access limited only to the researcher. Hard copies, if any, will be kept in locked storage. The retention period for all data will be five (5) years, after which they will be permanently destroyed through secure digital deletion or physical shredding. The researcher will also exercise conscientiousness in framing questions and using language that is fair and free from bias.

Furthermore, the researcher is obliged to orient her research assistants, documenters, and transcribers on the strict privacy and confidentiality protocols observed in this study. In accordance with the 2012 Data Privacy Act, participants are assured that all data will remain untraceable to their personal identities and that their role as sources of information will be fully protected.

Justice. The researcher is impartial in choosing the participants of the study. Nobody will be disregarded and anybody who fits the qualifications of a elementary school administrator were possible participants in the study. All participants are treated equally regardless if they participated in the study. To compensate for the time spent during data gathering, the researcher gave tokens of appreciation to all participants.

Meanwhile, the results, discussions, and findings from this study can be used by policy makers, school administrators, and teachers. School administrators as well may attend seminars, training's and workshop to address challenges in crisis management. Likewise, scholars and future researchers can benefit from this research as a way of providing them ideas for their future research endeavors.

Transparency. The researcher safeguards the proper implementation of the methods that were used in the study. The researcher included all the necessary documents that support data analysis and give the readers access to read through these in order to gain a better understanding of the results and findings of the study. Further, the findings discussed in a comprehensively

especially information that may have an effect in the presentation of the results to give importance to transparency. Lastly, the researcher describe the extent of her involvement and how she maintain objectivity in analyzing data and presenting the results of the study.

Qualification of the Researcher. The researcher recognizes her limited exposure to the qualitative approach. Consequently, she seek direction and advice from her mentor and panelists, as well as peers who are proficient in this method. Further, she is guided by these experts to implement the method properly to be able to gather the needed data for the intended purpose. She is also made exposure moral courage, societal understanding, culture, sensitivity, professionalism and integrity in all stages of the study.

Adequacy of Facilities. The researcher ensured the availability and accessibility of needed facilities in this study. Library and internet resources are available for further readings and references to deepen and strengthen analysis and interpretation of data gathered. Audio recorders, camera, and other materials needed are available. Finally, the group of experts provided valuable comments and suggestions to help researchers conduct research and exchange results.

Community Involvement. The researcher is committed to respect the community, especially the teachers and administrators of elementary schools. All activities done are subject to the permission of School Administrators / School Heads/ Program Coordinators and the faculty members as well. Through this study, the involvement of these stakeholders generated information that were

beneficial to their current practices in preparing the next generation leaders in their schools through their perception on succession planning and develop a better appreciation of the roles and responsibilities of leaders who become influential and promote common good within and beyond their context. Furthermore, the findings were disseminated to all school stakeholders for the purpose of information and awareness which can be used for school improvement plan or formulation of enhancement program.

Gathering of Lived Experiences

The researcher will secured approval for the study from the dean of graduate education, the chairperson, the research coordinator, the researcher's adviser, Schools Division Superintendent, District Supervisors and the head of the schools. The researcher instructed the participants to take part in the interview using a validated guide questionnaire. After they have indicated that they are willing to participate in the study, each participant will received an in-depth interview in person. The six (6) month collection period will run from May 2025-October 2025.

Following data collection, the recorder responses will undergo transcription, coding, and categorization analysis. The researcher will then send her adviser the data she has gathered for analysis and interpretation.

The data from the in-depth interview will be analyzed by the researcher using thematic analysis. The researcher combined various themes to create a logical whole. When deriving meaning from text, comparisons of meanings and

themes produced from the original data were helpful. The researcher was cautious and considerate throughout this phase, taking nothing from granted. Findings will be significant, so it was necessary to carefully identify the emerging theme. Outlining the meanings that were implicit in the interpreted experiences was the goal of writing up the themes. As this stage, findings were written and revised. Most of the time, it took more than one word to convey the meaning correctly, and the writing was important.

