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PAKWAN INTEGRATION SCHOOL: ITS TRANSITION

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Abstract

This paper documented on the transition of Pakwan Integrated School. The detailed history of the site was not the focus of this study. It applied a case study in which actual photos of the observation gave essence on this investigation. Community and leadership initiatives made the people of Pakwan's dream to realize to access to complete basic education which is the Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives of the Department of Education. Furthermore, the recent teachers' attitude, competency, and teaching style contribute to the unique delivery of curriculum.

Keywords: Pakwan Integrated School; Community and Leadership; Transition.

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1. Introduction

Pakwan Integration School is located at Barangay Pakwan, Municipality of Lanuza, Surigao del Sur, Philippines. Barangay Pakwan is known as the crucial boundary between Municipality of San Miguel and Municipality of Lanuza, about 22 kilometers from the national highway. If you are new to hear the word "Pakwan" you might mean it is a place where "pakwan" (a water melon) is abundant. Historically, Pakwan was known as "Pakuan" an abbreviation for "Pakuhan" (from the rootword "pako", an edible fern) which later became "Pakwan". Hence, Barangay Pakwan is dominated by Indigenous People, the Manobo Tribe.

Today, Pakwan Integrated School can be observed as one of competing schools in the District of Lanuza and Division of Surigao del Sur level as well. This is because of the new profile and positive competency of teachers and administrator, learners are ready to adapt ICT integration, new environment of the school, projects and programs implemented by government and non-government organizations, and the ideals that implemented by the school leader, stakeholders, and teachers which is anchored in the Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives (VMGO) of the Department of Education (DepEd). Thus, the purport of this paper is to document some information observed by the author during his stay in the scope of the study.

The limitation of this paper is not focusing on the detailed history of the scope of the study. The presentation of the data is covered during School Year 2009 until July 2017, and some information which is beyond from this timeline was taken from informants, from the community, of the study. The presentations and discussions of data inform how the scope of the study evolves as to physical aspects, and curriculum.



Plate No. 1: An overlooking the site of Barangay Carromata of San Miguel, photographer's position was at the top of "Text Mountain" (Photo courtesy by the researcher)

2. Brief Historical Background



Plate No. 2: From left: An entrance gate of Pakwan IS, taken last March, 2014, and the recent entrance gate of Pakwan IS, taken last May, 2017 (Photo courtesy by the Author)

According to the informant, before, the school was known as Pakuan Primary School in which it was composed primary grade levels and multi-classes were applied, and two (2) teachers only, one acted as the "School In-charge" or the school administrator. Thus, educational attainments of people in Barangay Pakwan were Primary level only. Few only were able to continue their next grade level or finish elementary and secondary at urban schools, and many did not able to continue, this was because of the distance or demographic profile of the site and economic status of the settlers.

There were no means of transportation. Settlers, traders, and people were just to walk for six (6) hours to get access in site. But, the operation of Surigao del Sur Corporation (SUDECOR) gave the settlers an opportunity to have means of transportation. Settlers were encouraged to trade their agricultural crops/products through the vehicles provided by the SUDECOR. However, the operation of SUDECOR gave threat to the settlers in which armed conflicts were evident. Hence, the SUDECOR operation stopped around 2012.

3. The School's Profile



Plate No. 3: From left, a repainted condemned building (along side of the lobby) utilize for academic and administrator's office purposes, and the teachers' cottage (Photo courtesy by the author)

Way back 2009, there were four buildings utilized by elementary grade level, and two buildings, with two rooms each, were utilized by secondary level. Among four buildings, one building with two-room was condemned due to not safe to everybody, but, still utilized. One room was utilized by two grade level (Grade 5 and Grade 6), and the second room was utilized by Grade 3. Office of the administrator was not yet established. Due to initiative of the school leader, this building was repaired and still exists and utilize for academic purposes (for grade six and grade 11-Senior High room), and for office of the administrator. Recently, the elementary levels were having four buildings: two 2-room buildings, and two One-room building.

As to teachers composition, in elementary, there were three (3) permanent (national paid), and three (3) volunteer teachers and they are not yet licensed teachers. In secondary, there were two (2) permanent teacher (national paid), and four (4) volunteer teacher, three (3) of these volunteer teachers were not yet licensed.

The two-room buildings of the secondary level were utilized also by the teachers as their cottage, where they can rest at night and cook foods at outside the buildings, and personal belongings were just hanged or settled aside the classroom. Thus, the establishment of Teachers' cottage, around year 2011, gave the teachers today a decent living.



Plate No. 4: From left, the uncompleted pathway, photo taken last June, 2013, and completed pathway, photo taken last May 2017 (Photo courtesy by the author)

The shallow geographic profile of Barangay Pakwan affects Pakwan Integrated School to be risked in flood. The pathway and ground of the school premises could be result to muddy and exposure of giant leeches and earthworms during rainy season. Long before, the school ground was described as abundant grown cogon, long grasses, and weeds, and swampy area.

