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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL PLANT MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND COMPLIANCE TO DEPED STANDARDS: COURSES OF ACTION AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

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#### ABSTRACT

The Department of Education prescribed a set of standard for school plant and facilities in 2010, but schools in the research area still lacked adequate provisions. Documentation of compliance levels and means of coping with standards were not well-established as well. This descriptive study determined the existing school plant management of the secondary schools of Claveria, Misamis Oriental to the prescribed DepEd standards. Questionnaires, focus group discussion, and Appreciative Inquiry were used as means of gathering necessary data and verifying facts. Frequency, percentages and weighted mean were used in data processing. Participant schools have an excellent compliance level in classroom structuring, very satisfactory compliance level in school site, furniture and equipment standards, and satisfactory compliance level in terms of school buildings, instructional/administrative spaces and disaster management. The schools generally lack certain facilities; and inadequate information dissemination, substandard materials and distance of the school are main factors which affect the schools' compliance levels. Courses of action to address these included division of labor, use of personal initiative, and networking. School practices considered as most effective included Brigada Eskwela, pahina system, and partnerships with organizations. Recommendations included information dissemination, giving training/seminars and circulating a simplified version of the manual.

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#### INTRODUCTION

**The problem and its background:** The learning process is of utmost importance in any school. Along with it, another factor which could spell the success or failure of student learning is the environment which has been proven by different educational researchers to have a close relationship with the academic performance of students (Al-Enezi, 2002, Asiabaka, 2008, Earthman, 2017). A more recent review of research by Bailey (2009) sheds additional light on the relationship between student / teacher health and performance and school buildings. This research supported the research of Lemasters (1997) and other previous work (Weinstein, 1979; McGuffey, 1982). Bailey (2009) analyzed studies on the same relationship between school building condition and student achievement between the years 1997 and 2008. Bailey reviewed 157 separate studies and selected 54 studies for analysis, which specifically considered the relationship between building condition and student achievement. Bailey asserted that the sum of the reviewed research indicated that a positive relationship exists between the condition of the school and the health and performance of students and teachers. This relationship was expressed in the difference in achievement scores of students in buildings assessed as being in either good or poor condition. The difference in student scores ranged

from 3% to 17%. A more recent review of research by Bailey (2009) sheds additional light on the relationship between student / teacher health and performance and school buildings. This research supported the research of Lemasters (1997) and other previous work (Weinstein, 1979; McGuffey, 1982).

**Review of research findings:** The four research reviews that have been mentioned are important because the relevant research on this topic is compiled systematically and presented in a utilitarian form for other researchers and practitioners to use. Further, these studies are the only recognized studies that have reviewed research findings regarding the field of school facilities. The findings of the latter two researchers reflect a change in emphasis of research from the more generalized approach to an investigation of a specific topic or area of study within the general area of school facility research. The Weinstein (1979) and McGuffey (1982) studies addressed research studies in the general area of school facilities and, as part of that body of research, looked at a limited number of studies that addressed the relationship between school building conditions and student achievement. Lemasters (1997) and Bailey (2009) reviewed studies that mainly addressed that very relationship. These two research reviews highlight a trail of evidence that supports the notion that there is a measurable relationship between the condition of a school building and the

health and productivity of students and teachers. Evidence of this relationship has progressed through each additional research review that has been conducted. Still, doubts exist about the influence the condition of a school building may have upon student/ teacher health and performance. In a meta-analytical synthesis of research studies dealing with the relationship between school building condition and student achievement, Stewart (2014) reviewed 42 studies and found only 38% of the studies (16) dealt with that relationship and reported a relationship that was significant in differences between student scores. But Stewart further reported: There was a positive relationship between the independent variable of building condition and the dependent variable student learning in 50% of the analyses found in the studies included in this meta-analysis. The researcher identified 16 specific analyses on the association between these two variables in the 42 studies that constituted the data set. Of these 16 analyses, eight revealed a positive relationship. Among the remaining analyses, six (38%) revealed no relationship between building condition while two of the analyses (12%) actually reported an inverse relationship (e.g. students in substandard buildings experienced higher achievement than students in standard or above standard buildings). It can be concluded that this meta-analysis suggests a weak association between building conditions and student learning (p. 56).

