PARENTS' VIEWS AS CO-TEACHERS IN HOMESCHOOLING DURING THE COVID - 19 PANDEMIC

IRENE E. EGUICO
Faculty of the College of Teacher Education, La Salle University, Ozamiz City, Philippines and on secondment as Chancellor of DMC College Foundation, Dipolog City, Philippines.
E-mail: irene.eguico@lsu.edu.ph

MARIA NANCY QUINCO-CADOSALES
Faculty of Cebu Normal University, Cebu City, Philippines.
E-mail: cadosalesm@cnu.edu.ph

WENNY M. CASEROS
Chancellor of La Salle University, Ozamiz City, Philippines.
E-mail: wenny.caseros@lsu.edu.ph

ATTY. DIANA CHARLETTE T. CONCHA
Dean, School of Tourism and Hospitality Management and at the time the Vice – President for Administration and Admission, DMC College Foundation, Dipolog City, Philippines.

VIDA S. OMAMALIN, MN
Vice – Dean, Allied Medical Sciences and at the time the Quality Assurance Director, DMC College Foundation, Dipolog City, Philippines.
E-email: vidabsaint@yahoo.com

Abstract

Parents play an important role in the learning process of their children during COVID - 19 pandemic. The presence of the parents counts in their children's remote learning. They become the co-teachers as they supervise the completion of the various learning activities. Homeschooling during the lockdown was manageable among students with the assistance and guidance of the parents who acted as co-teachers. The study used Creswell's [7] quantitative approach to survey research. There were 1152 parents among 16 schools in the Philippines who responded to the study. The parent-respondents were parents of students in the grade school, junior high school, senior high school, and tertiary levels. The questionnaire was validated by school leaders and was distributed using Google Form. The data revealed that the majority of the parent-respondents were females, Roman Catholics, 40 – 49 years old, and whose children are enrolled in senior high school. The parents viewed that the online learning modality gave their children more time to learn and perform the activities. They observed that their children's academic performance is greatly affected by distractions which could be addressed by including essential topics in the module. Further, the parents suggested that formation activities prioritized the career pathing of the students.

Keywords: parents, co-teachers, homeschooling, COVID - 19, pandemic, quantitative research method, Philippines

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted negatively on education systems around the world, affecting almost 1.6 billion students across 190 countries and continents. Closures of schools and other learning spaces have touched 94% of the world's student population, with rates as high as 99 percent in low- and lower-middle-income nations [38]. Due to the physical closure of schools, a quick shift to remote learning occurred, putting more responsibility for learning on the shoulders of parents and guardians. Parents stated that balancing obligations, learner motivation, accessibility, and learning outcomes were difficult for them [13]. The ideal method for ensuring learning continuity among students across the various grade levels was homeschooling as a byproduct of remote learning. In order to support their child's ongoing development, the parents later joined the school as co-teachers.

The international health crisis caused by the COVID - 19 pandemic had a significant impact on school operations at all levels. Schools re-engineered their learning continuity plans to thrive in the face of adversity while maintaining their relevance in students' education [32]. The pandemic had drastically changed the educational landscape from the usual face-to-face interactions to the online mode of teaching delivery. Schools contextualized their strategies on how to deliver quality education either modular, flexible learning, or pure online modality. Amidst the COVID - 19 pandemic, teaching and learning continued as regular activities in schools. Daniel [8] noted that many schools made use of technology in teaching and learning. Also, Pacheco [27] concluded that Covid-19 has transferred education online, physically isolating children from one another, from their teachers, and, most importantly, from the in-person dialogical encounters that classrooms may provide. The public area vanishes into the pre-designed screen space made possible by software, and the computer now serves as the material foundation for a curriculum of things rather than people.

During the pandemic, this shift in educational practices involved parents in their children's schooling. They instantly became co-teachers in offering educational support to their children's learning. According to Darling-Aduana et al. [10], the COVID-19 pandemic has caused several reforms in K-12 education. The shift to digital curriculum and instruction, as well as the transformation of parents and caregivers into co-teachers, are two of the most significant shifts. Adults at home support what is done in the classroom, allowing the home to function as a classroom [1]. In a survey conducted by Azubuike and Aina [4], 83% of the parents were actively helping their children's education during this pandemic. However, the majority of them complained that they do not know how to explain the lessons to their children because they do not have the training to do so. Further, Ozdemir [26] narrated in her auto ethnography how she participated in her son's remote learning by becoming visible and 'zooming' into the virtual classroom as a Muslim mother. It can be gleaned in these scenarios the importance of the quality of the home as a learning environment and the significant roles of the adults in supporting the remote learning of the child.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused an unforeseen catastrophe in education

