

Path-goal Leadership Styles and Performance of School Heads in the Implementation of Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP)

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Abstract

This study assessed Path-goal leadership styles and School Head's performance in BE-LCP implementation as perceived by the Elementary school heads and teachers of Candelaria School Districts, Division of Quezon. It aimed to find out the: (1) School Head's preferred leadership style; (2) School Head's performance in implementing BE-LCP; (3) significant difference between perception of respondents in extent of performance in BE-LCP implementation; (4) significant relationship between the leadership styles and extent of performance in; and (5) leadership styles influencing the extent of performance in BE-LCP implementation.

Descriptive correlation design of research was employed to 26 public Elementary School Heads and 373 teachers, using total enumeration.

School Heads preferred Participative leadership style very highly in implementing the BE_LCP while directive leadership is least preferred.

Respondents viewed the school heads to perform to the high extent implementation of BE-LCP in terms of focus on learning, ensuring quality teaching -learning process, safe operations and well-being and protection.

There is no significant difference between the perception of the respondents in school head's performance in BE-LCP implementation, as well as in leadership styles they used.

There is significant relationship between the leadership style and the extent of performance in BE-LCP implementation. And, leadership styles affect extent of performance in BE-LCP implementation.

It was recommended that school heads continue to evaluate their performance through a feedback mechanism, keep upgrading themselves in terms of leadership, and work hand in hand with the teachers, and have follow up/ parallel study using other variables.

Keywords: *Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan; Path-Goal Theory; Performance; Leadership Styles*

1. Introduction

In response to the challenge that education must continue even in times of crisis, the Department of Education (DepEd) has laid out its Basic Education Continuity Plan (BE-LCP), which will serve as the framework for class implementation. Recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all solution, the learning

continuity plan was created in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders to take into account the variety of contexts from which learners, teachers, and schools come (DepEd, 2020t). An assessment of the BE-level LCP's of implementation, specifically how school heads carry out their roles, will assist DepEd in evolving and improving its learning continuity plan. This could make the plan more responsive, flexible, and adaptable to the changing context or situation of educators on the front lines.

BE LCP has 7 domains namely: (1) focus on learning; (2) ensuring quality learning process; (3) provision of learning resources; (4) safe operations; (5) well-being and protection; (6) education financing; and (7) reaching the marginalized. The effectiveness of BE-LCP lies in the manner, behavior and leadership style of the school heads implementing it. Realizing the importance of proper leadership in carrying out the school goals and targets, school leaders may try different leadership styles that would suit the school needs and environment.

With the demands to maintain quality education amid pandemic, educational leaders seek approaches that will allow their learning institution improve. Hence, Path-Goal leadership theory, as a contingency leadership style, could be anchored to in this study. School leaders can exhibit one of four leadership styles: directive, supportive, participatory, and achievement-oriented. (Northouse, 2010)

The researcher believes that in time of pandemic, when everyone is still on the process of embracing the new normal set up, Path Goal is leadership will help the school leaders achieve their goals and targets. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of the BE-LCP is determined by the manner, behavior, and leadership style of the school leaders who implement it.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan

Adoption of Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (Be-LCP), by the virtue of DepEd Order 12, s. 2020, was introduced to Philippine basic education system as a response to the need to continue the delivery of quality education amid pandemic. Its primary aim is to ensure learning continuity through K to 12 curriculum adjustment and provision of learning resources, as well as safeguarding the health, well-being and safety of school stakeholders. (DepEd, 2020q)

School heads, as the steward of the learning institutions, play vital role in the effective implementation of BE-LCP. As stated in the School Effectiveness Toolkit crafted by DepEd-Bureau of Human Resource and Organizational Development (BHROD), one of the major tasks of a school head is to work with school partners in achieving the school's goals and objectives for the year. (DepEdt). School heads are expected to implement the 7 domains of BE LCP such as focus on learning, ensuring quality teaching-learning process, safety and well-being, safe operations, provision of learning resources, educational financing, and reaching the marginalized.

