

Paper: “Transitioning to the New Normal in Education: A Case Study of Chinese School Leaders in the Philippines”

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Peer review:

Reviewer 1: Michel Plaisent
University of Quebec at Montreal, Canada

Reviewer 2: Blinded

Reviewer 3: Nyukorong Remy
Stichting Kongregatie FIC, The Netherlands

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Manuscript Title: CHINESE PRIVATE SCHOOL LEADERS IN THE NEW NORMAL: A CASE STUDY	
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Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Rating Result</i> [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
1. The title is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.	5
The title is clearly written; informative that represents the content and captures the importance of the study.	
2. The abstract clearly presents objects, methods and results.	5

Essential details of the abstract are presented such as the objectives of the study, the research methodology, design, data collection and analysis. The findings are sufficient with specific detail and the conclusion was based on the findings and conclusion.	
3. There are few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.	4 or 5
My English is not good enough to comment but the text is easy to read and adequate for academic readers	
4. The study methods are explained clearly.	5
The research design is clearly defined and described. Data collection and data analysis are sufficiently described and referenced. Trustworthiness, rigor and ethical standards are considered in the study.	
5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.	5
The presentation of the results and findings are well organized and is easy to understand. Findings and implication are written in context with supporting vignettes from the research subjects/participants.	
6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	5
The conclusion is adequate but I wonder the relevance of the mention of Mao-Tse-tung's leadership style .	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	5
The references are sufficient for the study and contains enough very recent papers.	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accepted, VERY minor revision nice to do but not needed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Return for major revision and resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reject	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

Comments and Suggestions to the Editors Only:

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Please respond within the appointed time so that we can give the authors timely responses and feedback.

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Reviewer Name: Remy Nyukorong	
University/Country: Stichting Kongregatie FIC, The Netherlands	
Date Manuscript Received: 23-09-2021	Date Review Report Submitted: 27-09-2021
Manuscript Title: Chinese Private School Leaders in the New Normal: A case Study	
ESJ Manuscript Number: 61.08.2021	
You agree your name is revealed to the author of the paper: Yes	
You approve, your name as a reviewer of this paper, is available in the "review history" of the paper: Yes	
You approve, this review report is available in the "review history" of the paper: Yes	

Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Rating Result</i> [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
1. The title is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.	4

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The title is clear and appropriately reflects the subject of the manuscript. However, one of the following suggestions could make the title a lot clearer: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Transitioning to the new normal in education: A case study of Chinese School Leaders in the Philippines. b. A case study of Chinese Private School Leaders in the Philippines: The new normal. c. The role of school leadership in challenging times: Lessons from two Chinese Schools in the Philippines. 	
<p>2. The abstract clearly presents objects, methods and results.</p>	<p>5</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I confirm that the abstract clearly presents objects, methods and results. • The abstract gives an accessible summary of the manuscript. • Key words accurately reflect the content of the manuscript. 	
<p>3. There are few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.</p>	<p>4</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I approve that the manuscript reveals few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes. 	
<p>4. The study methods are explained clearly.</p>	<p>4</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I agree that study methods are explained clearly and sufficiently. • The study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the focus of inquiry and to bring an improved depth of understanding to the research (i.e., to investigate educational leadership in two Chinese basic schools in the Philippines). This approach allows the researcher to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. In studying school principalship in the Philippines, the authors collected data through personal interviews and informed commentary and supplemented with relevant documents. Authors believed that school principals needed to exercise a shared leadership to be successful. Shared leadership is meant to build personal relationship with teachers and staffs in school. School heads need to learn to support teachers and staffs to share their responsibilities. • Standard guidelines were followed. • There are no apparent ethical concerns about the study, particularly since the data was purposively selected and anonymous in nature. There is no individually identifiable participant information in the dataset. 	
<p>5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I approve that the results are clear and do not contain errors. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authors told a coherent story, i.e., what happened? What was discovered or confirmed. • The outcome was a critical analysis of the data collected. Authors described and discussed the overall story formed. Where there were gaps or inconsistencies authors addressed them and suggested ways future research might confirm the findings or take the research forward. 	
6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I support the fact that the concluding remarks are accurate and supported by the content. Conclusions were based on evidence. 	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	
<p>Copious literature references. However, the list is a rich and well-balanced source for readers. Out of the study's 52 referenced materials, 23 references were written within 5 years of the article's (intended) publication date. The 52 references for this relatively small study seemed to be on the high side (excessive?). Breaking new ground in a well-documented topic sometimes must be performed without the support of recent academic journal articles.</p>	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	
Accepted, minor revision needed	X
Return for major revision and resubmission	
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

