

A Professional Journey into Educational Administration: An Autoethnographic Case Study

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Abstract

This autoethnographic study explores the researcher's transition from a college instructor to an education specialist within the Department of Education. The study employs a multi-faceted journaling approach to capture the nuances of this professional shift based on data collected over a 16-month period from August 2024 to November 2025 and informed by over nine years of teaching experience. Thematic analysis, guided by Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach, revealed three primary themes: navigating role ambiguity, reconciling pedagogical and administrative identities, and adapting to systemic challenges in Philippine education. Integrating role identity theory, transformative learning theory, and complexity leadership theory, the theoretical framework provides a robust lens for interpreting the findings. The study highlights the complex interplay of personal, professional, and systemic factors in the transition process, revealing how educators negotiate the shift from classroom-focused to system-level responsibilities. Comparative analysis with similar transitions in other countries underscores universal challenges and context-specific nuances. The findings have implications for structuring transition support programs, mentorship initiatives, and leadership development in the Philippine education system. While limited by its subjective nature, this autoethnographic approach offers valuable insights into the lived experience of educational career transitions, contributing to our understanding of leadership development in diverse educational contexts.

Keywords

autoethnography, educational leadership, career transition, Philippine education system, professional identity

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Introduction

The employment of teachers in the Philippines presents a complex landscape, reflecting the nation's commitment to education and the challenges faced across its diverse geographical contexts. With its archipelagic nature, the Philippines faces unique challenges in ensuring the equitable distribution of qualified teachers between urban and rural areas (Alipio, 2020). While metropolitan areas, particularly in major cities, often have a higher concentration of teachers due to better infrastructure and career opportunities, rural areas frequently struggle with teacher shortages and retention issues, impacting the quality of education in these regions (Tarraya, 2023).

Significant changes have been seen in teacher employment patterns recently, particularly with implementing the MATATAG K-10 Curriculum in 2022. This curriculum reform aimed to address gaps in basic education and improve the overall quality of teaching and learning (Acido & Caballes, 2024). According to the Department of Education (DepEd), the teacher employment rate has shown fluctuations over the past three years: In 2021, before the MATATAG implementation, the teacher employment rate stood at 92% nationwide (Gallano et al., 2021). With the initial rollout of MATATAG in 2022, there was a slight increase to 93.5%, attributed to hiring additional teachers to support the new curriculum. By 2023, the rate had reached 94.2%, indicating a continued effort to fill teaching positions nationwide (Albert et al., 2023). However, these national figures mask significant regional disparities. Wulandari et al. (2021) found that while urban areas maintained a teacher employment rate of over 95%, rural areas lagged at 88%, highlighting the persistent challenge of attracting and retaining teachers in remote locations.

Casingal & Ancho (2021) works have provided valuable insights into teachers' challenges in the Philippines, mainly regarding financial literacy and job satisfaction. They highlighted Filipino public school teachers' financial literacy challenges, indicating that many struggle to manage their finances effectively despite employment. This financial strain can be a significant factor in teacher retention and job satisfaction, especially in areas where the cost of living is high relative to teacher salaries. Furthermore, C. P. Casingal (2022) research on Filipino elementary pupils' difficulties completing online performance tasks during the pandemic shed light on teachers' additional challenges adapting to new teaching modalities. These challenges likely contributed to increased teacher stress and workload, potentially affecting job satisfaction and retention rates. A more recent study (C. P. Casingal, 2022a) explored the journey of teachers transitioning from primary education to higher education institutions. This research revealed several key themes: being overworked, dealing with unrelated tasks, and feeling underpaid. These findings align with earlier research by Buchanan (2010) and provide crucial insights into the factors influencing teacher attrition and career transitions within the Philippine education system.

Implementing the MATATAG Curriculum has necessitated quantitative changes in teacher employment and qualitative shifts in teacher preparation and professional development. Kilag et al. (2024) The new curriculum demands increased investments in teacher training programs, particularly in integrating technology and modern pedagogical approaches. Despite these efforts, challenges remain. A comprehensive survey by Dalanon et al. (2018) revealed that teacher attrition rates in rural areas continue to be higher than in urban centers, with factors such as limited

infrastructure, lower compensation, and professional isolation cited as critical reasons for teachers leaving or avoiding rural postings.