2.2. Path-goal Leadership Styles

Path-Goal Theory is classified as a contingency approach since it focuses on the interaction of variables in a leadership scenario and patterns of leadership behavior. In the study conducted by Alanazi (2013), the proponent take a different approach to leadership research. Contingency or situational theories are based on the assumption that there is no unique leadership style that applies to all situations.

In implementing BE-LCP, school heads apply leadership styles that may help them achieve their goals. School heads may adopt Path-goal Theory leadership styles which include directive style, supportive style, participative style and achievement-oriented style. Path-Goal theory is centered on concentrating on employee motivation in order to improve employee performance and happiness. Leaders who are active in a Path Goal form of leadership tend to exhibit the following forms of conduct, according to Peter Northouse (Nothouse 2010) in *Leadership: Theory and Practice*. This behavior includes (1) defining goals in a clear and understandable manner, (2) clarifying the path so that followers and employees can easily follow it, (3) removing obstacles so that individuals can perform above expectations and achieve their goals, and (4) providing emotional and technical support so that workers are motivated and can achieve their goals to the best of their abilities. (Anderson, 2016)

2.3. Related Studies

However, true leadership has never been easy, and it has grown even more difficult in light of today's pressures: the need to distinguish, execute strategy, build enduring value, drive change initiatives, and cultivate future talent. In the same way, school heads are also confronted with different challenges. Today's public school principals must be able to manage a complex human organization in the fast changing dynamics of schools and society, as well as be an effective leader in a wide range of areas, with a growing emphasis on all students' achievement (Wise, 2015). Great leaders, like effective teachers, use a variety of abilities and tactics depending on the situation. On a typical school day, leaders must transform from authority figure to colleague, coach, and therapist, juggling a variety of positions as the need arises. (Kerrissey & Edmondson, 2020).

This present study is related to the study of Villar, et al (2021) which dealt with School Heads' Leadership Practices in the New Normal, Administrative Disposition, and Readiness of the Public School in Laguna. This is also in same view with the study of Tilahun (2014) entitled The Relationship Of School Principal's Leadership Styles To School Performance In Secondary School Of Agnwa Zone At Gambella National Regional State, as well as to study of Semanero (2021) on The Implementation of Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan and the Administrative Functions of School Leaders.

School leaders have adopted a variety of leadership styles to meet the demands of the school and prepare for the new normal education. (Villar, R.B., et al, 2021). This is therefore in consonance with the findings of Talihun (2014) when he concluded in his study that principals will not be able to significantly increase school performance unless they are well-versed in management and leadership abilities.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The researcher believes that the success of Basic Education-Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) implementation is heavily influenced by the school principals' demeanor, behavior, and leadership style.

Leadership styles in the paradigm include Directive Style, Supportive Style, Participative Style, and Achievement-oriented Style. On the other hand, school leaders' performance in implementing the BE-LCP in terms of learning focus, ensuring quality of teaching and learning, safe operations, well-being and protection is important. With the goal of improving school leaders' BE-LCP implementation, this investigation was drawn on the four leadership styles described in Path-Goal Theory. This investigation included a descriptive-quantitative analysis of school leaders' performance in implementing the school's BE-LCP, specifically in each of the identified domains.

Research Paradigm

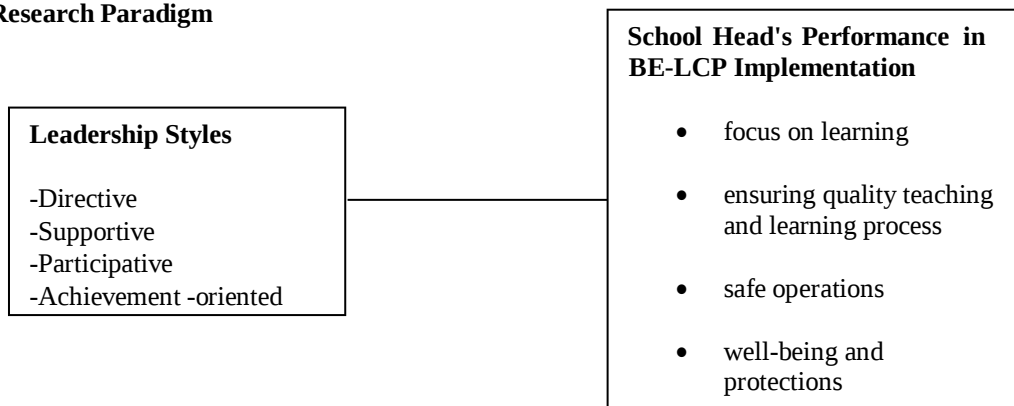


Figure 1. Schematic diagram shows the Path-goal Leadership Styles (Independent Variable) and the School Heads' performance in BE LCP implementation (Dependent Variable). This is guided by the assumption that leadership style affects the level of performance of the school heads in BE LCP implementation

3. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were posited in the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the perception of school head and teachers in the extent of performance in the implementation of BE LCP.
2. There is no significant relationship between the leadership style applied by the school head and the extent of performance in the implementation of BE LCP.
3. The extent of School Head's performance in the implementation of BE-LCP is not predicted by the leadership style he/she applies.

4. Methodology

This study is a descriptive correlational research which involved the leadership style and extent of School Head's performance in implementation of Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) as perceived by the respondents. Respondents were 26 Elementary School heads and 373 teachers from Candelaria East and West School Districts, using total enumeration. The researcher utilized a researcher-made questionnaires, with Part I for identifying leadership style using a modified version of path-goal theory leadership style questionnaire (Northouse, 2020). Part II was about the extent of performance of school heads in implementing the BE-LCP in four domains : focus on learning, ensuring quality teaching-learning process, safe operation, and well-being and protection. After securing permit from the office of the Schools Division Superintendent of Quezon, the researcher coordinated with the officials of Candelaria East and West Districts. The researcher administered the survey questions through Google form online platform and limited face-to-face distribution. The following statistical treatment were used: Mean and Standard Deviation for determining average response on leadership style and extent of school head's performance, t-test for significant difference in the perceptions of two set of respondents, the Pearson Product Moment of Correlation for relationship between the leadership style and School Head's performance, and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for leadership styles' influence on the school heads' extent of performance.

5. Result

5.1 Testing of Hypotheses

Table 1. Significant Difference between the Perception of School Heads and Teachers in Extent of School Head's Implementation of Be-LCP

Domains of BE-LCP	Respondents				t-test for Equality of Means		
	school heads		teachers		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	M	SD	M	SD			
focus on learning	4.25	0.54	4.38	0.64	-0.960	397	0.338
ensuring quality of teaching and learning process	4.27	0.73	4.35	0.69	-0.627	397	0.531
safe operations	4.57	0.81	4.48	0.71	0.601	397	0.548
well-being and protection	4.48	0.82	4.48	0.68	0.053	397	0.958

Table 1 exhibits the significant difference between the respondents' perception on School Head's extent of implementation of BE-LCP. It can be gleaned that there is no significant difference between the perception of the two groups of respondents in terms of focus on learning (sig. 2-tailed= 0.338 vs $t = -0.960$), ensuring quality teaching-learning process (sig. 2-tailed = 0.531 vs. $t = -0.627$), safe operations, (sig. 2-tailed=0.531 vs $t = 0.601$), and well-being and protection, (sig. 2-tailed = 0.958 vs. $T=0.053$).

The similarity of the perception is due to the fact that while school heads focus more on supervisory functions and the teachers focus on delivery of instructions, they have the same end goal, that is to deliver quality instruction to the learners. At the same time, both school heads and the teachers' primary concern is to ensure safety of themselves, the learners and other stakeholders in the school while giving their best to achieve the school goals and targets. In addition, both school heads and teachers viewed the importance of wellness and protection in workplace, thus strict adherence to health protocols is observed.

However, the result was on the contrary with the result of the study conducted by Abril (2020), wherein he found out that there is significant difference in the perception of Secondary school heads and teachers in the implementation of BE-LCP in terms of access, quality and governance. He further supported that the difference in perception was due to the fact that school heads and teachers have different roles in implementation of BE-LCP.