Overview

Crisis leadership matters, primarily because “it is often the handling of a crisis that leads to more damage than the crisis event itself. Learning from a crisis is the best hope we have of preventing repeat occurrences.” (James and Wooten, 2011, p. 61). When it comes to education however, Smawfield (2013) stated that “one of the most under-represented areas within the literature. is the capture of knowledge on how schools have been able to respond to real-life disasters” (p. 9).

The article, “*Chinese Private School Leaders in the New Normal: A Case Study*”, by Pecson Gina and Pogoy Angeline explored the different changing roles and leadership practices of two Chinese Basic school administrators in the Philippines in the new normal with its challenges and opportunities. The rationale for the study was described by the researchers as a need to investigate the leadership and institutional challenges that accompany crises, the roles that educators are required to play and the structures and behaviours that seem to be successful. Thus, the article located the discussion in the broader context of change, sustainability, leadership theories, and leadership styles

and shed light on the multiple and complex roles that the school principal must play to steer the staff to improve school standards and make it into an ever-evolving learning organization.

More specifically, this study examined school leaders' responses during the COVID-19 pandemic. The centrality of principals in the leadership and management of change puts a premium on the existing knowledge base as to how and why some principals cope more successfully than others. Mutch (2015) noted that "12–24 months after the onset of [a crisis seems] to be a useful time to start to review what has happened" (p. 187). This study is thus timely and appropriate. Educational scholars and school leaders need evidence from the field to inform the theoretical and conceptual approaches that have dominated during the global crisis.

The body of the paper

- A well-written introduction:
 - Sets out the argument
 - Summarizes recent research related to the topic
 - Highlights gaps in current understanding or conflicts in current knowledge
 - Establishes the originality of the research aims by demonstrating the need for investigations in the topic area
 - Gives a clear idea of the target readership, why the research was carried out and the novelty and topicality of the manuscript
- In general, the text was clear and easy to read. The manuscript makes a good contribution to the knowledge base on change leadership.
- However, the manuscript is confusing for the first couple paragraphs. On page 1, authors made the case that the topic has not been investigated in several years and that new research is required. "To date, there has been no research that has been reported since 2012 on the roles of school leaders among the Chinese Private Schools in the Philippines." This point is only valid if researchers can point to recent developments in data gathering techniques or to research in indirectly related fields that suggest the topic needs revisiting. Clearly, authors can only do this by referencing recent literature.
- For more clarity and simplicity, authors should break the introductory section of the article into main sections (i.e., pages 2 & 3), such as, School leadership within the OECD Countries, School leadership in the Philippines etc.
- The first line under the Introduction section, authors should write endangered species between inverted commas, i.e., "endangered species".
- The four research questions stated on pages 3 & 4 appeared to be logically driven by the identified gap in the academic literature.

Concluding Remarks:

- This article is not very straightforward in the beginning, and it is not until the second and third pages that you realize where the article is headed. To have

more people be engaged and read the whole article, it needs a new, more concise introduction followed by the literature review.

- Authors should critically study comments and address them.
- Overall, it is a solid, well-written paper with an important message for school leaders going through a difficult moment. The piece, when taken as a whole, is relevant and very convincing in theory and lays out a concrete way of approaching this complex problem.

Comments and Suggestions to the Editors Only:

Please, refer to reviewer's concluding remarks to authors (last section of page 4).