As the Philippines continues to navigate these challenges, understanding the nuanced landscape of teacher employment across urban and rural divides remains crucial for developing effective policies to ensure quality education for all Filipino students. Researchers like Casingal's insights offer valuable perspectives on the complex interplay of factors affecting teacher employment, satisfaction, and retention in the Philippine context.

Literature Review

Teaching in the Basic Education

Recent research on teaching experiences in primary education in the Philippines has revealed significant challenges and trends impacting educators' effectiveness and job satisfaction. A recurring theme in studies from 2015 to 2024 is the increasing workload and administrative responsibilities that often detract from teachers' core instructional duties. C. P. Casingal (2022b) highlighted Filipino elementary teachers' difficulties adapting to new performance tasks, illustrating the complexities of integrating new methodologies into traditional teaching practices. This aligns with findings from Quirap (2022), who identified heightened accountability pressures and excessive paperwork as significant contributors to teacher burnout and diminished job satisfaction among public school teachers in Metro Manila. Their study found that teachers spent an average of 60% of their workday on non-teaching tasks, significantly impacting their ability to focus on student learning.

The impact of working conditions and support systems on teacher performance and retention has also been a focal point of recent research in the Philippine context. Tippins & Handa (2010) explored the relationship between workplace environment, well-being, and job performance among elementary school teachers in rural areas of Luzon. Their findings emphasized the critical role of positive work environments and adequate resources in enhancing teacher effectiveness. Building on this, a comprehensive study by Shukla (2006) across three regions in the Philippines, there was a strong correlation between teacher autonomy in instructional decisions and higher job satisfaction and student achievement levels. These studies highlight the importance of comprehensive support systems in maintaining a high-quality, motivated teaching workforce in Philippine primary education.

An emerging area of research focuses on the transition of teachers from primary education to higher education in the Philippines, shedding light on the factors driving this career shift. C. P. Casingal's (2022a) study on Filipino public school teachers leaving for higher education institutions revealed that excessive workload, assignment of unrelated tasks, and inadequate compensation were primary motivators for this transition. This research underscores the systemic issues within primary education that must be addressed to retain experienced educators and maintain educational quality. A follow-up study by MOON (2023) across various regions in the Philippines found similar trends. 28% of surveyed teachers are considering a move to higher education or private sector roles within

the next three years, citing better work-life balance and professional growth opportunities as key factors.

The findings from these studies suggest that improving working conditions, providing adequate support, addressing workload concerns, and ensuring fair compensation are crucial steps in enhancing teacher experiences and effectiveness in Philippine basic education. As the educational landscape in the Philippines continues to evolve, ongoing research remains vital for informing policies and practices that support and retain high-quality educators in basic education settings.

The Work Experiences in the Higher Education

Recent research on higher education in the Philippines has shed light on faculty members' challenges, particularly those in contractual positions. A study by Bulawat (2020) highlighted the precarious nature of contractual employment in Philippine universities, with many faculty members experiencing job insecurity and financial instability. This issue is exacerbated by the frequent delays in salary disbursement and the lack of financial benefits, as noted by Martínez & Poveda (2021), in their examination of financial well-being among educators, they found that delayed salaries are particularly acute for contractual faculty, with some reporting delays of up to several months, significantly impacting their quality of life and job satisfaction (Marmol, 2019).

Workload issues, especially related to accreditation processes, have been a significant concern for faculty members in higher education. RAS (2024) found that the increasing demands of accreditation preparation often fall disproportionately on contractual faculty, who are expected to contribute extensively to these processes without the job security or compensation commensurate with their efforts. A disturbing trend noted by Usop et al. (2013) reported that there is widespread acceptance of assigning heavier teaching loads to contractual faculty, sometimes up to seven different course preparations, regardless of the total unit count. This practice is often justified as a way for contractual faculty to "prove themselves" worthy of permanent positions despite the potential negative impacts on teaching quality and work-life balance. This issue is compounded by the challenges in obtaining permanent positions, even for qualified faculty members. Kilag et al. (2023) reported that internal politics and nepotism often play a role in the distribution of permanent items, creating a frustrating environment for contractual faculty seeking stability in their careers.