The establishment of Physical Facilities and Schools Engineering Division (PFSED) by DO 17, s. 2004 led to the creation of the Educational Facilities Manual of 2010, which considers educational facilities as valuable assets of the school that have to be given priority to achieve an environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning. It applies planning and design principles to maximize collaboration among stakeholders, build a proactive facility management program, and design schools as neighborhood-scaled community learning centers. Working in the Department of Education (DepEd) and observing the importance of school environment to the learning process, the researcher found out that copies of the DepEd Educational Facilities Manual, as basis for acquiring equipment and facilities, was not properly disseminated in the area. How much the teachers and administrators know about the standards, and how religiously the schools were following the standards were also not well-established. With the full implementation of the K-12 program in 2016, this study would like to explore the present state of the secondary schools in Claveria, Misamis Oriental by looking at the present characteristics of the school plant in comparison to the prescribed standard, determine what stakeholders do to follow it, and to document effective practices.

#### **This study aimed to answer the following questions:**

- What are the existing school plant characteristics of the secondary schools vis-à-vis DepEd standards in terms of the school site and population, buildings, and school facilities?
- What is the level of compliance of the DepEd schools to the DepEd standards in terms of school site, buildings, furniture/equipment, and disaster management program?
- What factors affect the schools' compliance with the prescribed DepEd standards, and what courses of action were done to comply or address the concerns brought about by these factors?

- What are the practices in plant management that the school heads and other stakeholders consider as most effective in school plant management?
- What possible output is most suitable to help address the concerns brought about by the factors affecting the schools' compliance with the prescribed DepEd standards?

This study is premised on the Environmentalist learning theory which states that the child's environment shapes learning and behaviour (Enock 2006), and that behavior and learning are reactions to the environment (Graetz, 2019). This outlook may encourage families, schools, and educators to understand how students develop skills in reaction to things around them. In support to this premise is Rotter's social learning concept which maintains that environment is an important factor in the process of learning and development of the mind, and suggests that personality is the result of interactions of the individual with his environment (Rodriguez, 2010).

**Literature review:** Recognizing a link between plant management practices and school performance, the role of facilities management in facilitating performance and in providing competitive advantage is widely acknowledged (Cash and Twiford, 2012; Othman and Muijs, 2013). The pressing need for adequate and quality school plant reverberates in many parts of the world for both the developed and developing countries. Poor quality of facilities maintenance management practices are seen in developed countries like the United States (Lavy and Bilbo, 2009) and in developing countries like Nigeria (Uko, 2014). Yelkperi (2009) who studied the state of the school plant in Brong-Ahafo region of Ghana found out that inadequacy in school facilities is common, while Lunenburg (2010) found that old school buildings create barriers to learning. The study of Lanham (1999) in a rural high school in Virginia found a positive relationship between building condition and over-all student achievement with students in better designed school performing 5% better than their counterparts and 7-9% differences in reading, vocabulary and spelling. Similarly, Hamdallah, *et al.* (2013) compared the academic performance of students from private and public schools and found out that private schools perform better than their public school counterparts, and school plant was among the major factors. In the Philippines, the different levels of education recognize the importance of appropriate and adequate plant facilities in schools and gear their goals towards the achievement of these. Instructional Quality Criterion 2 of the Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order #10, s.2007 maintains that the libraries, laboratories, I.T. support system, physical plant, school site and infrastructure are tangible evidences of quality and excellence that has an impact on the overall quality of education.