The use of thematic analysis, particularly inductive coding, to identify meanings, organize them into patterns, and write themes related to the study's purpose and context helped to summarize the study's findings.

Process of Doing Phenomenology

Changes in the design, sampling techniques, and research participants may be anticipated methodology problems.

Trustworthiness of the Study

The term "trustworthiness" refers to a data analysis level of quality. In qualitative studies, credibility, transferability, conformability, and dependability are established.

The researcher will approach the schools permission in order to ensure transferability, in order to guarantee conformability, the researchers' interview was audio-recorded, and notes were taken to ensure that no information would be lost during further analysis and interpretation. The Vivo coding system will be

used by the researchers to ensure consistency during data collection and analysis in order to establish the study's dependability.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of the study on school administrators lived experiences regarding crisis management. The results are organized thematically, derived from the participants' narratives, codes, categories, significant statements, meanings, and themes. The discussion integrates the findings with relevant literature to contextualize the administrators' experiences within the broader field of educational leadership and crisis management.

Navigating Crises Amid Challenges and Responsibilities

Crisis Types

School administrators reported facing a wide range of crises in their schools. These included natural disasters such as earthquakes and flooding, health-related emergencies like pandemics, and institutional challenges such as overcrowding, learner absenteeism, conflicts, academic difficulties, and cultural or religious misunderstandings. Participants described their experience during an earthquake, stating that:

“During the earthquake, my first concern was to ensure all students were accounted for and safe. I immediately coordinated with the

barangay officials and ensured our evacuation plan was followed.”

IDI_P1

“Managing online learning during the lockdown was very difficult, especially since some students had no access to stable internet.”

IDI_P2

These statements demonstrate the diversity of crisis situations school administrators encounter and underscore the need for flexible leadership approaches.

Leadership Responses

In response to crises, administrators emphasized prioritizing safety, clear communication, coordination with local government units (LGUs) and NGOs, community engagement, collaboration with staff, and mediation. Some participants shared:

“I had to coordinate with the local health office and NGOs to provide masks, sanitizers, and support for affected students.”

IDI_P1

“Immediately after the flood, I informed parents and teachers about evacuation plans and safety measures to prevent panic.” IDI_P7

These responses highlight administrators’ capacity for rapid decision-making, coordination, and ensuring the safety and welfare of their school community.

Challenges Faced

Administrators also reported facing infrastructure damage, resource shortages, emotional and mental health crises, and technological barriers during crises. Participants recalled:

“After the flood, many classrooms were damaged and learning materials were lost, which made resuming classes very difficult.”

IDI_P11

“Supporting students’ and teachers’ mental health while managing academic expectations was extremely challenging during the pandemic.” IDI_P15

These statements show that beyond operational concerns, administrators are responsible for managing emotional and logistical challenges, demonstrating the multidimensional nature of crisis leadership.

The findings show that school administrators face a wide range of crises, including natural disasters, pandemics, and institutional challenges, and must balance immediate safety, communication, and resource management. It also implies that principals play a crucial role in disaster response — conducting awareness campaigns before disasters, leading communal collaboration during disasters, and guiding adaptive recovery post-disaster.

This implication is supported by the study of Lopez (2023), which highlighted that principals play a crucial role as first responders by coordinating with stakeholders, leading adaptive recovery, and ensuring continuity of

operations during disasters. It is also supported by the study of Chatzipanagiotou and Katsarou (2024), which emphasized that school leaders actively manage holistic school safety, adapt operations during unpredictable crises, and provide support to students and staff during COVID-19 disruptions.