Today, the realization of two projects implemented by KALAH I (a non-government organization) which were the completed pathway and community drainage that passed across the school premises gave the students, teachers, and community to enjoy walking along the premises.



Plate No. 5: The installation of solar panel, photo taken last 2015 (Photo courtesy by Cherry Abne-Bruzon)

The site was not access to electricity; it was one of the challenges of the teachers and administrator in implementing ICT (Information and Communication Technology) integration (Daling, 2018). Teachers used portable components when integrating technology in class, such as cassette or karaoke, and powered generator when conducting school activities, such as moving-up, and graduation ceremony. Teachers found hassle in preparing lesson plans and reports at night.

Today, the installation of solar panel for solar energy by the MERALCO Foundation, and PAMANA Projects contributes to the school in integrating ICT, conducting school activities, and preparing lesson plans and reports at night, and to the community to access in media, such as TV programs and TV series.

Furthermore, the distance of the site and physical features of the road and the means of communication were the major challenges of the educators and to any supporting agencies (government or non-government) in delivering services. The slippery and rocky road aspect could risk to educators and concern individuals who would like offer services especially during bad weather condition such as typhoon or heavy rain. Another challenge experience was the means of communication. There were many cases that educators were delayed in updating, submitting, and responding reports or services these were because of the absence of communication's channel. The study of Daling (2018) conforms that three (3) kilometers away from the main site can only have phone signal. Lastly, arm conflicts were a threat to individual, specially to educators, when performing ideal services. It affects emotions and attitudes in quality of services and decision-making.



Plate No. 6: A selfie photo of a teacher during stranded in risk as their vehicle having an engine problem (photo courtesy by Madilyn Cabacoy)

4. The School Leader and the Community



Plate No. 7: From left: Parents during “Brigada Eskwela 2015”, and School Administrator led to do school maintenance (Photo courtesy by the researcher)

The Mission of the Department of Education enclosed in the Dep. Ed. Order no. 36, series of 2013:

“...Family, community, and other stakeholders are actively engaged and share responsibility for developing life-long learners”.

School leader leads the school plan and goals, while community is an asset that could strengthen the school improvements and development. Thus, school leader and community must have a mutual and good relationship.

The Plate No. 7 shows how community and school administrator work for the improvement of the school which is one of the goals of the educational system, to build strong partnership with stakeholders. On the actual observation of the researcher, as shown in photo, few participation of community could weaken the development plan and goals of the school leader, this is now a challenge of the administrator. However, the above presentation does not mean that there was weak relationship between the school leader and the community. During the immersion of the study, the few participation of the community had a reasonable factors; the conflict of community's time to participate in school's activities and actions because their means of living relied only through farming and they had to grapple time for farming for their daily needs, specifically for food needs, and the distance of community's household that affected that coordination of school's communication.

According to Marzano, et.al. (2005), parent and community involvement is one of the school-level factors that works in schools. He emphasized the three related elements that deals with the support and involvement of parents and community; communication, participation, and governance. Communication refers to which the school has developed good lines of communication both to and from parents and community. Hence, digital gadgets have important roles in communication. Such as, mobile is the easiest way to communicate the stakeholders. Participation refers to the extent that stakeholders are involved in goals and objectives of the school. This could be means of sharing duties and responsibilities. Participation of stakeholders is a good process in which strengthening good relationships develop, and empowering them to help the school leaders to think, to decide, or to plan for the achievements and accomplishments of the schools. Governance refers to the extent to which the school established structures that allow stakeholders to be involved in decision making relative to school policy development.



Plate No. 8: Teachers and Parents on their social activity (Photo courtesy by Pakwan IS Staff)

In fact, the establishment of secondary curriculum was because of the courage of the community to realize and to access to complete basic education. Investigation showed that the establishment of the secondary school was role by parents and local officials, who had attended a college level, as teachers of the students, and the curriculum was adopted by Florita Herrera-Irizari National High School (FHINHS). Later, the mother school assigned a permanent/regular teacher, and the

local officials (Barangay and Municipal) supported through allocating funds for volunteer teachers. Recently, Pakwan Integrated School has a complete permanent/regular teacher, both elementary and secondary level, funded by national budget. This is in consistent also with Article XIV, Section 2(1) of the 1987 Philippine Constitution which states that “The state shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society”.

5. The Learners and the Curriculum

Most of the time, it is inevitable that there is a comparison between the rural schools and urban schools. Generally, urban schools describe as modern and updated schools, and rural schools are classical school. This is because there are a lot of factors to be observed. Urban schools are easily access to new trends lifestyle, such as the expansion of modern technology.



