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Exploring the Experiences of Senior High School Parents in Online Learning Context

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A B S T R A C T S

As a remedy to the nearly shutting down of education owing to the spreading cases of COVID-19 all across the world, face-to-face classrooms where students could go to school were transitioned into online learning. As a result, parents are forced to help their children throughout their online learning. This study aims to explore and reveal the various experiences of Senior High School parents during online learning, how the transition from face-to-face learning to online learning affected their daily lives, and how the parents handled these changes. This qualitative study applied the Phenomenological Research design. Moreover, to analyze the data gathered, Thematic Analysis was utilized. The participants of the study were residents of the province of Sultan Kudarat, and parents whose child is enrolled in Sultan Kudarat State University – Laboratory High School, the Philippines. The participants were chosen through the Random sampling technique specifically the lottery method. According to the responses, parents have no choice but to support their children morally despite the differences in schedules inside the household. It was revealed that their children's online learning serves as a distraction because they are having trouble balancing their time between performing their work and assisting in their children's online learning. Moreover, the parents' thoughts regarding e-learning vary depending on their situations. On the other hand, parents still believe that pursuing education in this time of pandemic will help their children to continue absorbing knowledge.

A R T I C L E   I N F O

1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted industries worldwide, particularly the education sector. For continuing education, shifting from traditional classroom lectures to online learning is now the greatest solution (Chiu *et al.*, 2021; Condino, 2021; Hoang & Le, 2021, Mahyoob, 2020; Widayanti & Suarnajaya, 2021; Ying *et al.*, 2021). Remarkably, more than half a billion youth have already been constrained into becoming virtual-school learners as they seek refuge in conventional educational contexts. In a conventional context, a paternal contribution is a crucial determinant of student success. Parental support has been shown to contribute to students' learning achievements in a virtual classroom (Borup *et al.*, 2014; Feng & Cavanaugh, 2011; Lee & Figueroa, 2012; Makrooni, 2019; Woofter, 2019).

In the Philippines, higher education institutions have attempted to leverage technology and offer online classes and learning experiences as a substitute for in-class time to maintain the continuance of education despite the lockdown. Because everyone was quarantined, families had more time to spend together. The family, as a cell, operates solely with love and respect, and it controls comprehension, affection, sacrifice, and childcare. As an upshot, Parents frequently struggle to comprehend their roles in their children's online education. Parents have mixed emotions about virtual learning. Some parents feel very close to their children's classwork, whereas others see it as additional responsibility. One of the most complex and advantageous components of online learning for parents is keeping their children on track while trying to complete their classwork in the former and interactions with the children's instructors in the latter.

Several factors may limit parental participation in distant learning settings, including a deficiency of internet access, an absence of interest in using technology, and a lack of digital self-efficacy. Pre-pandemic investigation on virtual school milieus revealed that children who spend much time in an online environment have their guardians become their motivators and primary learning mentors to achieve academic success (Hasler Waters & Leong, 2014). Virtual learners benefit from parental guidance in the following ways: (a) consolidating and managing students' schedules; (b) fostering connections and interactions; (c) checking student engagement; and inculcating students as necessary (Borup, 2016).

Most of the studies presented were conducted in an international context, primarily focused on the school's traditional location-based settings, but parental immersion in online settings can be dramatically different. Parents' online learning skills, struggles, and needs must be carefully observed as clear partners in their children's educational accomplishments. Generally, there have been limited related studies in the local community, and no study examines parents' experiences in online learning in the Senior High School context. Due to the prevailing condition, it is timely to explore this matter as students transition to a virtual environment from face-to-face learning.

Thus, this study aimed to qualitatively investigate and gain insight into the experiences of SHS parents throughout their children's online learning context to serve as a basis for program implementations, policy formulation, and strategic management.

2. METHODS

For this qualitative study, the researchers used a phenomenological research approach. Parents of Senior High School students' experiences were investigated and emphasized. The study was done entirely online, with participants being interviewed using Google Meet. The data was gathered through a semi-structured interview. Thematic Analysis (TA) was utilized to analyze the data.

2.1. Participants of the Study

The participants of the study are five (5) parents whose child is enrolled in Sultan Kudarat State University - Laboratory High School and is a senior high school student. Specifically, the participants must: (a) be Filipino citizens; (b) be a parent whose child is enrolled in Sultan Kudarat State University - Laboratory High School online learning; (c) be a parent whose child is a senior high school student; (d) be a parent whose child is ranging from 16-18 years old; (e) be a parent between ages 40-50 years old; (f) be a resident of Sultan Kudarat Province; (g) be spending at least 1-2 hours monitoring their children's learning; (h) have access to the internet; (i) have accounts on the following social network services: Facebook and Google; (j) either be employed or self-employed; and (k) have the willingness to participate in this study.

2.2. Data Gathering Instruments

The researchers used a semi-structured interview which includes the guide and complement questions to elicit more data from the participants. The guide questions served as a tool to discuss possible themes of the experiences of SHS parents in an online learning context.

2.3. Data gathering procedure

A letter asking for permission to conduct the study was sent to the chairman of Laboratory High School. After obtaining the consent to conduct the study, a pre-survey was conducted to create a list of possible participants. The participants were identified using a random sampling technique. The researchers approached the randomly chosen participants via Facebook Messenger. The informants were asked to read and sign the interview privacy policy, which indicates that they have the right to refuse or withdraw from the interview during the process. The semi-structured interview questions were prepared. The interview of the participants was conducted via Facebook Messenger and Google Meet. The meetings were documented using a screen recorder of the researcher's device. After the interview, the questions were reviewed for any clarification. The recordings obtained from the interviews were transcribed, reviewed (for accuracy), and translated into English by the researchers. All utterances during the semi-structured interview were written verbatim in the transcription table. Afterward, the final transcript interviews were subjected to data analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
3.1. Parents' experiences in sub-theme of change of lifestyle, lack of resources

The participants differentiated how they originally performed their daily routines during the face-to-face classes and the changes and adjustments they made to adapt to their situation child engaging in online learning. The primary purpose of the question asked to create this theme and sub-themes is to determine the reasons, impacts, different perspectives, and how the new modes of instruction affect the parents' everyday life.