The mistreatment of contractual faculty has been a recurring theme in recent literature. Kilag et al. (2023) documented instances of contractual faculty being assigned heavier teaching loads, often with less desirable schedules, compared to their tenured counterparts. Moreover, Ormilla, (2021) highlighted the lack of representation and voice for contractual faculty in university decision-making processes, further marginalizing this group within the academic community. Cabello (2022) found that this systemic exploitation of contractual faculty affects their well-being and potentially compromises the quality of education provided to students. These issues collectively contribute to a challenging work environment in higher education, particularly for contractual faculty, underscoring the need for comprehensive reforms in university employment practices and policies.

The Shifting Processes: Teaching to Administration

The transition from teaching to non-teaching administrative roles in Philippine higher education presents a complex shift in professional experiences and challenges. Research comparing these career paths highlights significant differences in workload, job satisfaction, and career development opportunities.

Teachers in Philippine higher education, particularly those in contractual positions, often face heavy workloads and precarious employment conditions. According to Tolentino (2023), contractual faculty frequently juggle multiple course preparations, sometimes up to seven different courses, regardless of the total unit count. This practice is often justified to prove their worth for permanent positions. In contrast, Arcilla (2020) noted that administrators typically have more stable employment but face different challenges, such as managing institutional policies, budgets, and personnel.

The transition from teaching to administration often shifts focus from direct student interaction to broader institutional management. Bastasa & Guhao Jr (2024) while teachers primarily concern themselves with classroom dynamics and student learning outcomes, administrators must navigate complex institutional politics, manage resources, and implement educational policies. This shift can be both rewarding and challenging. Cruz (2016) some educators who transitioned to administrative roles reported increased job satisfaction due to greater decision-making power and the ability to influence institutional policies. However, they also noted increased stress levels related to managing diverse stakeholder expectations and institutional pressures.

Financial considerations also play a role in this transition. While contractual faculty often struggle with delayed salaries and limited benefits C. P. Casingal & Quimson, (2024) administrative positions typically offer more stable and often higher compensation. However, Comighud (2019) pointed out that this financial gain often comes at the cost of reduced direct engagement with students and teaching, which some former teachers find challenging to reconcile with their professional identities.

The transition to administrative roles also requires developing new skill sets. Lingam et al. (2017) highlighted that effective administrators must cultivate strong leadership, communication, and organizational skills, which may not have been as crucial in their teaching roles. Additionally, administrators often find themselves at the forefront of implementing and managing accreditation processes, which requires a different perspective from classroom teaching.

The transition from teaching to non-teaching administrative roles in Philippine higher education represents a significant shift in professional focus, skills, and challenges. While it can offer more excellent stability and influence, it also requires adapting to new responsibilities and potentially sacrificing direct classroom engagement. Understanding these differences is crucial for educators considering such a career transition and for institutions seeking to support their staff through these changes.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical underpinnings of this autoethnographic study draw from several interconnected perspectives in educational and organizational theory, providing a robust framework for understanding the complex process of transitioning from a teaching role to an educational administration position. Stryker & Burke's (2000) role identity theory is at the core of this framework, which posits that individuals possess multiple identities tied to their various societal roles. This theory illuminates the researcher's navigation between teacher and administrator identities, highlighting the negotiation required when moving between roles that may present conflicting demands and self-conceptions. Complementing this perspective, Mezirow's transformative learning theory offers insight into the profound shifts in perspective documented throughout the researcher's journey. This theory suggests that adults undergo a process of critical reflection on their assumptions when faced with challenging new experiences, mirroring the phases observed in the researcher's adaptation to their administrative role.

