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Volume 5 | Issue 1
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# Table of Contents

EDUCATION

# Students' Learning Style and Modality Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic

Ma. Nenita L. Magallanes

*Mindanao State University-Marawi*
manenita.magallanes@msumain.edu.ph

## Abstract

Learning is a relatively permanent change in behavior; a never-ending process that leads to a specific outcome. Successful teaching and student learning can be accomplished by acknowledging the learner's style and preferred learning modality. This study sought to discover varied learning styles and preferred learning modalities of Senior High School students during the first semester of SY 2021-2022 when COVID-19 (Omicron variant) pandemic was still on the rise. It relied on Fleming's VARK model of learning style scale and a self-constructed questionnaire that focused on students' preferred learning modality. Using Google Forms, 199 purposively chosen students completed the questionnaires. Data were statistically treated and analyzed using the SPSS software. Results revealed that most students are visual based on the VARK model and preferred self-learning kits with hard copies of the modules as a learning modality. Since most students provided multiple responses with regard to preferred learning modality, the relationship between learning style and learning modality was not statistically evaluated and established. Moreover, students' learning styles when grouped based on sex, with computed p value = .06, did not have a significant difference; when grouped based on subject strand, with computed p value = .46, students' learning styles did not have a significant difference. Therefore, Ho1 and Ho2 were accepted. It is recommended that teachers should first determine students' learning styles using the VARK model at the start of classes to accrue a sound understanding of what to teach and how to teach in order to involve students in teaching and learning activities. The results imply that teachers and students must adapt to the demands of the current situation despite monetary and technological difficulties. School administrators must provide necessary technological skills advancement so that teachers can deliver quality education effectively and efficiently.

**Keywords:** *Learning style, Learning modality, COVID-19, Pandemic, VARK model*

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in schools shut down all across the world. Globally, over 1.2 billion children are out of the classroom. Eventually, education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning, whereby teaching and learning activities are undertaken remotely and on digital platforms. With this sudden shift away from the classroom, many are wondering whether the adoption of online learning and other learning modalities will continue to persist, and how such a shift would impact the worldwide education market.

Online and digital learning delivery mode, modular distance learning, or a combination of these modes of instruction has replaced traditional face-to-face classroom interactions. Learning in this time of pandemic is flexible, enabling students to learn at their own pace and ensuring that they would be able to continue their educational journey at home.

There are however multifaceted challenges to deal with. Students without reliable internet access and other gadgets struggle to participate in online/digital learning. This gap is observed across countries and between income brackets within developing countries. Teachers and students alike have been disturbed by the possible effects on teaching and learning activities after the global pandemic was declared.

There is a paradigm shift in the way educators deliver quality education --- through various online platforms. However, critical issues surfaced when e-learning and instruction were introduced. The students, the parents, as well as the teachers become aware of the monetary costs associated with it. Transitioning from traditional face-to-face learning to online learning and other learning modalities has become a panacea for this unprecedented global pandemic despite the challenges posed to both teachers and learners. This can be an entirely different learning experience that teachers and learners must adapt to with little or no alternatives available.

**Objectives of the Study**

This study was undertaken in the hopes of making an impact. It focused on discovering students' learning styles and preferred learning modalities amid the pandemic. Further, it is believed to respond to students' difficulties experienced during the pandemic and for teachers to have benchmark information about students' learning styles and modalities to use in planning courses that will be taught. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions and hypotheses:

RQ1 What is the profile of students in terms of age, sex, and subject strand?
RQ2 What is the learning style of the students?
RQ3 What is the preferred learning modality of the students?
RQ4 Are there significant differences in students' learning styles when grouped based on sex and subject strand?

Ho1 There is no significant difference in students' learning styles when grouped based on sex.
Ho2 There is no significant difference in students' learning styles when grouped based on subject strand.

## Related Literature

Learning during the pandemic is flexible. Its flexibility enables individuals to learn at their own pace as they prepare for the future. It is fit in this time of the pandemic as it ensures that learners will be able to continue their educational journey at home. (https://www.mvorganizing.org)

Pashler, et. al. (2020) indicated that e-learning tools played a crucial role during the pandemic, helping schools and universities facilitate student learning. While adapting to the new changes, student and teacher readiness must be gauged and supported accordingly. There is no one-size-fits-all pedagogy for online learning. Different subjects and age groups require different approaches to online learning. By following an interactive, collaborative approach, the students and the teachers co-create the learning process.

Learning style speaks to the understanding that every student learns differently. Technically, an individual learning style refers to the preferential way in which the student acquires, processes, comprehends and retains information. Learning styles make up the important elements of how the teacher demonstrates the student's knowledge to understand what is being taught (Busilaoco et al., 2014). In a study conducted on learning style and its relationship with educational achievement, Rezaeinejad (2015) found out that knowing the student's learning styles helps the teacher to deliver the lesson that students cope with easily, make different teaching strategies, and leads to educational achievement.

According to the Philippines' Department of Education K-12 Basic Education Program (2012), the learner is the very reason for the entire curriculum system. Its primary emphasis is on the learner's holistic learning and growth. The teacher provides an environment wherein the learner enjoys learning, participates in more meaningful learning activities, and achieves success because she/he is valued, embraced, and feels secure. The learner is empowered to make choices to become responsible for her/his learning in the classroom and in her/his lifetime.

Often, learners differ in their natural, habitual, and preferred way of acquiring, processing, and retaining new information and skills (Reid, 1995). In addition, learning style is not an ability in itself but rather a preferred way of using one's abilities (Hatami, 2012).