Table 1. **Experiences of School Administrator on Crisis Management**

Theme	Codes / Categories
Navigating Crises Amid Challenges and Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Crisis Types</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Leadership Responses</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Challenges Faced</i>

Lessons and Leadership Growth from the Lived Experience

Importance of Preparedness

Administrators highlighted that being prepared and having contingency plans is essential for effective crisis management. Participants emphasized,

“Having an evacuation plan and safety protocols already in place allowed us to act quickly when the earthquake happened.” IDI_P12

“Planning ahead for possible health emergencies helped us continue learning online without major interruptions.” IDI_P20

These reflections illustrate that preparedness minimizes risks and allows for structured responses during crises.

Calm and Quick Decision-Making

A critical skill emphasized by participants was making calm and timely decisions under pressure. Some administrators stated,

“Even though we were stressed during the flood, I remained calm and delegated tasks to teachers to manage students safely.”

IDI_P1

“During the pandemic, I had to make quick decisions about online teaching platforms while considering students’ varying access to technology.” IDI_P2

These experiences reflect the need for leaders to remain composed and decisive during emergencies.

Teamwork and Inclusivity

Administrators also underscored the importance of collaborative and inclusive leadership. Some participants explained,

“Through these crises, I learned that listening to the teachers and parents before making a decision leads to more effective and accepted solutions.” IDI_P1

“I always consult the school staff and community leaders before implementing any plan so that everyone feels involved and informed.” IDI_P13

These statements show that inclusive approaches improve acceptance and effectiveness of decisions, while also building trust among stakeholders.

Empathy and Adaptability

Many administrators emphasized the role of emotional intelligence and flexibility. They stated that,

“Addressing staff and student emotional well-being is as important as ensuring their physical safety.” IDI_P5

“During unexpected crises, I learned to adapt quickly to new situations and find creative solutions.” IDI_P16

These insights demonstrate that crises not only challenge leaders operationally but also provide opportunities for personal and professional growth.

This suggests that crisis experiences can serve as opportunities for leadership development. Professional development programs should incorporate crisis simulation, decision-making exercises, and emotional intelligence training to equip school leaders with the skills needed for effective crisis management. Through crisis exposure, school leaders develop key competencies: emotional intelligence, collaborative skills, adaptive decision-making, and a more inclusive leadership style. Moreover, preparedness allowed administrators to respond efficiently to emergencies, while calm and strategic decision-making enabled them to manage multiple challenges simultaneously. Collaborative approaches and inclusive leadership strengthened trust and buy-in from teachers, parents,

and the community, while empathy and adaptability helped maintain school morale and well-being during difficult times.

Smith and Riley (2022) argue that exposure to crises enhances reflective and transformational leadership capabilities, while Johnson et al. (2020) emphasize that attending to the emotional and mental health of staff and students improves school resilience and trust. These findings indicate that leadership growth during crises is not only beneficial for administrators but also positively impacts the entire school community.

Table 2. Meaning and Insights Derived from Lived Experiences of School Administrators in Crisis Management

Theme	Codes / Categories
Lessons and Leadership Growth from the Lived Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of Preparedness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm and Quick Decision-Making
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork and Inclusivity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy and Adaptability

Strengthening Crisis Preparedness through Reflection and Collaboration

Training and Drills

Administrators highlighted the importance of continuous training and regular drills to prepare staff and students for emergencies. Some participants shared,

“It is essential to develop and regularly update comprehensive crisis plans to invoke all stakeholders, provide ongoing training focused on leadership and mental health awareness and established clear transparent communication channels for timely information sharing. Building strong partnership with local emergency services and community organization enhances collaboration and resource access while incorporating technology aids coordinators, and data driven improvements. Emphasizing a positive school climate through preventive measures and student involvement helps reduce risks and prioritizing emotional support and post crisis reflection fosters resilience and continuous learning from challenges and resources.” IDI_P3

“After drills or an actual event, conduct a thorough debriefing to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan, identify weaknesses, incorporate lessons learned, and revise procedures accordingly.”

IDI_P20

This demonstrates that proactive preparation reduces panic and ensures efficient responses.