Plate No. 9: Students on their learning process, photo credits by the researcher

Teachers may find it challenge to establish positive relationships with children who display an overly confident demeanour (Wu, Hughes, and Kwok, 2009). On the other hand, the medium of communication has a role in establishing relationship with learners. Thus, the native language and the teachers' medium of instruction could make a conflict of teacher and learners communication. Teaching English language is difficult for a teacher if he/she is not belong to the ethnicity of the class, and it is difficult for him/her to use the medium of instruction when he/she does not know the language within the culture, especially if he/she is new within the community, sometimes it leads to culture shock. This is now one of the challenges experienced by teachers assigned in the site of the study. This is similar to the study of Daling (2017) in teaching English language in which he designed a teaching model that bridge the gap between teacher's medium of instruction and native language of learners. In his observation, learners' ability in expressing ideas, either written or oral, was observed that find teacher difficulty in achieving the school's curriculum. The finding of Rodrigues and Oxbrow (2008) showed that students believed using L1 in L2 classroom can help to improve L2 learning. They found that majority of the students preferred teachers to explain grammar rules and give instructions in L1 that teacher explaining the similarities and differences between the first and second language was also an interesting.



Plate No. 10: A Grade 5 pupils on their Christmas Tree making. Photo courtesy by the researcher

Curriculum must be relevant, responsive and research-based that transforms children into well-rounded individuals (Sleeter & Cornbleth, 2011). Exposing learners in practical activities is one way to discover his/her own way of learning and potentials. In this process, he/she will teach his/herself a positive attitude and values, such as dependent individual, develop teamwork to his/her peer, and provide opportunity to be socialized with peers. Likely, the picture above is evidence how these positive attitudes developed. On the photo, learners are doing the task given by the teacher. On actual, teacher was the first who did the activity, he shown to them (the learners) the activity as it is inviting them to do the task and later learners joined the activity. In this process, relationship of learners and teacher was on progress through positive communication. Positive communication means dealing with learners as they close friends or something that they could feel that teacher is one of their peers. In addition, teacher's showing activity is a technique of opening the learner's state of curiosity. Curiosity led to learners to discover something, and discovering something is a process of experiential learning. Same as giving the child a time to play and to provide interesting toys, we could say playing is just a normal activity but the impact on it to her/his has a major impact to his her development either mental, emotional, physical, and some complex. According to Davis and Henry (1993), as cited by Al Dafaiei (2013), "the learner interacts with the environment, processes the information, and elicits the response". This is also the claim of Cognitive theory that learning results from interactions with the environment (Al Dafaiei, 2013).



Plate No. 11: Children on their play time (Photo courtesy by the researcher)

The stated scenario was evident to Kindergarten class of the site of the study. Teacher used her approaches and strategies through playing and dealt as one of them. The following year, these children were become amazing in class interaction. Unlikely, the previous school year of this site of the study, learners were having difficulty in mastering 3Rs (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic). Investigation showed that these learners were the product of deteriorated instruction. Investigation revealed that there were factors that cause with this deteriorated instruction which were teachers' incompetency, negative attitude, negative emotional quotient, disability to connect native language of learners, and absence of resources and materials.



Plate No. 12: From left: Pupils on their backyard activities, collecting insects (Photo courtesy by the researcher), Teachers demonstrating “Laro ng Lahi” (Photo courtesy by the Pakwan IS Faculty)

The photo above shows pupils on collecting insects, and teachers demonstrating a traditional activity. The photo's pupils collecting insects demonstrated the teacher on contextualizing the lesson in science subject. Teacher used local resources to realize and apply lesson. While, the photo's teachers demonstrating “Laro ng Lahi” showed teachers were introducing and demonstrating filipino's traditional play/game.



Plate No. 13 Learners and Teachers on their “Zumba Dance” in early morning (photo courtesy by Pakwan IS faculty)

Today, the new generations of faculty in Pakwan Integrated School help change the image through introducing new and unique aspect of curriculum. Teachers influenced learners through making them as friends then later guiding and empowering them as future leaders, and always emphasizing that they are the center of the curriculum.

Hence, the primary focus in curriculum is the holistic learning and development of the learner. Teacher must creates a conducive atmosphere where the learner enjoys learning, takes part in meaningful learning experiences and experiences success because he/she is respected, accepted and feels safe even if in his/her learning exploration he/she commits mistakes. He/She is empowered to make choices and to become responsible for his/her learning in the classroom and for a lifetime (The K TO 12 Basic Education Program as of March 2012). Thus, motivating learners in teaching process is very much important. It implies activate, integrated and directed behavior that creates energy expended in goal-seeking or to the internal or external factors that help initiate and maintain organized effort (Lazarus, 1961; Aquino, 1999).

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

Regardless of the challenges, problems, and weaknesses, the ideal image, accomplishment, and achievement of Pakwan Integrated implies that there is a continual development of the educators, leaders, and community, and the Department of Education (DepEd) as well who truly dedicated to dream and to have passion to create an ideal Filipino citizens of the Republic of the Philippines.

Hence, detailed or brief historical background of the site of the study would like to address the author to other researchers, academicians, or scholars to dig and to explore more that would give more information and essence on this study.

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