systems around the world. All stakeholders in education, from governments to school leaders to teachers, students, and parents, are attempting to mitigate the harm. The foundation of the education system in the 'new normal' is a collaboration between educators and parents, as they are the primary point of contact for pupils for all educational needs. All stakeholders should work together to support this cooperation so that children can continue to obtain an education during the pandemic [28]. In a pandemic like COVID - 19, there is an increase on the demand of the presence of the parents or significant others in supervising the learner while doing the academic tasks. Both the presence and supervision of a more educated adults may influence not only one's academic success but as well as the motivation of the child to participate in the varied virtual school activities. Of the child. As Puspita [31] mentioned that parents are there to assist children with tasks such as writing, reading, and completing schoolwork. They must also be taught and informed in order to supervise their children's online learning involvement and engagement [2]. They supervised their children in the learning process [17] and embraced a very challenging responsibility as co-teachers [12]. Parents play a crucial role so that their children will be able to master the competencies that they need to learn. However, some parents do not have the knowledge and skills to teach their children. Others are busy in their jobs that they cannot supervise their children's learning [23].

This scenario in the educational arena at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic fueled the researchers to gain a better understanding of the role of parents as co-teachers in the homeschooling of their children.

2. Research Objectives

This study described the role of parents as co-teachers during the COVID - 19 pandemic. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following:

1. What is the demographic profile of the parent-respondents in terms of:

> 1.1. gender;

> 1.2. religion;

> 1.3. age; and

> 1.4. grade level of their child or children?

2. What is the extent of the effect of the factors/challenges to students' academic performance as perceived by the parents/guardians?

3. What suggestions were given by the parent-respondents to address the challenges encountered?

4. What formation programs were suggested by the parent-respondents?

3. Methodology

To address the study's research objectives, the quantitative approach of survey research was applied. According to Creswell [7], survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of a group's trends or opinions by researching a sample of that population and drawing generalizations. The respondents of the study were parents and guardians whose children are enrolled in elementary, junior high school, senior high school, or tertiary levels from the 16 schools in the Philippines who were supervised by one of the Catholic universities in the country. There were 1152 parents and guardians who responded to the survey using the Google Form. The questionnaire was researcher-made. School leaders from the respondent schools were requested to evaluate the content validity of the questionnaire. Ethical considerations were observed in the study. The identity of the schools and parent-respondents were treated with the utmost confidentiality. It was assured that no hazards in any form were done with the parent-respondents.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the salient findings of the study as enumerated in the research objectives.The demographic profile of the parent-respondents describes their gender, religion, age, and grade level of their children as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Parent-Respondents

Demographics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender (n=1152)		
Female	970	84.20
Male	182	15.80
Religion (n=1152)		
Roman Catholic	1043	90.54
Non-Catholic	109	9.46
Age (n=1062)		
20-29	76	7.16
30-39	297	27.97
40-49	450	42.37
50-59	200	18.83
60 and above	39	3.67
Grade Level of Child (n=1158)		
Grade School	308	26.60
Junior High School	181	15.63
Senior High School	660	57.00
Tertiary	9	0.77

The data reveal that the majority (84.20%) of the parent-respondents are females. The data imply that more mothers are engaged in the schooling of their children compared to the fathers which were also evident in the study of Quinco-Cadosales et al. [32]. The majority (90.54%) of the parent-respondents are Roman Catholics which was also evident in the cross-sectional study of Grande et al. [14] that revealed the dominant religious affiliation among the nursing students. The parent-respondents were aged between 40-49 years old (42.37%). This datum is similar to the findings of Dugue et al. [11] that most of their parent-respondents were also aged 41 years old and above. This

is the current study, more than half (57%) of them are parents of Senior High School students. As revealed in the data, there is diversity in the demographic profile of the parent-respondents as to their sex, religion, age, and grade level of their children.The respondents' perception of the advantages of online learning is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Parents' Perception of the Advantage of Online Learning

	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Students have more time to learn and do other activities.	3.62	Agree
Online learning saves time and provides an opportunity for self-study among students.	3.55	Agree
Online learning is more convenient and flexible than ordinary classes.	3.43	Agree
Grand Mean	3.53	Agree