Schools in the country mostly share the same common problem: lack of sufficient high quality school plant with those in rural areas and public schools equipped only with the basic amenities (Figuroa, *et al.*, 2016). Results often point to the need for schools to have new school buildings or reconstruct old ones and repair their worn-out facilities such as tables and chairs (Seameo-innotech.org). The impact of the school environment to student learning led Nkuta (2014) to propose that school administrators and the government should observe best practices and benchmark strategies in different public schools to gain more insight and perspective.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is descriptive in nature, as it sought to describe existing school plant characteristics of the seven secondary schools of the first and second districts of Claveria, Division of Misamis Oriental in comparison to the DepEd standards. The use of questionnaires, Focus Group Discussion, and Interview were used as strategies and included the school heads, teachers and student leaders of the secondary schools involved. To come up with effective practices regarding school plant management, the study also integrated the Appreciative Inquiry Method. This study was conducted to the seven (7) secondary schools in the first and second districts of the municipality of Claveria, Misamis Oriental, Philippines, a landlocked first class municipality of 57,963 hectares. It was conducted in 2016 with seventy-three (73) respondents that comprised school heads, teachers and student leaders of the seven schools in the municipality. Questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion were used in gathering necessary data and confirming/verifying facts. It was validated by administering the same to a sample group of teachers in the area who were not participants in the study. Primary data included answers from school heads, teachers and student leaders during the interview and answers to the questionnaire and focus group discussion. Secondary data were scanned/photocopied after being granted permission for documentation purposes. Data gathered were presented in a matrix or laid out as pictures for ease of interpretation. Frequency, percentages, and actual units/quantities were used where needed. Answers to the FGD were consolidated in paragraphs. Answers to the questionnaire were processed using the weighted mean, and the grand mean was determined as well to measure the level of compliance of the school.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**School Site and Population:** All school sites, except for Rizal National High School were donated, and mostly have tax declarations. The title for the Rizal National High School was acquired through purchase and already has a land title. All of the schools have their School Site Development Plan, although the principals of schools which were newly established, such as the Patrocinio NHS and Rizal NHS said that their plan was not drawn to scale. In fact, when the researcher asked for a copy, the teacher who was in charge of the document said that they cannot provide at the moment because they had contacted an architect who is still working on it. In terms of population, Dr. Gerardo Sabal Memorial NHS had the most number of students, with 519 males and 542 females for a total of 1061 students. It was followed by Hinaplanan NHS with 253 males and 224 females, for a total of 477 students. The school with the lowest population is Rizal NHS, which had 89 males and 87 females with a total of 186 students. This number is quite understandable, considering that Rizal NHS is still a newly-established school, and the community where the school is established is not as populated as the Poblacion of Claveria where Dr. Gerardo Sabal Memorial NHS was located. Regarding the number of teachers, the most teachers still belong to Dr. Gerardo Sabal Memorial NHS with 38 teachers, 9 of which are males and 29 are females. Hinaplanan NHS has four male and 14 female teachers, for a total of 19 faculty members. Patrocinio NHS had 15 teachers while Malagana NHS had 13. It was closely followed by Aposkahoy NHS with 12 teachers. Rizal NHS and Mat-i NHS both had 10 teachers each. The secondary schools in the two districts of Claveria

were located in rural areas, so even if the school site is located near the center of the community it intended to serve, the vicinity is more or less free from places that commonly endanger the safety and moral growth of the students such as beer or videoke joints, gambling dens, cinema houses railroads busy highways and the likes, and the standard requirements of the DepEd Educational Facilities Manual's requirements on the location, design and safety standards as well as the accessibility standards were adequately met. In terms of topography, the school buildings were built in places which were leveled, and even if the contour level of the land in the municipality of Claveria is not regular, school officials and contractors made it a point to flatten the surface of the area where they will build structures. In the case of Malagana NHS, for example, students jokingly call the lower portion "Ground Floor" and the upper portion "Second Floor" because of the difficulty going up and down from the front portion to the back part of the school. To make it easier, a joint project was organized, wherein the school provided a concrete pathway so students and teachers could go up and down easily even during rainy days to reduce hazard when the ground tends to be slippery. The land portions where the classrooms and other structures were built were leveled, and, except for the elevation, it was not difficult going from one classroom to another. The rest of the schools do not have problems with the elevation of the ground within the campus, although the roads to some of the schools such as Dr. Gerardo Sabal Memorial NHS are elevated. This elevation is more observable on the roads going to Aposkahoy NHS and Malagana NHS.

**School Buildings:** Most of the buildings followed the standards given them as stipulated in the measurement standards of buildings by the DepEd Facilities Manual. However, there was a standard for all secondary schools as provided in page 99 of the manual which states that "all public secondary schools should adopt the 7mx9m dimension regardless of its class size." This implies that some secondary schools in the first and second districts in Claveria have school buildings whose classrooms are considered "small" or inadequate for a classroom-student ratio of 1:45, as in the case of Hinaplanan NHS whose Aquino and Bagong Lipunan Buildings were only 6mx8m and were still used as classrooms despite the fact that these buildings were condemnable.