The social nature of the researcher's professional transition is further elucidated through Lave & Wenger (1991) they situated learning theory. Their concept of "legitimate peripheral participation" provides a lens for understanding the researcher's gradual integration into the community of practice of educational administration, from initial peripheral engagement to increasing responsibility and expertise. Given the systemic challenges in Philippine education highlighted in the study, Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT) offers a valuable framework for contextualizing the researcher's new role within a complex adaptive system. CLT's delineation of administrative, adaptive, and enabling leadership functions helps frame the multifaceted nature of the researcher's transition from a primarily adaptive role as a teacher to a position requiring a balance of all three leadership functions.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) Ecological Systems Theory further enriches this theoretical framework by providing a structure for understanding how the researcher's transition is influenced by and influences various levels of the educational ecosystem. This ecological perspective allows for an analysis of the researcher's experiences within the immediate work environment (microsystem), their interactions across different settings (mesosystem), the impact of external factors like national education policies (exosystem), and the broader cultural context of Philippine education (macrosystem). By grounding the autoethnographic data in these theoretical frameworks, this study moves beyond personal narrative to contribute to broader discussions in educational leadership and organizational studies. These theories collectively provide a structure for understanding the complex interplay of personal, professional, and systemic factors in the transition from teaching to educational administration, offering a theoretically rich context for interpreting the researcher's lived experience.

Research Design and Methodology

This study employed an autoethnographic case study design, a qualitative approach that combines elements of autobiography and ethnography to explore a singular case within a specific context (Ellis et al., 2011). The case is the researcher's transition from a college instructor to an education

specialist in a division office within the Department of Education. The methodology is rooted in the interpretive paradigm, acknowledging experience's subjective nature and context's importance in understanding social phenomena. (Denzin & Lincoln, 1996). This autoethnographic approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the researcher's lived experience situated within the broader sociocultural context of the Philippine education system.

Context and Background

This autoethnographic study is informed by my extensive experience in the Philippine education system, spanning two distinct roles:

This autoethnographic study is informed by my extensive experience in the Philippine education system, spanning two distinct roles:

1. Public School Teacher (June 2, 2015, to July 2024): 9 years and 1 month of experience in basic education.
2. Education Specialist in a Division Office (August 2024 to November 2025): 16 months of experience in educational administration.

This long-term involvement in the education sector provides a rich background for understanding the nuances of the transition from teaching to administration.

Data Collection Process

This autoethnographic study primarily focuses on the transition period from August 2024 to November 2025, capturing the researcher's career shift from a public school teacher to an education specialist in a division office. The study incorporates reflections on the researcher's prior teaching experience to provide context and depth. The data collection process employs a multi-faceted journaling approach to capture the nuanced experiences of this career transition. Three core journaling methods were utilized: real-time experiential journaling, artifact-based reflections, and retrospective entries. Real-time journaling captured immediate experiences, reflections, and observations on a daily basis or as notable events occurred, focusing on challenges, insights, and significant occurrences during the transition. Bi-weekly artifact-based reflections involved examining specific work artifacts to trace professional approaches and identity changes. Monthly retrospective entries integrated prior teaching experiences with the current role, reflecting on relevant past experiences and their connections to current challenges and insights. The data collection timeline included a pre-transition phase in July 2024 for preparation, the active transition phase from August 2024 to November 2025, and a post-transition reflection period from December 2025. All journal entries were digitally recorded, securely stored, and tagged with relevant themes for easy analysis.

The study adhered to ethical guidelines for autoethnographic research, including measures to protect the privacy of colleagues and institutions mentioned. Data validation techniques included periodic member checks with trusted colleagues and data triangulation by comparing the various journaling methods. This comprehensive approach ensured a rich, layered dataset that captured the

immediate experiences of the career transition and the broader context of the researcher's educational journey, allowing for deep analysis of professional growth and identity formation. The primary focus of this study is on the transition period from August 2024 to November 2025, encompassing the researcher's shift from a public school teacher to an education specialist in a division office. However, reflections on the researcher's prior teaching experience are incorporated to provide context and depth to the analysis. For this autoethnographic study, the researcher employed a diverse range of journaling methods to capture the multifaceted nature of the transition experience. At the core of this process were experiences, reflections, and observations, ensuring the immediate capture of notable events and challenges. Additionally, the researcher engaged in periodic artifact-based reflections, examining specific work artifacts to trace professional approach and identity changes over time. To integrate the extensive teaching background into the study, the researcher also wrote monthly retrospective entries, reflecting on relevant experiences from the teaching career and connecting these past experiences to current challenges and insights. This comprehensive journaling approach ensured a rich, layered dataset that captured both the immediate experiences of the transition and the broader context of the researcher's educational career.