During the homeschooling, the students were exposed to both synchronous and asynchronous modes of remote learning. However, parents viewed online learning as advantageous for their children. Roy et al. (2022) mentioned that during the COVID - 19 pandemic, parents faced much greater responsibility in supporting their children's learning both online and offline. In this recent study, the parent-respondents agreed that online learning gave students more time to learn and do other activities (WM=3.62). At the onset of the COVID - 19 pandemic, students did remote learning. Since they are staying at home, they have enough time to perform the learning tasks. As Chang [5] suggested in her study on resilience in the pandemic, students' individual learning approaches and behaviors have a greater impact on their learning outcomes than the modality in which they are taught. The parents agreed that online learning saves time and provides an opportunity for self-study (WM=3.55). During the pandemic, the students were no longer commuting to school which took much of their time. Instead, online learning allowed the students to learn at their own pace and time. Both the synchronous and asynchronous modes of learning forced them to learn on their own. Roy et al. (2022) claimed that during the pandemic, parents observed the child's difficulty staying on task, lack of motivation, remote learning factors, and lack of social interaction as challenges. However, Singal et al. [35] emphasized that self-study among medical and dental students influenced their effective learning during COVID - 19.

To keep children attentive, teachers must offer more interactions and hands-on activities as revealed in this study. They considered that remote teaching was an excellent technique to keep track of students' development. Students may study at their own pace and time with asynchronous exercises, which help them learn the lessons better [21]. In the same vein, parents in the current study claimed that online learning is more convenient and flexible than ordinary classes (WM=3.43). As observed by

Table 3. Extent of Influence of the following Factors/Challenges to Students' Academic Performance

Factors perceived to affect students' academic performance	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Dealing with distractions	4.53	Most greatly influenced
2. Providing support to children	4.04	Greatly influenced
3. Poor internet connection	4.03	Greatly influenced
4. Adjusting to a new learning environment and modality	3.86	Greatly influenced
5. Less discussion/interaction with classmates and teachers	3.76	Greatly influenced
6. Difficulty in understanding the Learning Management System (e.g. Google meet, FB messenger, etc.)	3.69	Greatly influenced
7. Accessibility of teachers for clarifications regarding the lesson	3.67	Greatly influenced
8. Trustworthiness of remote assessment	3.64	Greatly influenced
9. Difficulty in understanding the module content due to the nature of the subject	3.62	Greatly influenced
10. Loss of motivation/interest	3.60	Greatly influenced
11. Self-paced learning	3.60	Greatly influenced
12. Unreasonable deadlines and many requirements	3.60	Greatly influenced
13. Difficulty in understanding the lesson	3.59	Greatly influenced
14. Insufficient explanation in the module	3.58	Greatly influenced
15. Managing time properly	3.56	Greatly influenced
16. Availability of learning devices (i.e. laptops, tablets, smartphones) to access the internet and view the online materials.	3.53	Greatly influenced
17. Lack of teacher guidance on how to do the activities/tasks	3.51	Greatly influenced
18. Unstable and unpredictable class schedule and deadlines	3.5	Greatly influenced
19. Inadequate module contents	3.50	Greatly influenced
20. Unclear or ambiguous instructions in modules	3.50	Greatly influenced
21. Experiencing anxiety and frustrations	3.49	Greatly influenced
22. Lack of finances to support use of gadget	3.49	Greatly influenced
23. Availability of functional gadgets	3.46	Greatly influenced
24. Travel related problems	3.46	Greatly influenced
25. Speed and cost of internet	3.45	Greatly influenced
26. Physical and mental health issues	3.44	Greatly influenced
27. Inadequate class time	3.40	Moderately influenced
28. Financial Problem	3.40	Moderately influenced
29. Unclear copies of the modules	3.35	Moderately influenced
30. Attitude towards studying/schooling	3.34	Moderately influenced
31. Unfavorable (home) learning environment	3.30	Moderately influenced
32. Having a hard time understanding the whole module	3.05	Moderately influenced
Average of Weighted Mean	3.58	Greatly influenced

parents, students doing remote learning had more time to finish the learning tasks at their own pace and time. However, the parents need to be vigilant to monitor their children. The current scenario on parents' views on students' online learning was opposite to what Aureo et al. [3] found in their study on the readiness of parents to embrace the shifting of learning materials from printed to digital form.

The parent-respondents believed that there are factors or challenges as the students performed in different learning areas. The extent of the influence of the challenges on the academic performance of the students is shown in Table 3.