**School Facilities:** Table 1 contains the school plant characteristics of the seven secondary schools in terms of facilities, as stipulated in the National Inventory of DepEd Public School Buildings for S.Y. 2014-2015. The DepEd Educational Facilities Manual stipulated that in terms of health facilities and provisions for safety, there should be "at least one toilet seat for every 25 children, with separate bathrooms for boys and girls." In the document, it is clear that this provision was not complied if the school population is considered. There is obviously a lack of comfort rooms in all the secondary schools in both the first and second districts of Claveria, Misamis Oriental. Aside from that, the researcher also observed that not all the classrooms have CRs and that those that do, only have one comfort room, and not two, as required. In terms of chairs, all the seven schools have complied with the optimum BEIS school furniture analysis, and if related to the school population, the schools may fall under the color code green, which indicates generous seat provision and implies a cool classroom. This level of compliance would also imply that each student has one seat, plus some extra vacant seats inside their classrooms.

Table 1. School plant characteristics in terms of facilities

School	Toilet Bowls	Urinals	Total Number of Armchairs	Chairs (not with back rest)	armchairs: monobloc,	School Desks	Washing Facilities
PNHS	5	0	400	15		0	0
HNHS	12	0	510	24		0	2
RNHS	2	2	180	0		180	1
DGSMNHS	28	0	1200	18		0	3
MatNHS	12	0	563	127		0	5
ANHS	6	0	180	10		0	0
MalNHS	3	0	350	35		0	1

Table 2. Level of compliance of the secondary schools

Category	Level of Compliance to DepEd Standards	
	Mean	Interpretation
School Site	3.71	Very Satisfactory
School Buildings: General Features	3.99	Very Satisfactory
School Buildings: Ins. & Admin Spaces	2.83	Satisfactory
School Furniture and Equipment	4.0	Very Satisfactory
Classroom Structuring	4.68	Excellent
Disaster Management	3.07	Satisfactory
Grand Mean	3.71	Very Satisfactory

## Legend:

4.5 – above	Excellent	1.5 – 2.49	Poor
3.5 – 4.49	Very Satisfactory	1.5 below	Non-compliant
2.5 – 3.49	Satisfactory		

Page 118 of the manual stipulated that “hand washing facility shall, if possible, be provided proximate to the playground, gardens, school canteens and toilets. The minimum standard capacity of two faucets for every 100 pupils/students is recommended”. This has also been disseminated in the form of DepEd Order Nos. 56 and 66, s. 2009 in all DepEd schools, both elementary and secondary. In the case of the secondary schools in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, only the external hand washing facility was counted in the national inventory, and based on the DepEd standards, most of the schools have not complied. But after taking pictures, the researcher found out that many classrooms in all the seven secondary schools have lavatories which are used for hand washing purposes. The researcher also observed that toilets are located in the classrooms, where the sink/lavatory is located; and most of the time, this is the place where hand washing is needed most on a day-to-day basis. Hence, even if the school reported having no hand washing facility, the students could still wash their hands properly in their own classrooms.

**Level of Compliance to DepEd Standards:** Table 2 shows the level of compliance of the DepEd schools in districts 1 and 2 of Claveria, Division of Misamis Oriental to the DepEd standard in terms of their school site, school buildings, and school furniture/equipment and disaster management program. DepEd public schools in general, are governed by rules and policies which are usually disseminated through Orders and Memoranda. As such, these documents carry a very important implication: these are mandatory, and should be implemented as soon as possible. The researcher sees this as a reason for the excellent level of compliance of the secondary schools in Claveria in terms of classroom structuring because the Division Office conducts a yearly evaluation in both elementary and secondary schools in its area of jurisdiction. In terms of school furniture and equipment, the requirements are fairly easy to obtain, With the exception of the armchairs and the chalkboard which have definite measurement standards. In terms of the general features of a school building, the level of compliance is still very satisfactory. It was noticeable, however, that the external building colors have higher levels of compliance compared with the required colors of the interior