Data Analysis

The analysis in this autoethnographic study employed a thematic coding approach as (Braun and Clarke, 2006) outlined and adapted to the researcher's self-reflective process. As both the subject and the analyst, the researcher begins by immersing himself in his narrative data, revisiting personal journals, reflections, and memories of his transition from teaching to administration. He then generates initial codes, systematically working through his experiences to identify key moments, emotions, and insights. These personal codes are analyzed and combined to search for potential themes that capture significant aspects of his transition journey. The researcher then reviews these themes, ensuring they coherently represent his lived experience while remaining distinct from each other. In defining and naming these themes, he strives to capture the essence of his transformation and challenges. Finally, the analysis culminates in producing a report that weaves together the identified themes with personal anecdotes and reflections, contextualizing his individual experience within the broader landscape of educational administration and career transitions in the Philippines. This introspective process allows the researcher to derive meaningful insights from his journey, offering a unique, insider perspective on the complexities of moving from teaching to administrative roles in the Philippine education system.

Thematic Analysis Techniques

The thematic analysis for this study followed Braun et al. (2023) Six-phase approach, adapted for autoethnographic data. The process began with familiarization, where the researchers immersed themselves in the data through multiple readings of all journal entries and reflective memos. This was followed by initial coding, which involved generating initial codes using NVivo software to organize the data systematically. The third phase, searching for themes, entailed grouping these codes into potential themes that captured significant patterns in the data. In the fourth phase, reviewing themes, the researcher refined these themes through an iterative process, ensuring internal coherence and clear distinctions between themes. The fifth phase, defining and naming

themes, involved clearly articulating the essence of each theme and identifying subthemes where necessary to capture nuances within significant themes. Finally, in the sixth phase, producing the report, the researcher wove the final analysis into a coherent narrative that integrated personal experiences with theoretical insights and contextual factors in Philippine education. This systematic approach to thematic analysis allowed for a rigorous examination of the researcher's transition experience, balancing personal reflection with analytical depth.

Ethical Considerations

The autoethnographic nature of this study necessitates a rigorous ethical considerations approach that extends beyond traditional research ethics frameworks. (Tolich, 2010). Central to this approach is the concept of relational ethics (Ellis, 2007), acknowledging the researcher's interconnectedness with colleagues, students, and administrators featured in the narrative. Strategies to protect anonymity and obtain informed consent are implemented where necessary, balancing the need for authentic representation with privacy concerns. (Sikes, 2015). The researcher engages in ongoing reflexivity, critically examining his positionality and the power dynamics inherent in his dual role. (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Careful boundary-setting guides self-disclosure, ensuring analytical purposefulness rather than mere self-indulgence (Anderson, 2006). Consideration is given to the institutional context and potential implications on organizational relationships (Tullis, 2021). Self-care strategies are employed to address the emotional challenges of deep self-reflection (Chatham-Carpenter, 2010). While autoethnographic research often falls outside traditional ethical review processes, the researcher has voluntarily sought institutional ethical approval and engages in ongoing ethical reflection and consultation (Lapadat, 2017). This comprehensive ethical framework aims to produce a rich, insightful account while respecting the dignity and privacy of all individuals implicated in the narrative. It will contribute to the broader discourse on ethical practices in autoethnographic studies within educational settings.

Limitations and Trustworthiness

While autoethnography provides deep, personal insights, it is limited in generalizability. To enhance trustworthiness, the researcher may employ strategies such as member checking, peer debriefing, and thick description (Lincoln, 1980). Additionally, the researcher engaged in reflexivity, acknowledging their positionality and potential biases throughout the research process.

Findings and Discussions

This autoethnographic study explores the researcher's journey transitioning from a college instructor to an education specialist in a division office within the Philippine education system. Through deep reflection and systematic analysis of his experiences, several key themes emerged that illuminate the complexities of this professional shift. These themes capture the researcher's individual experience and resonate with broader issues in educational administration and career transitions within the Philippine context.