In this present study, 32 factors were identified as having an impact on students' academic performance. As seen in the data, parents claimed that dealing with distractions has the greatest impact on their children's academic performance. This finding backed-up Morgan's [25] claim that many students had learning difficulties during the COVID - 19 pandemic, which may have resulted in psychological harm. Furthermore, Li [20] stated that when face-to-face learning switched to online interaction, students experienced issues, one of which was being distracted by social media and other technological constraints. These research findings hold true to what the parent-respondents in this present study reveal.

It can be noted in the data that twenty-five factors were perceived to greatly influence the academic performance of the students as viewed by the parent-respondents while six factors moderately influenced. Providing support to children, poor internet connection, adjusting to a new learning environment and modality, and less discussion/interaction with classmates and teachers were considered by parents as top factors that affect the students' academic performance. It can be noted that the parent-respondents' presence motivated their children to perform well academically. A similar finding was noted by Tabbada et al. [36] who inferred that parents of senior high school students help and guide their children in their school activities. According to Helali et al. [16], parental support motivated students to study, which in turn had a significant impact on their academic achievement. However, in the study conducted by Dangle and Sumaoang [9], one of the challenges in distance learning is the parents' inability to teach their children academically.

Experiencing poor internet connection or even unavailability of the internet is a common concern among students in online learning [19] which is also revealed by the parent-respondents in this present study. Also, Singal et al. [35] claimed that internet connectivity concerns were proved to be time consuming. On the onset of the COVID – 19 pandemic, most of the concerns of the leaners and parents were on the lack of gadgets, insufficient mobile data allowance, and unstable internet connection while shifting to distance learning. Tupas and Linas-Laguda [37] also stressed that the lack of facilities like gadgets or computer sets and connectivity is a unique challenge. Their study found that more than 6.9 million cited unstable mobile and internet connections, while over 6.8 million noted lack of available gadgets and equipment suitable for distance learning. In conclusion with this claim, Mathew et al. [22] elaborated on the various training needs that are to be provided to students when they shift to an online mode of learning which include positive discipline, skills training technological skills, and attitude change. In the Philippine setting, students are challenged by poor internet connectivity most especially in remote areas. Also, the number of uses in the household might cause connectivity issues. Sabariah and Riinawati [34] identified various disadvantages of online learning, including the high cost of using the internet

and, in most cases, slow speed, addressing technological challenges among students, and providing students with digital literacy instruction.

 Homeschooling strengthened the bond between the home and school partnership. The parent-respondents as the co-teachers of their child's education provided possible solutions to what they viewed as hindrances in the effective homeschooling of their children. The parent-respondents expressed their suggestions to address the challenges mentioned in Table 3 are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. The Parent-Respondents' Suggestions to Address the Challenges/Problems

Suggestions	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. The essential topics only be included in the module	4.38	Strongly Agree
2. No deduction of points for delayed submission of requirements	4.35	Strongly Agree
3. Academic break/freeze	4.35	Strongly Agree
4. Teachers collaborate to reduce number of performance tasks given to students	4.30	Strongly Agree
5. Teachers follow a strict schedule strictly to avoid conflict with other subjects.	4.29	Strongly Agree
6. Organize schedule of class activities for students to follow	4.28	Strongly Agree
7. Design and implement a counseling program	4.24	Strongly Agree
8. Extend semester (for college) / school year (for basic education)	4.22	Strongly Agree
9. Reduce requirements (i.e. assignments, activities) in every subject	4.21	Strongly Agree
10. Review and evaluate the (online/offline) modules in terms of instructions/directions, activities, number of lessons, deadlines, assessment, distribution, etc.	4.21	Strongly Agree
11. Review school fees especially on charges for use of facilities	4.19	Agree
12. Conduct student consultation to provide students venue to raise their concerns	4.19	Agree
13. Give more consideration to students who have difficulty with Internet connection	4.15	Agree
14. Utilize easy to understand learning materials	4.15	Agree
15. Conduct a survey on preferred learning modalities of students – online, offline printed modules, offline non-print modules (USB), etc.	4.15	Agree
16. Adjust deadlines based on abilities of students	4.04	Agree
17. Improve internet connectivity	3.80	Agree
18. Conduct (limited) Face to Face learning	3.63	Agree
19. Increase class/instruction time	3.33	Neutral
Average of Weighted Mean	4.13	Agree