Table 2. Relationship Between the leadership style and Extent of BE-LCP Implementation by School Heads

	focus on learning	ensuring quality of teaching and learning process	safe operations	well-being and protection
Directive leadership	.660**	.732**	.710**	.701**
Supportive leadership	.653**	.737**	.745**	.735**
Participative leadership	.662**	.742**	.748**	.719**
Achievement-oriented leadership	.657**	.740**	.745**	.733**

Table 2 depicts about relationship of each Path-goal leadership style on domains of BE-LCP. It can be noted that there is positive relationship between directive leadership and performance of school heads in implementing the four domains identified. On the other hand, it can be noted that there is also existing positive relationship between supportive leadership and extent of implementing BE-LCP in terms of focus on learning ($r=.653$), ensuring quality of teaching and learning process ($r=.737$), safe operations ($r=.745$), and well-being and protection ($r=.735$).

The results imply that the more supportive the school head, the more the teachers perform better. It can be noted that the manager(school leader) will work with the employee until he or she is empowered and skilled enough to perform responsibilities with less monitoring in the future. This conduct is required in situations where jobs or relationships are psychologically or physically demanding, just like this time of pandemic. (Samson, 2019)

In addition, the extent of implementing focus on learning, ensuring quality teaching-learning process, safe operations and well-being and protection is highly related to participative leadership with r values = .662, .742, .748, and .719 respectively.

Since participative leaders encourage involvement of all school stakeholders in every educational endeavor, the teachers' participation in instruction development and maintaining safety and wellness of the school play vital role in better performance of the school as a whole. At the same time, both school heads and

teachers realize they need to build trust and get to know each other better because their combined knowledge and drive shape their daily work and the team's eventual success. (Psychologia, 2021)

The extent of performance of school heads in BE LCP implementation is as well related to achievement-oriented leadership. It is confirmed by the results: focus on learning ($r=.657$), ensuring quality teaching-learning process ($r=.740$), safe operations ($r=.745$), and well-being and protection (.733).

Achievement-oriented leaders tend to elicit the best results on teachers' and learners' performance all the time. Hence, with proper motivation, the school can achieve its targets and goals.

Table 3. Predictors of Focus on Learning Based on Perceived Leadership Styles

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
2 (Constant)	1.935	0.136		14.205	0.000
Participative leadership	0.286	0.078	0.355	3.675	0.000
Directive leadership	0.274	0.080	0.332	3.442	0.001

$R = .674$, $R \text{ squared} = .454$, $\text{Adj. } R \text{ squared} = .452$; $F(2,396) = 164.826$, $p = .000$

Table 3 presents the regression analysis for leadership styles predicting the extent of performance of School Head in BE-LCP implementation focusing on learning.

The multiple regression revealed that Participative and Directive leadership styles contributed significantly to the regression model, with $F(2,396) = 164.826$, $P = < .01$, and accounted for 45.40% of the variation accounting to the focus in learning. The remaining 54.60% are accounted for some variables that are not included in the regression.

Hence, it can be noted that participative and directive leadership are factors that significantly account for the extent of school head's performance in terms of focus on learning. Thus, this result produces the final regression:

$$FL = 1.935 + 0.286 (PL) + 0.274 (DL)$$

where: FL = Focus on Learning

PL = Participative Leadership

DL = Directive Leadership

The equation affirms that for every one (1) point increase in respondent's perceived extent of performance in terms of focus in learning, there is 0.286 point increase in perceived participative leadership, holding the other variable constant. Moreover, the model predicts for every one (1) point increase in respondent's perceived focus on learning, there is 0.274 increase in School Head's directive leadership, holding the other variable fixed.

School Heads and teachers work together to achieve the school goals and targets in ensuring that learning is delivered at its best. While the school head directs the teachers on carrying on the programs, projects and activities stipulated in BE-LCP, the teachers, as instructional facilitator, use various strategies to deliver learning to all kinds of learners. the cooperation of the school heads and the teachers is vital in the development of learning process aligned to the one prescribed by Department of Education. In addition, school heads seek the participation of the teachers in every endeavor so that tasks would be carried out easier.

