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# Parents Home Learning Strategies During the COVID-19 Pandemic Using Colaizzi Method

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## Abstract

Numerous Filipino families grapple with challenges due to home learning amid the pandemic. This study delved into parents' experiences and strategies regarding their children's secondary education at home. Utilizing Colaizzi's descriptive design, data was gathered through interviews. Eight parents from Tambulig, Zamboanga del Sur, with children in secondary home learning and no household COVID-related health issues, participated. Results revealed that while prioritizing their children's education, parents faced daunting challenges, leading them to opt for home learning. Balancing educational needs, work, and household duties posed significant hurdles. Concerns arose regarding distractions in modular and online setups, such as noise and peer influence. Despite these obstacles, parents remained committed to supporting and fostering a conducive learning environment at home, adhering to government safety measures.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Home Learning, Colaizzi, Parents

## 1. Introduction

Home Learning is the new mode of learning since the coronavirus pandemic happened. The virus greatly affected the economy and education sector as well (Zhu et al., 2020). Home learning has become the new normal to adapt to the situation and to continue the learning of the students. Since COVID-19 is far from being over, and the education sector also understands the situation of the students in the Philippines, flexible learning was introduced to reshape the way of instruction. This means that learning programs are developed to meet the needs of students, schools, and communities (Joaquin et al., 2020).

Implementing a new normal in education poses a lot of challenges for many Filipino students since not everyone will be able to afford to buy smartphones, laptops, tablets, personal computers, secure internet connections, and others. It is not normal for a Filipino parent to buy since many have lost their jobs during the pandemic. Unfortunately, the attempt to slow the spread of the virus via home learning has affected the parents as well. The responsibility of facilitating the learners has shifted from the teachers to the parents. Parents are now spending

more on resources to set up a new learning environment at home. Distance learning lowers the family's spending priority in terms of the child's daily budget, whereas online learning increases the family's financial burden by increasing the use of electricity due to the internet connection. Power failures, on the other hand, obstruct students' ability to complete activities owing to often disconnection in their online meetings. Parents take note of the learners' difficulties, such as expeditious lessons and unmet learning objectives due to too many activities in a short amount of time (Agaton and Cueto, 2021).

Parents were forced to take part in the education of their children who were limited to their homes. All educational activities, which have previously been handled by schools and teachers, were now coordinated by the parents. Parents have aided distant education in a variety of ways, including eliminating technological obstacles, providing required internet infrastructure, organizing the physical environment at home, and monitoring and motivating children to participate in courses and other educational activities (Demir and Demir, 2020).

Learning inequity is addressed by modular learning, which makes education more accessible to all. It is used to supplement the learning that a child needs in schooling. With the help of online communication apps online, learning is possible, and printed modules are being used offline to ensure the teaching and learning to happen between teachers and the students (Agaton & Cueto, 2021).

With these initiatives at hand to address this educational situation, it is evident that it burdened the parents even more by facilitating home learning for their children while simultaneously working (Bhamani et al., 2020). Up to this day, the sources of study regarding the strategies of parents are limited specifically in the Philippines. Not much has been conducted related to it. Thus, the aim of this study is to examine the participants' experiences and strategies in home learning.

## 2. Method

This qualitative study is grounded in Colaizzi's descriptive design, which helps to understand and explain the experiences of research participants as they give an account of their experiences (Polit & Tatano Beck 2010; Wertz et al., 2011). This design was selected because the focus of the study was to describe parents' experiences having children attending secondary education and their perceptions of online learning (Patton 2002; Tolentino, 2016; Elley-Brown 2015).

For this research study, eight (8) parents from Tambulig, Zamboanga del Sur having children at a secondary level, who are attending Home Learning, spending time to formally facilitate their children learning, and have no COVID or related morbidities in the house were chosen as participants of this study.

Interviews that lasted for 90 minutes were conducted to gather data, which were then analyzed through Colaizzi's method (1978) of data analysis. This is a distinctive seven-step process providing a rigorous analysis, with each step staying close to the data. These steps are the following: transcribe and familiarize, extract significant statements, formulate meanings, clustering themes, create an exhaustive description, produce fundamental structure, and validate findings.

## 3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Participants' Cognition on Home Learning

| Formulated Meanings  | Cluster Themes | Emergent Theme                         |
|--|----------------|--|
| Parents do not have an idea about home learning.                               | Awareness      | Perceived home learning as a challenge |
| Parents are doubtful and worried about the learning of their children.         | Uncertainty    |  |
| The parents have an idea of what home learning is through similar experiences. | Knowledge      |  |
| Parents perceived home learning as difficult.                                  | Difficulty     |  |

|   |          |  |
|---|----------|--|
| The parents are okay with home learning as they are afraid of their children's health interacting with many people due to the pandemic. | Security |  |
|---|----------|--|

The findings of the study revealed the emerging theme "**Perceived Home Learning as a Challenge.**" The interview revealed that the participants experienced home learning as a challenge because they had no idea about what it was. Although they may have heard of it, they have not experienced it themselves. This made them doubt and worry about their children's learning. They are not sure about this new arrangement or what the students will learn, especially since they are responsible for their children's learning. It is difficult for parents to balance work and guiding their children at the same time.