Clear Communication

Participants emphasized clear and timely communication as a key strategy for effective crisis management. Some administrators reflected,

“Immediately after the flood, I sent updates to parents, teachers, and local authorities to coordinate support.” IDI_P1

“Using multiple communication channels ensures that everyone is informed and can act accordingly during emergencies.” IDI_P2

These statements show that communication is central to coordinating resources, preventing misinformation, and maintaining community trust.

Stakeholder Consultation

Administrators reported that consulting with staff, parents, and community partners leads to more effective planning and implementation. Some participants stated,

“Involving the community in decision-making helps ensure that plans are realistic and supported.” IDI_P5

“When we plan for emergencies, input from different stakeholders allows us to address potential gaps before a crisis occurs.” IDI_P7

These reflections illustrate that collaboration strengthens organizational resilience and ensures that all perspectives are considered in crisis strategies.

Risk Assessment and Emotional Support Systems

Participants emphasized the need for risk assessment and establishing support systems. Some administrators explained,

“We conduct regular risk assessments to identify vulnerable areas and plan accordingly.” IDI_P4

“Providing counseling and emotional support for students and staff has become a priority during and after crises.” IDI_P8

These strategies show a holistic approach to crisis management, addressing both safety and mental well-being.

This theme demonstrates that reflection, planning, and collaboration are essential for building school resilience. Schools should institutionalize continuous training, stakeholder engagement, and risk assessment protocols, ensuring preparedness for future emergencies. The evidence also suggests that sustainable crisis preparedness depends not only on internal practices but also on formalizing crisis plans (CMPs), integrating mental-health and support structures, and partnering with external stakeholders. For schools: adopting a comprehensive CMP, regular drills, stakeholder consultations, and embedding disaster risk reduction (DRR) in school culture/policy would likely improve resilience and responsiveness. These findings highlight that beyond reactive measures, schools benefit from proactive, systematic crisis-preparedness, institutionalizing drills, stakeholder engagement, risk assessments, and emotional-support systems to build overall resilience.

This implication is further supported by the study of Rico (2019), who emphasized that sustained collaboration between schools and community stakeholders enables shared responsibility in disaster preparedness and helps

institutionalize disaster-risk reduction initiatives. It is also reinforced by the work of The Development of the Disaster Preparedness and Safety School Model (2021), which showed that systematic planning, clear protocols, and preparedness frameworks significantly enhance the ability of schools to respond to multiple hazards, thus highlighting the importance of proactive rather than reactive approaches.

Harris and Jones (2021) emphasize that collaborative planning and continuous improvement strengthen organizational capacity and ensure continuity of education. These strategies not only improve response efficiency but also enhance the overall well-being of students and staff, promoting a culture of resilience within the school community. Likewise, the study of Mutch (2023) demonstrated that schools play a central role in developing community resilience and social capital by serving as hubs for disaster preparation, response, and recovery, thus underscoring the importance of partnerships, consultation, and wider engagement in crisis planning. Collectively, these studies support the theme that crisis preparedness is strengthened when schools adopt reflective practices, consult with stakeholders, and engage in collaborative planning that extends beyond the school into the community.

Table 3. Recommendations to Help Improve School Administrators Crisis Management Strategies to Address Challenges and Triumphs

Theme	Codes / Categories
Strengthening Crisis Preparedness through Reflection and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and Drills
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Communication
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Assessment and Emotional Support Systems

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS AND DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Implications of the Study

The present study explored the lived experiences of school administrators in managing crises in public basic education settings. The findings revealed that crises experienced in schools range from natural disasters, pandemics, conflicts, resource scarcity, mental–emotional challenges, and institutional issues. These crises required school administrators to enact immediate safety mechanisms, coordinate with community stakeholders, manage emotional climates, and provide leadership under uncertain and rapidly changing situations. Based on these findings, important implications may be drawn for policy, practice, theory, and future research.