Table 4. Predictors of Ensuring Quality of Teaching and Learning Process based on Perceived Leadership Styles

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.345	0.133		10.125	0.000
Participative leadership	0.261	0.089	0.298	2.946	0.003
3 Achievement-oriented leadership	0.250	0.091	0.277	2.737	0.006
Directive leadership	0.179	0.086	0.201	2.093	0.037

R = .757, R squared = .573, Adj. R squared = .570; F (3,395) = 176.740, p = .000

Table 4 presents the regression analysis for the perceived leadership styles in School Head's extent of performance in terms of ensuring quality teaching-learning process. Stepwise multiple linear regression was conducted with perceived leadership styles as the independent variables and measure of extent of school head's performance in ensuring quality teaching-learning process as dependent variables.

The regression analysis revealed that participative leadership ($p=0.003$) and achievement-oriented leadership ($p=0.006$), and directive leadership ($p=0.037$) have significant contribution to the extent of performance of school head in ensuring quality teaching-learning process, as shown by the result $F(3,395) = 176.140$, $p = .000$. and accounted for 57% of the variation accounting to extent of performance in ensuring quality teaching-learning.

This implies that in order for the teaching and learning process to be best observed, teachers need to be involved in every school endeavor especially when it comes to planning the curriculum, setting the target for learners' achievement, and be directed by the school heads through class observations and giving technical assistance in terms of delivery of instruction.

The model suggests that participative, achievement-oriented, and directive leadership styles are factors that significantly influence the extent of performance of school heads when ensuring quality teaching-learning process. Thus the final regression is:

$$EQTL = 1.345 + 0.261PL + 0.250AOL + 0.179DL$$

where: EQTL = ensuring quality teaching-learning

PL = Participative leadership

AOL = Achievement-oriented leadership

DL = Directive leadership

The equation further justifies that for every one (1) point increase in respondent's extent of performance in ensuring quality teaching-learning process and , there is 0.261 point increase in perceived participative leadership, 0.250 increase in perceived achievement leadership, and 0.179 increase in directive leadership, holding that the variable is constant.

The measure of successful implementation of BE-LCP in terms of quality teaching and learning is reflected by how the school head, teachers and learners perform. Despite the current situation, quality education must be delivered to the learners. The cooperation and collaboration of the school's internal and external stakeholders is vital in ensuring the delivery of good instruction to the learners.

Table 5 presents the regression analysis of the perceived leadership style predicting the implementation of safe school operations under BE-LCP. It can be noted that participative leadership ($p = 0.009$), achievement-oriented leadership ($p = 0.008$), and supportive leadership ($p=0.029$) play significant role in predicting the extent of school head's performance in maintaining safe school operation.

Table 5. Predictors of Safe Operations based on Perceived Leadership Styles

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.365	0.135		10.070	0.000
Participative leadership	0.254	0.097	0.281	2.624	0.009
³ Achievement-oriented leadership	0.249	0.093	0.267	2.688	0.008
Supportive leadership	0.213	0.097	0.233	2.198	0.029

R = .763, R squared = .583, Adj. R squared = .579; F (3,395) = 183.712, p = .000

It is confirmed by the results $F(3,395) = 183.712$, $p = .000$, and accounts for 58.30% of the variation in favor of participative, achievement-oriented and supportive leadership styles, while the remaining 41.70% are accounted to some other variables not included in the regression analysis. Hence, the suggested final regression is:

$$SO = 1.365 + 0.254PL + 0.249AOL + 0.179 SL$$

Where: SO = Safe Operations

PL = Participative Leadership

AOL = Achievement-oriented Leadership

SL = Supportive Leadership

The equation further implies that for every one (1) point increase in extent of performance in safe operations, there is 0.254 point increase in perceived participative leadership, 0.249 point increase in perceived achievement-oriented leadership, and 0.179 point increase in supportive leadership. Ensuring the safety of the learners, teachers, school head, and other school personnel amid pandemic is one of the primary concerns of the schools under BE-LCP. Evaluation of the possible risks and threats is an integral part of maintaining safe and child-friendly school environment (DepEd, 2020q). The continuing threat of Covid-19 in the country brings about unprecedented changes in basic education. While the department continues to design and implement various alternatives to maintain delivery of quality education, school heads and teachers should work hand in hand to keep the school a safe place to go to.