This shows that they entrust their children's learning to the teachers. Therefore, there is concern whether the lessons will take place at home, as mentioned in the interview. The responses revealed that the participants are not sure what their children will learn with such an arrangement. In addition, they find similarities in teaching and monitoring their children's assignments even before the outbreak of the pandemic.

Prior to adopting home schooling, parents were briefed on their responsibilities in this new learning format. They were informed that they would be responsible for receiving, delivering modules to their children, and providing guidance. Additionally, parents expressed concerns about the health risks associated with sending children to school, hence preferring to continue their education at home.

Table 2: Challenges Experienced in Home Learning

| Formulated Meanings  | Cluster Themes        | Emergent Themes                                  |
|--|-----------------------|--|
| One of the challenges in home learning is internet connection.   | Internet Connectivity | Availability of Home Learning Resources          |
| The problem among parents is spending money to provide for their children's education by buying load, paying tuition fees, and other school materials.   | Financial Problem     |  |
| Children do not have proper phones at the beginning of home learning and gradually buy new phones as parents feel the need to buy them. They are also concerned about radiation and distraction.   | Learning Devices      |  |
| During the submission and receiving of modules, parents struggle with the lack of public vehicles near the school and the sun's heat.  | Transportation        |  |
| The parents are aware of the difficulties of the modules and how their children struggle to answer them.   | Difficulty            |  |
| Teachers are sometimes not available whenever there are concerns regarding the module.   | Unavailability        |  |
| Parents are doing the laborious tasks so that their children can study undisturbed, even though sometimes students use school requirements as an excuse.   | Laborious Tasks       | Parents are burdened with hefty responsibilities |
| Parents have experienced rushing the modules just to submit them on time. Parents working while also having children attending school pose difficulty in monitoring their children's learning. Parents multitask to cope with the new normal. Due to their job schedules, parents cannot guide their children. | Time Management       |  |
| The close neighborhood can distract students from being tempted not to study or not being able to learn due to noises from the natural environment.  | Environment           |  |
| Home learning causes stress to parents. Home learning can be unsettling for parents because their minds are constantly preoccupied.  | Distress              |  |
| Parents believe that home learning is unfair because some parents are illiterate and unable to teach their children.   | Literacy              |  |

|   |                  |   |
|---|------------------|---|
| It is difficult for parents to have uninterested children in answering their modules.   | Lack of Interest | Parents observe that home learning is ineffective because students become too dependent in their responsibilities |
| Due to addiction to playing online games, children have a poor sleeping routine and are unwilling to answer their modules.  | Distractions     |   |
| Parents believe that modules are ineffective because they are sometimes the ones who respond to them rather than the students. They do not take it seriously because the modules provide an answer key. | Dependence       |   |

With the surge of COVID-19, this is the first time that most parents experienced and facilitated learning personally. However, because of a lack of experience, the participants perceived home learning to be complicated. It seems hard for parents to think about the materials like gadgets that are needed in this new normal, which are not necessary during face-to-face classes in addition to the new responsibilities of teaching their children. Home learning has never been introduced to all parts of the Philippines before. Thus, because of the pandemic and the implementation of home learning at all levels of education, both parents and students face many challenges, like internet connectivity, financial problems, transportation, laborious tasks, time management, unavailability of teachers, disruptive environment, lack of interest, distractions, distress, literacy, and dependence.

Table 3: Strategies Applied in Managing the Challenges of Home Learning

| Formulated Meanings   | Cluster Themes      | Emergent Theme   |
|---|---------------------|------------------|
| According to the parents, several internet platforms assist in responding to modules.   | Internet Assistance | Parental support |
| Parents seek the support of friends, teachers, and other knowledgeable individuals, including themselves, to assist their children in answering the modules.<br>Parents make use of the financial aid from the government for their children to attend home learning. | Support             |                  |
| Parents give their children the freedom to answer their modules and give them ample time to relax if necessary.   | Freedom             |                  |
| Parents carry out their responsibilities in home learning, such as submitting modules, guiding, and disciplining.   | Accountability      |                  |
| When their children perform well, parents are less concerned and merely provide guidance.   | Guidance            |                  |

When the researchers asked the participants about their strategies to manage home learning challenges, their answers revealed the emergent theme **“Parental Support.”** Research has repeatedly demonstrated that parents/guardians’ engagement in their children’s education positively impacts students’ learning (Lusse et al., 2019; Pushor, 2012).