Implications for Policy

The significant emphasis expressed by participants on communication, safety, emergency response and community support suggests the need for clearer, standardized crisis-management frameworks in public schools. These include updated disaster-preparedness policies, institutionalized safety protocols, and official partnerships with local government units and emergency response agencies. Furthermore, policies should emphasize emotional and psychological support measures during crisis periods, recognizing that school systems are expected not only to sustain instruction but also to respond to mental health

needs of learners and personnel. The implication therefore is that schools need stronger policy backing that institutionalizes crisis-preparedness plans, designates permanent crisis teams, and assures resource allocation for school-based preparedness activities. These implications, while supported by participant experiences, are drawn within the scope of a limited number of public-school administrators and therefore should not be generalized to all educational contexts without further empirical support.

Implications for Practice

The results indicate that crisis leadership relies heavily on collaborative practices, inclusive decision-making, and emotional responsiveness. This suggests the need for continuous leadership capacity-building for administrators, including training in emergency communication, stakeholder coordination, trauma-informed approaches, and mental health awareness. In practice, schools may integrate crisis simulation activities, regular stakeholder consultations, and resilience-building programs for both students and staff. The findings further imply that schools must develop preventive rather than reactive strategies by strengthening preparedness, establishing safety committees, and building community partnerships. While these implications are supported by evidence from the participants, they must be interpreted based on the unique crisis conditions faced within the research setting and may differ across schools with different resources, contexts, and governance structures.

Implications for Theory

From a theoretical perspective, the findings suggest that crisis leadership in basic education goes beyond administrative functions and may be understood as a form of adaptive, collaborative, and empathetic educational leadership. The lived experiences of school administrators highlight crisis leadership as an evolving capacity shaped by situations rather than a fixed leadership style. These findings extend existing literature on crisis leadership by demonstrating that school-level crisis experiences foster transformational and emotionally responsive leadership behaviors. The theoretical implication therefore is that crisis leadership in education should not only focus on decision-making but must incorporate emotional care, inclusivity, and community engagement as essential theoretical dimensions. However, these implications should be measured cautiously as they were derived from qualitative narratives rather than large-scale testing; thus, further research is needed to validate emerging theoretical assumptions.

Implications for Subsequent Research

The results of this qualitative inquiry indicate the potential usefulness of further research examining the relationship between crisis leadership practices and measurable school outcomes such as learner well-being, disaster-readiness, or institutional resilience. Future studies may adopt mixed method approaches to validate emerging constructs and extend understanding beyond the current geographic and institutional context. Although the present study offered rich qualitative insights, the scope involved only a specific group of school

administrators and may not represent all crisis contexts. Therefore, subsequent research should broaden sampling and include schools from varying regions, risk exposures, and school typologies to support generalizations.

Directions for Future Research

Given the current findings, several directions for future research are recommended. First, future studies may adopt quantitative or mixed-method designs to measure the effectiveness of crisis leadership strategies, emergency planning systems, and collaborative crisis-management models across schools. Second, further inquiry can examine student and teacher perspectives regarding school crisis responses to provide a holistic understanding of crisis experiences at multiple levels of the school community. Third, future research may explore comparative crisis experiences between rural and urban schools, or between public and private institutions, to determine contextual variations and to identify whether certain leadership approaches are more effective in specific crisis environments. Fourth, longitudinal studies may be conducted to examine how crisis leadership capacities evolve over time and how sustained exposure to crises influences professional identity, resilience, and emotional competency among school leaders. Fifth, additional studies could develop and validate crisis-leadership frameworks appropriate for Philippine basic education contexts to support theory-building and national policy development.

Overall, the present findings point to meaningful directions that emphasize preparedness, collaboration, mental health responsiveness, and adaptive

leadership development. However, it remains necessary that future research expand the scope, involve broader populations, and apply diversified methodologies to further illuminate the complexity of crisis leadership in education and support generalizable policy recommendations.

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