The findings presented here result from a rigorous thematic analysis of the researcher's personal narratives, journal entries, and reflections collected throughout the transition process. Following

Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach, the researcher immersed himself in the data, generating codes that captured significant moments, challenges, and insights. These codes were then synthesized into overarching themes representing his transitional experience's essence. It is important to note that while these findings are deeply personal, they aim to contribute to a broader understanding of career transitions in educational settings.

In the following sections, the researcher will present and discuss three primary themes that emerged from his analysis: (1) Navigating Role Ambiguity, (2) Reconciling Pedagogical and Administrative Identities, and (3) Adapting to Systemic Challenges in Philippine Education. Each theme will be explored through personal anecdotes and reflections, contextualized within relevant literature, and discussed in terms of its implications for individual educators and the broader educational system. This discussion aims to bridge the gap between personal experience and systemic understanding, offering insights that may inform policy, practice, and future research in educational leadership and administration.

Theme 1. Navigating Role Ambiguity

This table compares various aspects of the researcher’s teaching and administrative roles, including primary focus, daily tasks, relationships, decision-making, and time management. It also includes a column for my reflections on these changes.

Aspect	Teaching Role	Administrative Role	Personal Reflection
Primary Focus	Student learning and classroom management	Policy implementation and institutional management	Initially, I am adjusting to the broader scope of administrative duties.
Daily Tasks	Lesson planning, teaching, grading	Meetings, report writing, decision-making	Adjusting to prioritize tasks without clear guidelines. I am still learning the basics of administrative roles.
Relationships	Direct interaction with students and fellow teachers.	A broader network, including other administrators and stakeholders	I missed close student interactions but appreciated new professional connections with the teachers, school heads, and division

Decision-making	Mostly classroom-level decisions	Institution-wide decisions with a broader impact	administrators. I felt the weight of responsibility in making decisions affecting many.
Time Management	Structured around class schedules	More fluid, often with competing priorities.	I found it challenging to balance multiple demands without a clear structure.

The first table illustrates the stark contrasts between teaching and administrative roles, highlighting the challenges faced during the transition. As a teacher, the primary focus was on student learning and classroom management, with daily tasks revolving around lesson planning, teaching, and grading. The administrative role, however, shifted the focus to policy implementation and institutional management, involving more meetings, report writing, and high-level decision-making. This shift was accompanied by a change in professional relationships - from direct interactions with students and fellow teachers to a broader network, including other administrators and stakeholders. The nature of decision-making also changed significantly, moving from classroom-level decisions to those with institution-wide impact. Time management became more fluid in the administrative role, often involving competing priorities, which contrasted sharply with the structured teaching schedule. Personal reflections indicate initial feelings of being lost in the broader scope of administrative duties, struggles with task prioritization, and a sense of missing close student interactions while appreciating new professional connections. The weight of responsibility in making decisions affecting many was keenly felt, as was the challenge of balancing multiple demands without a clear structure.

Theme 2. Reconciling Pedagogical and Administrative Identities

This table explores how your professional identity shifted, comparing aspects such as core values, skills utilized, professional growth, measures of success, and job satisfaction between your pedagogical and administrative identities. It also notes the challenges you faced in integrating these identities.

Aspect	Pedagogical Identity	Administrative Identity	Integration Challenges
Core Values	Student-centered learning, educational impact	Efficiency, policy compliance, institutional growth	I struggled to maintain focus on student needs within administrative constraints

Skills Utilized	Teaching methodologies, subject expertise	Leadership, communication, organizational skills	I had to develop a new skill set while feeling the loss of daily teaching practice
Professional Growth	Focused on improving teaching methods	Centered on leadership and management development	I felt torn between developing admin skills and maintaining teaching expertise
Measure of Success	Student achievement and growth	Institutional performance metrics	Grappled with new definitions of professional success
Job Satisfaction	Derived from student progress and engagement	Stemmed from institutional achievements and improvements	Experienced periods of doubt about a career change and impact