part of the building. In fact, the researcher noticed light pink and light blue interiors both in classrooms and offices. When asked about it, one school head explained that the division office is very strict with the uniformity of buildings from the outside, and the required color of roofing and external walls should be followed. However, considering budget constraints, more consideration is given to internal wall and flooring colors. The fact that most school sites were donated, and the school existed long before the DepEd Educational Facilities Manual was circulated; it is not surprising that school sites in the secondary schools in Claveria may find their school site lacking in size. The school heads also admit the fact that because of the irregular and sloping terrain of the municipality, site preparation for new structures is a usual problem. Disaster Management as a program is relatively new to DepEd, and although schools have plans about disaster and risk reduction, there are still some requirements that are not met, and the school heads explained that they are still working on it. It is also noteworthy that all schools have organized their Disaster Control Group in accordance with the requirements of the DepEd Educational Facilities Manual and are conducting regular fire and earthquake drills. Teachers and administrators were observed to comply very well with the standards if they have definite guidelines and are well-informed of the standards, as in the case of Classroom Structuring, which was disseminated in the form of a Regional Memorandum in 2013, and later on, as a contest in 2015. This goes to show that DepEd teachers respond very well to what is required of them given the proper guidance. Hence, there is a need for information dissemination of the required standards for plant management. The concerns raised by teachers in the succeeding problems of this study may also be validated by the results of the questionnaire answered by the school heads. The prescribed standards for school buildings, instructional and administrative spaces, for example, were only met with a satisfactory level of compliance. These required standards were deemed by the respondents as something which are not impossible to comply (such as the color of the external wall, etc. which received a poor level of compliance) even with budget constraints, and whose compliance level may greatly improve given the proper orientation of the standards.

**Factors Affecting the School's Compliance Level:** From the focus group discussion made, majority of the teacher and student respondents of the seven secondary schools say that their compliance level is affected by their lack of knowledge about the DepEd standards. Many of them, especially student leaders, are not aware that there is a set of standards to be followed. For most of the teacher and student respondents, this lack of knowledge and information about the DepEd standards and technicalities affect their school's compliance. Many of them indicated that lack of budget and materials is also an issue, and is a major factor affecting on-time compliance to given standards. Sometimes, some schools have to wait for several weeks or months for requests to be provided because some schools are built in remote areas, or are told to be provided with materials on a later date because there is no budget for it at the moment.

**Courses of Action to address the concerns brought about by the factors affecting the schools' compliance with the prescribed DepEd standards:**

Common courses of action among the seven secondary schools included division of labor, use of initiative and networking. Division of labor, or assigning tasks to the different stakeholders is considered necessary and important by Hinaplanan NHS, DGSabal NHS, and Mat-i NHS, Aposkahoy NHS. These stakeholders include students, teachers, PTA and LGU. Students and teachers (especially the class advisers) were usually assigned to maintain the cleanliness and beautification of the school, especially the façade of the school site and the buildings. The PTA and LGU were given tasks during Brigada Eskwela to trim trees, repair the perimeter fence, repaint buildings and chairs and the likes. The LGU is also usually invited to take part during this time. The teacher respondents of all the seven secondary schools affirmed that their school is in close coordination with the LGU in their locality. Use of initiative range from the use of personal money of the teachers involved, bringing own materials to school, integration of subject to possible solutions which could address present needs, call for "pahina" to cut labor cost, mobilization of PTA and SSG for maximum participation in activities and financial assistance on projects and other structures as well as waste and facilities management. Networking is also seen as a course of action which is expected to bring about positive results. Forming connections and partnership with LGU and other government units enable schools like DGSMNHS, Patrocinio NHS, Aposkahoy NHS and Malagana NHS to accomplish projects and activities such as tree-planting, and purchase equipment such as air conditioning unit for the computer laboratory, land filling activities and other kinds of financial support. Looking closely at these courses of action, it can be seen that the secondary schools, through their school heads and teachers, evidently exert effort in trying to come up with the standard requirements of DepEd. And, as shown in the previous pages, there are areas which were properly addressed, and there are also areas and standards which proved to be really difficult to comply. The role of the school head is very significant in addressing these concerns. In initiating courses of action towards meeting DepEd standards, one very important document which school heads religiously prepare is the School Report Card. This should always be given utmost importance because this not only shows the present state of the school but it also becomes a strong basis for projects and structures given to schools. Hence, it should be able to present the state of the educational facilities of the school as closely as possible, so that needs could be addressed properly. Another instance is the