Parents strongly agreed that the following be done to address the challenges/problems as experienced by the students during homeschooling: include essential topics only in the module; no deduction of points for delayed submission of requirements; academic break/freeze; teachers collaborate to reduce the number of performance tasks given to students; teachers' follow schedule strictly to avoid conflict with other subjects; organize the schedule of class activities for students to follow; design and implement a counseling program; extend semester (for college) / school year (for basic education); reduce requirements (i.e. assignments, activities) in every subject; and review and evaluate the (online/offline) modules in terms of instructions/directions, activities, number of lessons, deadlines, assessment, distribution, etc. Mohamad et al. [24] concluded that as the usage of online learning grows, parents should be given more information on how to help their children thrive in this new type of education.

Table 5. Formation Activities Recommended for Students

Recommended Formation Activities	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Webinar on career pathing	4.43	Very greatly needed
2. Skills Development Program	4.35	Very greatly needed
3. Values Formation	4.33	Very greatly needed
4. Spiritual and faith formation programs	4.26	Very greatly needed
5. Leadership formation	4.26	Very greatly needed
6. Physical fitness program	4.25	Very greatly needed
7. Reading program	4.24	Very greatly needed
8. Webinar on time management	4.23	Very greatly needed
9. Webinar on how to sustain attention in class	4.23	Very greatly needed
10. Webinar on blended learning and Online Distance Learning	4.23	Very greatly needed
11. Mental health program	4.21	Very greatly needed
12. Psychological debriefing	4.20	Greatly needed
13. Stress/anxiety management webinar	4.19	Greatly needed
14. Webinar on improving students' motivation/engagement	4.19	Greatly needed
15. Webinar on building self-confidence	4.16	Greatly needed
16. Orientation program for students and parents on new learning modalities	4.15	Greatly needed
17. Webinar on adapting to the new norm	4.11	Greatly needed
Average of Weighted Mean	**4.24**	**Very greatly needed**

Given their critical role in their children's academic achievement, parents' perceptions should not be overlooked as an important component of a student's academic improvement. Furthermore, Jankovic et al. [18] noted that parents encouraged students to learn at home during the pandemic as a supplement to regular schooling. However, as demonstrated in the current study, the parent-respondents made several ideas that should be addressed in order to resolve the obstacles or concerns associated with homeschooling.Parents were also asked what formation activities they will recommend for students. Their responses are presented in Table 5.

As shown in Table 5, eleven formation activities were recommended by parents/guardians as very greatly needed for their children. These formation activities are webinar on career pathing; skills development program; values formation; spiritual and faith formation programs; leadership formation; physical fitness program; reading program; webinar on time management; webinar on how to sustain attention in class; webinar on blended learning and online distance learning; and mental health programs. Indeed, these formation programs may help students maintain psychological balance. As Morgan [25] revealed that isolation caused harmful effects to students. Remote learning without interaction with significant others may cause psychological problems. In the same vein, Pietrabissa and Simpson [29] posited that resilience is linked to the depth and strength of one's personal connection that involves groups and communities. Similarly, the parent-respondents in this present study recommended formation activities for their children to help them cope with the varying demands of remote learning that might hamper their psychological well-being. Moreover, this finding supports the claim of Istiqomah [17] that parents helped the formation of the character of children during distance learning. Moreover, Claver et al. [6] emphasized that policymakers may establish and incorporate reforms in the curriculum that focus on relearning academic components, core values, and discipline, among other things to help students during online learning.

During the pandemic, the results of this cross-sectional study by Harjule and Agarwal [15] revealed a substantial disparity between preferred means of studying online and traditional classroom approaches. While learning online under a school closure scenario, school children's screen time increased significantly. This was one of the leading sources of worry and mental health concerns among Indian schoolchildren and their parents. Similarly, the parent-respondents in this current study suggested that schools offer mental health programs, stress/anxiety webinars for their children.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

During the COVID - 19 pandemic, the learning environment was the home. Parents played an important role as co-teachers in homeschooling in ensuring the students' learning continuity. They became teachers' collaborators in coaching students to comply with the learning activities in both synchronous and asynchronous learning modes. Parents as co-teachers were able to monitor their children's academic progress in remote learning. During the lockdown, their observations and ideas helped schools to

enhance the quality of their services. As a whole, parents greatly influenced the academic performance and success of their children in homeschooling during the lockdown in the midst of the pandemic.

Disclosure and Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in the conduct, completion, and publication of the study.

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