The second table delves into the complex process of reconciling pedagogical and administrative identities. It reveals how core values shifted from focusing on student-centered learning and direct educational impact to concerns about efficiency, policy compliance, and institutional growth. The skills utilized in each role differed significantly - teaching methodologies and subject expertise gave way to leadership, communication, and organizational skills. Professional growth focus also changed from improving teaching methods to developing leadership and management capabilities—the measure of success transformed from student achievement and growth to institutional performance metrics. Job satisfaction, once derived from student progress and engagement, now stems from institutional achievements and improvements. The integration challenges column highlights the struggle to focus on student needs within administrative constraints, the need to develop a new skill set while feeling a loss of daily teaching practice, and grappling with new definitions of professional success. This table effectively captures the internal conflict and periods of doubt experienced during the career transition, reflecting the complex process of reshaping professional identity.

Theme 3: Adapting to Systemic Challenges in Philippine Education

This table focuses on specific Philippine education system challenges, how they impacted your teaching and administrative roles, and the personal strategies you developed to adapt to them.

Challenge	Impact on Teaching Role	Impact on Administrative Role	Personal Adaptation Strategies
Resource	Limited teaching	Difficult budget	Developed creative

Constraints	materials and technology	allocation decisions	solutions and prioritization skills
Policy Changes (MATATAG K-10)	Adapting teaching methods to the new curriculum	Implementing and overseeing systemic changes	Engaged in continuous learning and professional development
Urban-Rural Disparities	Varied teaching experiences and challenges	Managing diverse needs across different contexts	Developed more inclusive and flexible approaches
Teacher Retention Issues	Experienced firsthand as a teacher	Tasked with developing retention strategies	Used personal experience to inform policy recommendations
Workload and Administrative Burdens	Struggled with non-teaching tasks	Responsible for streamlining processes	Implemented efficiency measures based on teaching experience Incorporated financial
Financial Literacy among Educators	Personal challenge as a teacher	Developing support programs for staff	management into professional development initiatives

The third table focuses on the systemic challenges in Philippine education and how they were experienced differently in teaching and administrative roles. Resource constraints, a perennial issue, affected teaching through limited materials and technology, while in administration, it manifested as difficult budget allocation decisions. Policy changes, such as implementing the MATATAG K-10 curriculum, required teachers to adapt their methods while administrators oversaw these systemic changes. The table also highlights the urban-rural disparities in the Philippine education system, which presented varied teaching experiences and challenges and required administrators to manage diverse needs across different contexts. Teacher retention issues, experienced firsthand as a teacher, became a strategic concern in the administrative role. The challenge of workload and administrative burdens shifted from a personal struggle with non-teaching tasks to a responsibility for streamlining processes for others. Financial literacy among educators, once a personal challenge, became an area for developing support programs as an administrator. The personal adaptation strategies column reveals how these experiences informed policy recommendations, led to the implementation of efficiency measures, and shaped professional development initiatives. This table effectively illustrates how firsthand experience of educational challenges as a teacher informed and enhanced the administrative approach to addressing these issues.

Relation to Existing Literature on Career Transitions in Education

The findings of this study align with and extend the current understanding of career transitions in education (C. P. Casingal, 2022a), particularly the shift from teaching to administration. The theme of navigating role ambiguity resonates with Spady (1985) The concept of "role discontinuity" describes the challenges educators face when moving between distinct professional roles. This study provides a contemporary, Philippine context for this concept, highlighting how role ambiguity manifests in a developing educational system.

The process of reconciling pedagogical and administrative identities observed in this study echoes Marshall & Mitchell (1991) work on transforming professional identity during the transition to educational leadership. However, while Marshall and Mitchell focused primarily on acquiring new skills and knowledge, this study emphasizes the emotional and philosophical adjustments required, particularly in balancing student-centered values with system-level responsibilities.

The theme of adapting to systemic challenges in Philippine education contributes to the growing body of literature on educational leadership in developing countries (Oplatka*, 2004). This study provides a nuanced, first-hand account of how macro-level challenges translate into day-to-day administrative dilemmas, extending our understanding of the contextual nature of educational leadership.