class size. For classrooms which have not come up to the standard classroom size, the school heads usually instructs teachers to accommodate lesser number of students so the classroom could still be conducive to the learning process. Concerns about lack of information dissemination/ orientation of the DepEd standards may be properly addressed gradually through INSET and trainings. Giving enough and timely information is a surefire way of empowering school heads and teachers to act and encourage the entire school to work together to comply with what is required by DepEd. These other courses of action, the researcher believes, may address the concerns brought out in the previous discussions and may greatly improve the level of compliance of these seven secondary schools in Claveria, Misamis Oriental.

**Effective Practices in Plant Management:** The following effective practices were gleaned from the focus group discussion.

**Brigada Eskwela:** Every start of the school year, schools are expected to be well-prepared because students, teachers, parents, LGU and other organizations have already accomplished their Brigada Eskwela. All the respondents agreed that the Brigada Eskwela has yielded positive results and relieved teachers from a lot of worries at the start of the school year. Because this has been a DepEd program since 2003, and has been well-documented, many of the teacher respondents see this as a very effective way of mobilizing the school and community to accomplish development for the school. Long-term effects of the Brigada Eskwela, according to some teacher respondents, include savings in operating expenses and better classrooms for students. It should be noted, however, that Brigada Eskwela is a mandated activity by DepEd, and all schools nationwide hold this activity every start of the school year. Since teachers in the area of research consider this as an activity which they are very satisfied with, despite the fact that it is considered compulsory, the researcher included this as an effective practice. This is also to affirm that the Brigada Eskwela is not just a DepEd requirement, it also effectively serves its purpose, which is to prepare schools nationwide for the start of the school year.

**Pahina:** Pahina also takes the concept of "*bayanihan*", or extending voluntary help or assistance for any specific purpose, and is usually for a shorter period than Brigada Eskwela. This activity, unlike Brigada Eskwela, is not mandatory, and is organized only when the need arises. Teacher and student respondents also see this as a very effective practice, especially for short-term goals and even emergency situations when time is limited. They also added that the results of pahina give the stakeholders a sense of ownership of the task, and parents would occasionally inquire about it afterwards, which indicates the concern they give to the school. This, in turn, assures teachers that they could comfortably work with parents in any undertaking, for as long as it is for the good of the students.

**Forging partnership with LGU, close coordination with PTA, SSG and active school organizations:** Partnership with the different sectors outside the school and with the different organizations inside the school was also regarded by the respondents as an effective way. Partnership with the LGU through the school board resulted in assistance for school site development and enabled schools to build buildings and other structures. Close coordination with the PTA and SSG made

possible the accomplishments of projects of the school. This is especially true because the PTA usually provides financial assistance. This has resulted to schools being able to build Peace Parks, Gulayan sa Paaralan, perimeter fences, concrete/covered pathways and the likes. Such financial support has also made possible the acquisition of many other school properties, such as sound systems, monobloc chairs, and the likes. The Supreme Student Government (SSG) is an organization which contributes to the development of the school through its projects. Student leaders also see this as a positive way of showing what they could do for the school and leaving their legacy to their Alma Mater. It is in this manner that they feel empowered and realize that they, too, play a big part in the development of their school. In the case of DGSMNHS, teachers linked with their graduates to ask for aid in concreting the pathway between buildings, going towards the covered walk. As a result, financial support poured and the project was completed in a short time. The alumni also feel that somehow, they have given back to the school which nurtured them academically for several years.