Parents have a significant role in implementing home learning and continuing the children’s education. With this new normal, many parents have encountered challenges during home learning as it was the first time, they have experienced it. Because of this, parents devised different strategies to manage these emerging challenges. Due to the learning that takes place at home, parents have made a lot of adjustments just to provide a better learning environment for their children, including materials and devices that are needed to connect with the teachers and classmates and answer their modules. However, some resources did not meet the required assistance. According to parents, several internet platforms are useful for their children, like Facebook, Brainly, Google, and YouTube. These materials are said to help answer the children’s modules, especially when parents do not have an idea about them. Parents responded that they use their phones to search for answers on Google and YouTube.

The study also revealed that the participants would ask for support from higher-grade students or tell their children to ask their classmates about the lesson they do not understand. They seek the help of those knowledgeable individuals to assist or guide their children on what to do. Due to the difficulty of the lesson, there were cases in which the students were not able to answer the. The participants revealed that aside from assistance from other people, there are times when they must answer the module themselves.

Table 4: Strategies Applied in Facilitating Home Learning for the Children

| Formulated Meanings  | Cluster Themes | Emergent Theme       |
|--|----------------|----------------------|
| Parents limit their children's extra-curricular activities and provide a suitable learning atmosphere.<br>When children are out of control, parents use physical discipline. | Discipline     | Parental Involvement |
| Parents are the ones that submit the modules on time and are more likely to answer when their children are no longer able to complete them.                                  | Replacement    |                      |
| Parents monitor and update their children's modules regularly to ensure that their work progresses.  | Monitoring     |                      |
| Having tutors available is beneficial when learning at home.   | Tutorial       |                      |
| Parents comply with the government's decision and aim to guide their children during home learning.  | Compliance     |                      |
| Parents' show moral, emotional, financial, and technical support in home learning and looking closely at their children's condition.   | Support        |                      |

Amidst the backdrop of widespread school closures and the swift transition to home learning, the burden of educational support has increasingly fallen upon parents' shoulders (Garbe, 2020). Traditionally, within the confines of the classroom, teachers adeptly navigate content delivery, pedagogy, and effective communication. However, the abrupt shift to remote learning in the face of this new normal has left a void in the real-time delivery of concepts, procedural clarifications, and the provision of comprehensive student support (Hawkins, 2020). Consequently, parents have found themselves thrust into the forefront, assuming a more active role in facilitating their children's learning journeys.

Within this evolving educational landscape, the researchers delved into the strategies adopted by participants to navigate the intricacies of home learning. What emerged prominently from their inquiries was the overarching theme of "Parental Involvement." In this role, parents have not merely served as makeshift instructors but have become integral partners in their children's educational endeavors, providing guidance, encouragement, and supplementary educational resources. This newfound responsibility has underscored the vital role of parental engagement in fostering effective learning experiences amidst the challenges posed by remote education.

Parents take the most significant role during this time because they oversee their children's learning. Parents carry out their responsibilities in home learning, such as guiding and monitoring their children in doing their modules. They are focused on their obligations in this new normal, which is a strategy for managing many responsibilities. Parents do not use physical discipline and use other ways to monitor their children's activities. Submitting the modules is one of the responsibilities of the parents since children are not yet allowed to go to school. They would sometimes have to pay for vehicles to pass the modules on time. They also shared their experience where they give their children the freedom to do their modules whenever they want. Parents do not force their children to answer, especially when they feel tired doing it and too difficult to respond, if they get it done on time. The interview shows that parents are less worried about their children's learning when they know they perform well. It was less work for parents since they would no longer need to teach them personally; instead, they are only a guide. Parents narrated their cognition, challenges, managing the challenges, and how they facilitated their children during home learning. Findings also revealed that Discipline, Replacement, Monitoring, Tutorial, Compliance, and Support are the strategies of parents to facilitate their children's home learning.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study used interview data to derive research findings. Six main themes emerged during the data analysis, including: Perceived Home Learning as a Challenge, Availability of Home Learning Resources, Parents are Burdened with Hefty Responsibilities, and Parents Observe that Home Learning is Ineffective because Students are Becoming too Dependent on their Responsibilities, Parental Support, and Parental involvement. For this research study, an exhaustive description of the lived experiences of the participants was developed through comprehensive data collection, interpretation, and analysis.

The study showed that home learning brought about by the pandemic placed the parents in very challenging situations. While there is significant importance for the parents to continue the learning of their children, health risks were also a primary concern. Thus, they settled with learning at home despite the possibility of having additional loads in their work. It exposed them to various difficulties like providing the necessary learning resources, work, parental responsibilities, and managing their home. Parents also displayed their concern about what the students would learn in modular and On-Line learning setups because of factors that distract the learners like noise, peers, and games. They continue to assist the learners by providing the necessary support and guidance to make the home conducive to learning. Parents also opt to follow the measures taken by the government to ensure the safety of their children while continuously learning.

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