Implications for Policy and Practice in Educational Administration

The findings of this study have several implications for policy and practice in educational administration, particularly in the Philippine context:

1. **Structured Transition Programs:** The challenges faced during the transition suggest a need for more structured support programs for educators moving into administrative roles. This aligns with Browne-Ferrigno (2003) recommendation for formalized leadership preparation programs that address technical skills and identity transformation.
2. **Mentorship Initiatives:** This study highlights the value of peer support and senior guidance and underscores the potential benefit of formal mentorship programs for new administrators. This echoes findings by Daresh & Playko (1994) on the positive impact of mentoring on new principals' effectiveness and job satisfaction.
3. **Bridging Policy and Practice:** The study reveals the importance of administrators understanding classroom realities and system-level challenges. This suggests a need for policies encouraging regular interaction between administrators and teachers, fostering a more integrated approach to educational leadership (Fullan, 2015).
4. **Contextual Leadership Development:** The unique challenges faced in the Philippine education system highlight the need for leadership development programs tailored to the specific context of developing educational systems as Hallinger & Walker (2017) argue in their work on school leadership in Asia.

Limitations of the Autoethnographic Approach

While autoethnography provides rich, in-depth insights into personal experiences, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations:

1. **Subjectivity:** Autoethnography's profoundly personal nature means the findings are inherently subjective. While efforts were made to enhance trustworthiness through strategies like member checking and peer debriefing, the results remain grounded in one individual's experience (Ellis et al., 2011).
2. **Generalizability:** This study's findings, based on a single transition experience, may not be generalizable to all educators transitioning to administrative roles. However, as Stake (1995) It argues that the value of such studies lies in their potential for naturalistic generalization, where readers find resonance with their own experiences.
3. **Retrospective Bias:** Retrospective reflection may be subject to recall bias, particularly in integrating past teaching experiences. However, contemporaneous journaling for the transition period mitigates this to some extent (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000).
4. **Cultural Specificity:** While the Philippine context provides valuable insights into educational leadership in developing countries, it also limits the direct applicability of findings to other cultural contexts. This echoes Dimmock & Walker (2005) emphasis on the importance of cultural context in educational leadership studies.

Despite these limitations, the autoethnographic approach provides a unique window into the lived experience of transitioning from teaching to educational administration, offering valuable insights that complement broader, more generalizable studies in the field.

Comparative Analysis: Transitioning to Educational Administration in Global Contexts

The transition from teaching to educational administration, as experienced in the Philippine context, shares commonalities with similar transitions in other countries while presenting unique challenges. In the United States, Browne-Ferrigno (2003) found that new administrators often struggle with role conception and identity transformation, mirroring this study's findings on role ambiguity and identity reconciliation. However, the U.S. context often provides more structured pathways to administration, including specific degree programs and licensure requirements, which are less formalized in the Philippines.

In contrast, a study by Moorosi & Bush (2011) in South Africa revealed that transitioning educators face significant challenges related to gender and racial dynamics in leadership roles, an aspect less prominently featured in the Philippine experience. The South African context also highlighted the importance of mentorship in successful transitions, aligning with this study's emphasis on peer support and guidance from senior administrators.

Research from the United Kingdom by Thompson et al. (2021) emphasized the impact of policy changes on the roles of educational leaders, echoing this study's findings on adapting to systemic

challenges. However, the UK context showed a greater focus on marketization and competition between schools, factors less prevalent in the Philippine public education system.

In East Asia, a study by Hallinger & Walker (2017) across five societies (China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, and Taiwan) highlighted how cultural values significantly shape leadership practices. Their findings on the importance of hierarchical relationships and collective decision-making processes contrast the more individualistic challenges faced in the Philippine transition experience.

Australia presents another exciting comparison point. Prado Tuma & Spillane (2019) found that transitioning educators in Australia often struggle with the shift from a teaching-focused to a management-focused role, similar to the experiences documented in this study. However, the Australian context emphasized financial management skills, reflecting differences in school funding models.

This brief comparative analysis reveals that while the core challenges of transitioning from teaching to administration – such as identity shift, role adaptation, and systemic navigation – are relatively universal, the specific manifestations of these challenges are deeply influenced by national and cultural contexts. The Philippine experience, as documented in this study, contributes to this global understanding by highlighting the unique interplay of personal, professional, and systemic factors in a developing education system.

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