The first participant (P1) of this study shared her struggles and experiences with her child's online learning. It is said that the online learning process of the children does not affect their daily lives, but the parents don't feel the presence of their children due to the amount of time sitting in front of the computer for their classes.

The second participant (P2) of the study also answered the same question. The response of the second participant wants to pertain that online learning has been a disadvantage, especially since they lost their work during the pandemic. They had to go farming, which drastically changed their lifestyle. They struggled with the lack of resources like electricity and

internet connection which were major factors for their children's online classes. They had to find a way to provide for their family.

The third participant (P3) also shares their thoughts and struggles. P3 argues that their children devote more time to online learning, and they even use their time to finish their school activities rather than their responsibility in household chores. Parents pity their children because too much school work has been stressing their child, and online learning has already taken up their time to spend for them. They also had to aid their children with specific problems like internet fluctuation and power interruption, which requires the parents to abandon their work and address the issues for their children.

Participant 4's response is identical to that of the second participant (P2); they too had to supply certain devices and facilities that their children need, which put them in a financial bind. The fifth participant (P5) of the study answered the same question and cited their examples and experiences. Participant 5 (P5) shared that online learning is an advantage for their family's financial stability. It has been easier for the parents to limit the school fees such as uniforms and study books because the school now provides online modules. However, there are challenges that both parents and children have been facing in terms of communication. In this situation, the interaction of the parents and the children is now seldom because students are more focused on their online classes, and they need extra time to finish their work.

3.2. Financial impact on sub-theme of additional chores, lack of quality time

Most participants have expressed relief for the massive decrease in money expenditures for their children's academics. Two of the participants said that their home responsibilities had risen as a result of their children being overly concentrated on their lessons which are highlighted under the sub-theme: Additional Chores. For the sub-theme Lack of Quality Time, the parent's response from which we generated this topic stated that their connection with their children has altered since, instead of conversing, their children spend more time with their classes or sleeping. Participant 3 and Participant 4's experiences were similar to participant 1. Their lives were affected by catering to additional chores that their child could not do, which conflicts with the parent's work schedule and personal activities.

According to P1's response, they emphasized that they are having trouble with the chores which are supposed to be done by their child. They are forced to take over the work because their children are busy with online classes, but they cleared that it was not a significant setback. Participant 2's answer proved the theme of financial impact. They said that online classes made their life easier, specifically in finance. Their family's monthly expenses were reduced due to the exclusion of school allowance and transit money for their children.

Participant 3 and Participant 4's experiences were similar to participant 1. Their lives were affected by catering to additional chores that their child could not do, which conflicts with the parent's work schedule and personal activities. The responses of P5 and P2 are the same regarding the positive effect of online learning on their lifestyle. They believe that through online learning, they were able to save money. The difference between participant 2's answer towards participant 3's, is that they struggle to get a hang of their child due to their children's lack of personal time. Their family's communication and bond were not the same as before due to the workload or resting time that their children prioritize.

3.3. Changes in online classes in sub-theme of understanding change, time adjustment

Some participants indicated that they are experiencing difficulties managing their time especially when they ought to do additional tasks that their children can't. This theme is

mainly focused on the changes and thoughts of the parents on the adjustments brought by the new learning context.

Participant 1 (P1) answered the question briefly and highlighted that there were no actual changes in their lives. Before, their job was just to carpool their child to school, but now that the context changed and they don't often get out of their house, their bond was strengthened.

Participant 2 did not experience any significant changes, however, their connection with their kid was impacted. Communication between them has deteriorated, particularly since they no longer live together owing to work obligations.

Participant 3's response revolved around the understanding of the change that was brought by online learning. They said that the only thing needed is positivity and not allowing negativity to avoid disputes within a household.

Participant 4 stated the changes that happened within their family. Parents would cover up housework, and they tend to skip breakfast which is unhealthy. Nevertheless, they could save financially due to the reduction of expenses like school allowance.

The last participant, their answer was also brief. They expressed that there were no significant changes; it's just that facing the challenges of the new context, parents should always understand the situation of their children.

3.4. Perception of online learning

The Parents' observations and experiences during the online classes with their children are all similar. Although, some of them may have a positive and negative perception of how their children are still absorbing knowledge through online learning. Yet, the only idea that the participants want to convey is that distractions while learning is normal. Even in face-to-face classes, it is inevitable that the students may face distraction and loss of inspiration in learning. However, they still believe that their student's education is still effectively provided by the educational institutions, and online learning is an opportunity to continue the education career of their children despite the pandemic. The participants' responses only indicate that parents are concerned about their children's time in online learning. They consider that children deserve to have quality time for themselves and their family members to motivate them and enrich their interest in learning.

4. CONCLUSION

Despite the new normal contexts, parents have important parts in their children's education. The researchers concluded that due to the time senior high school students put on their online classes, parents are disturbed by the delayed work of their children inside the household. It was also revealed that parents are not pleased with the online learning context because they are involved in the problems their children encounter during the new context. The conclusion that the loss of internet connection is the main distraction of students that they turn to their parents for a solution that may conflict with the parents' activities was also created based on the results. Lastly, despite the hardships that e-learning had brought, the parents believed that their children were progressively learning.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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