### **Other Effective Practices**

- Holding contests to achieve classroom structuring consistent with the standard or to raise funds. The respondents of Hinaplanan NHS, Rizal NHS and Mat-i NHS see contests both as stressful and fulfilling way of complying with the DepEd standards. However, they said that parent's support is very essential for this venture to succeed, and raise money for whatever project that was agreed upon.
- Respondents claim that these contests give a sense of urgency to the participants. According to them, it is the desire to win that motivates the participants to reach and even exceed their goal. And, because everyone is giving their best, at the end of the day, even if there is only one winner, everybody has already achieved the goal.
- Use of logbook for borrowing equipment and educational materials. Rizal NHS, Patrocinio NHS, Aposkahoy NHS view this as a method of instilling the sense of responsibility among students who borrow materials and equipment. The teacher usually asks the student to surrender his/her ID before the equipment/material is lent, and returns the ID upon the return of the borrowed material.
- Use of media and internet. In tapping the Alumni of Malagana NHS, teacher respondents decided to contact their graduates through the internet and radio. They reported that there were more responses from their alumni than they usually receive when they distribute communication through letters. They particularly cited facebook as a very effective way of contacting people because active facebook users would check their account regularly, and their messages will not be missed. They also said that it yielded positive results and they were able to complete their project on time.
- Mini-libraries. Rizal NHS advisers put up their mini-library in their classrooms to compensate their lack of library. They said that it is effective in making their students want to read, because the material is very much within their reach. The adviser keeps a logbook and lists the borrowed books. Every class formulates its own policies regarding the borrowing and returning of books.

**Possible Output to address the concerns brought about by the factors affecting the schools' compliance to the standards:** Simplified Educational Facilities Manual for Teachers. Based on the suggestions, the researcher chose a simplified version of the Educational Facilities Manual as an output intended primarily for teachers, especially classroom advisers, but school heads, students and even parents may also be given copies as needed. Teachers need a material which is easier to read, considering their time for lesson preparations and school activities. INSET activities and trainings only happen several times a year, but a simplified manual will always be handy for day-to-day reference. Constant reminders are always better than occasional ones. The contents of the simplified manual are culled from the DepEd Educational Facilities Manual 2010. The contents are basically an enumeration of the standard requirements for the school site, school buildings, and school facilities and equipment. Some simplified introductions are also included. Preface, acknowledgment and table of contents are added to the material as well. The simplified manual will only be for instructional and information purposes, so before the simplified manual will be disseminated, the researcher would ask for permission from the Division School Plant Supervisor and have the manual double checked by competent authorities to be recommended on that level, for accuracy and consistency with the DepEd Educational Facilities Manual. Further recommendations shall be asked before the material is distributed to avoid violations of intellectual rights and other legal aspects.

### **Conclusion**

The standards set in the DepEd Educational Facilities Manual (2010) are not generally followed, especially on school site and buildings. However, the levels of compliance to the requirements in school site, school buildings and school facilities and equipment range from Satisfactory to Excellent, which means that the schools involved in the study have complied to the minimum standards, and in some areas, even beyond the standard. While it is true that there are issues beyond the control of the school heads, and teachers, like in the school site (topography of the municipality) and school buildings (dimension, class size and laboratories), there are also other concerns that can be properly addressed. Among these include giving adequate information or guide for all school heads and teachers to use. The dissemination of a simplified manual based on the DepEd Educational Facilities Manual 2010 is seen as the most appropriate, based on the opinions of the respondents and the observation of the researcher.

### **Recommendation**

There is a need for teachers and administrators in the first and second districts of Claveria, Misamis Oriental to improve awareness of the standards set by DepEd. Hence, it is highly recommended that this topic be included in discussions/topics during INSET to improve the awareness and level of compliance of the schools. Administrators, Property custodians, librarians, ICT personnel, laboratory, in-charge who have direct involvement in school plant management should be made more aware of the contents of the Educational Facilities Manual through training and/or seminars. Emphasis should be given in the preparation and presentation of the School Report Card as basis for future development of the school. The same

may also be a basis for request for budget appropriations to minimize the problems about budget constraints. Initial conference among the personnel involved in building construction should be strictly observed. The school head should be in close coordination with contractors and DPWH personnel before a structure will be built. The schools in the area of study should revisit the DepEd requirements for areas which received "poor" level of compliance like the science laboratories, waiting sheds, guidance office, school canteens, library, school clinic and the likes to guide them in improving these areas. Items which were rated "non-compliant" should also be revisited, to see how these requirements could be complied with. Effective practices such as "Pahina" should be strengthened because of its positive outcomes, and should properly be documented. A simplified version of the manual should be put into circulation for easier reading and interpretation for the benefit of teachers, students and other interested stakeholders. Further research involving a larger scope should be made in this study area, especially on the technicalities discussed in the manual, and the level of compliance of the schools to the prescribed standards.

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