Table 6. Predictors of Well-being and Protection Based on Perceived Leadership Styles

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
2 (Constant)	1.514	0.135		11.230	0.000
Supportive leadership	0.349	0.080	0.394	4.336	0.000
Achievement-oriented leadership	0.331	0.082	0.366	4.031	0.000

R = .747, R squared = .558, Adj. R squared = .555; F (2,396) = 249.645, p = .000

Table 6 displays the regression analysis for the extent of performance on maintaining well-being and protection based on perceived leadership.

The stepwise multiple linear regression was conducted with extent of performance in maintaining well-being and protection of school stakeholders as dependent variable and perceived leadership style as independent variable.

The analysis revealed that both supportive ($p = 0.000$) and achievement-oriented leadership styles ($p = 0.000$) are significantly contributing to the extent of performance of school head in maintaining the well-being and protection of school personnel and stakeholders. The above-mentioned leadership styles accounted for the 55.80% of the variation in accounting to extent of performance in maintaining well-being and protection, while the remaining 44.20% are accounted to other variables not mentioned in the regression analysis. The result is supported by $F(2,396) = 249.645$ and $p = 0.000$ at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, supportive and achievement-oriented leadership styles are factors that significantly account for the performance of school head in terms of well-being and protection, which produces the final regression:

$$WP = 1.514 + 0.349SL + 0.331AOL$$

Where:

WP = Well-being and Protection

SL = Supportive Leadership

AOL = Achievement-oriented Leadership

The equation further implies that for every one (1) point increase in extent of performance in well-being and protection, there is 0.349 point increase in perceived supportive leadership and 0.331 point increase in perceived achievement-oriented leadership, holding that the variable is constant.

In this time of pandemic, everybody's foremost concern is the well-being of school stakeholders while continuing the delivery of quality instruction.

6. Discussion

The study reveals the following findings:

1. Among the Path-goal Leadership Styles, Participative leadership is very highly preferred by the school heads as perceived by the two groups of respondents. On the other hand, directive leadership is the least preferred among the four.

1. While implementing BE-LCP, both sets of respondents perceived the School Heads perform to the high extent in terms of focus on learning, ensuring quality teaching-learning process, safe operations, and well-being and protection.

2. The perception of School Heads and the teachers in leadership styles that the school heads employ while implementing BE-LCP do not significantly differ. Likewise, there is also no significant difference between the perception of school heads and teachers in the extent of School Head's performance in BE-LCP implementation.

3. There were significant relationship between the leadership styles and extent of performance in implementing BE-LCP.

4. The leadership styles, singly or in combination, can influence the extent of performance in BE-LCP implementation in terms of focus in learning, ensuring quality teaching-learning process, safe operation, and well-being and protection.

7. Conclusion

1. There is no significant difference between the perceptions of School Heads and teachers in the extent of School Head's performance in implementing BE-LCP. Thus, the null hypothesis posited, that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of the two sets of respondents, is accepted.

2. There is significant relationship between the leadership styles and the extent of School Head's performance in BE-LCP implementation. Thus, the null hypothesis posited, that there is no significant relationship between the leadership style used by school head and the extent of performance in implementing BE-LCP, is rejected.

3. The leadership styles, singly or in combination, affects the School Head's extent of performance in BE-LCP implementation. Thus, the null hypothesis given, that leadership styles do not influence the performance of the school head, is not sustained.

8. Recommendation

Based on the above findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Since the leadership styles and extent of performance in BE-LCP have significant relationship, it is recommended that school heads continue to evaluate their performance through a feedback mechanism. This may help them monitor and assess the school performance and attainment of goals and targets while implementing BE-LCP. In addition, this will also help them define and align their leadership style based on the context of their school needs.
2. Since the extent of performance in BE-LCP implementation is singly or in combination affected by leadership styles, it is suggested that the school heads keep upgrading themselves in terms of leadership, and work hand in hand with the teachers so that both parties meet at the middle. This may help both sides to improve and provide immediate and appropriate intervention when conflicts arise.
3. A follow up or parallel study may be conducted using other variables since this will open opportunities to deepen the understanding on BE-LCP.

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