According to Fleming's VARK model, students' learning styles include visual, auditory, reading/writing preferences, and kinesthetic (Fleming & Baume, 2006). This model acknowledges that students have different approaches to how they process information. Visual learners prefer images, maps, and graphs to understand new information; auditory learners understand new materials through listening and speaking in seminars and group discussions; students with reading/writing preferences learn best through copious note taking and reading and translating abstract concepts into words and essays; kinesthetic learners best understand information through a tactile representation of the material (Cabual, 2021).

It is important for educators to understand the differences in students' learning styles so that the best teaching strategies could be implemented in daily classroom activities, curriculum, and assessment. Identifying students as visual, auditory, read/write, and kinesthetic learners, and aligning the overall curriculum with these learning styles will prove to be beneficial for the entire classroom. Allowing students to access information in ways they are comfortable with will increase academic confidence. Recognizing the student's learning style can lead to effective learning. The teacher gains a better perspective on implementing these learning styles into lesson plans and teaching techniques (Cherry, 2020). Teachers need to understand how the students learn. They should understand that knowledge of their students' learning styles is the key to unlocking the classroom, making the class prepared, and matching the students' preferences with appropriate teaching methods and techniques.

During the pandemic, learning modality relates to modality where learning takes place between the teacher and the students who are geographically remote from each other during instruction. This modality includes modular distance learning, online/digital learning, and TV/radio-based instruction. These modalities are alternative delivery modes that aim to provide learners with equal access to quality education through a home-based environment.

Modular distance learning features individualized instruction that allows learners to use self-learning modules in print or digital copy, whichever is applicable to the learner. The teacher takes the responsibility of monitoring the progress of the learners. Online/digital learning modalities are the technologies and tools that students and teachers use to learn and teach online. A very common way is asynchronous/synchronous modalities. Asynchronous means self-paced, and students can use provided learning platforms at the time and place of their choosing. Synchronous means used in real-time, requiring students and teachers to meet virtually at the same time from different places. Both asynchronous and synchronous tools may be blended together to create online instruction. TV/radio-based instruction proved to be a good alternative in a context where online learning is not possible. Teacher-broadcasters present the programs and innovations as well as discuss the lessons via television and radio-based distance learning.

According to DepEd Sec. Leonor Briones, "8.8 million parents preferred learning modules, incorporated to blended learning, a combination of modular, online classes, TV, and radio (3.9 million parents), online learning (3.8 million parents), and educational TV (1.4 million parents) as reported by Bonz Magsambol (July 30, 2020).

One of the most important things that educators should understand in the learning process is the mindfulness that students are diverse individuals, especially in their learning styles. Lathan (2021) indicated that while the teacher still holds authority in the classroom, they should act more like facilitators, coaching and assisting students in their learning. Integrating different learning styles into the classroom creates more appropriate instruction for the students. The student's success is more likely dependent on the teacher's understanding of their learning styles. Both teaching and learning styles play an essential role in learning development and achievement. Researchers hence focus more attention on discovering students' learning styles, particularly during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Methodology

This section presents the research design employed, the locale of the study, the sample and sampling procedure, the research instrument, the data gathering procedure, and the statistical treatment and analysis of data. Ethics in research was also considered.

### Research Design

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed in the study. Quantitative research methods are usually adopted because they are scientific and provide immediate results. It is more efficient, can test hypotheses, and always targets clarifying features, and builds statistical models to describe what is discovered during research. According to Matthews and Ross (2010), quantitative research is essentially put on collecting data sets that could be displayed numerically and analyzed scientifically. In this study, a test of difference (*Chi-square test*) was employed. Qualitative research is mainly used when the focus is on reason and information rather than on predictions (Hakim, 2000). It focused on empirical observation and was used to analyze the students' demographic profiles, learning styles, and preferred learning modalities.

### Locale of the Study

Iligan City was chosen as the locale of the study. The researcher resides in the city and conveniently observes students' activities during the conduct of the research.

Officially, the city of Iligan is a first-class highly urbanized city in the region of Northern Mindanao, Philippines. According to the 2020 census, it has a population of 363,115 people whose religion is predominantly Roman Catholic. It is geographically within the province of Lanao del Norte but administered independently from the province. It has an area of 813.4 sq. km. with weather conditions at 330C, wind N at 10 km/h, and 65% humidity. It is best known for the large number of waterfalls concentrated in the area and is aptly called the City of Majestic Waterfalls.

Five randomly selected Senior High Schools in Iligan were considered as the specific locales from which to identify the participants (e.g., Iligan City National High School [ICNHS], Iligan City East High School [ICEHS], MSU-IIT Developmental HS, SMCHS, and La Salle Academy-Iligan).


[Figure found at iligan.gov.ph]

**Figure 1**. *Map of Iligan*

**Sample and Sampling Procedure**

Since the context of the study is the COVID-19 pandemic, the participants of the study were purposively chosen. Purposive sampling is acceptable for special situations and uses judgment in selecting cases with a specific purpose in mind (Lee, 2011). Most often, purposive sampling is employed when a difficult-to-reach population needs to be measured. One-hundred-ninety-nine (199) senior high school students participated in the study.

**Research Instrument**

Sixteen sets of questions for students' learning styles were accomplished employing Fleming's VARK scale which was customized to fit the context of the study and validated (Cronbach a = .89). Four questions for each learning style were randomly positioned. In addition, a self-constructed, five-item open-ended questionnaire was accomplished to solicit responses on students' preferred learning modality.

**Data Gathering Procedure**

The link to Google Forms was provided to 199 identified and invited senior high school students who used mobile data connections. They were requested to respond to the items in both instruments. The responses were collected via Google Forms. However, not everyone was able to access it through Google Forms. Consequently, face-to-face administration of the research instruments was undertaken following proper health protocols. Ethics in research, particularly informed consent, debriefing, the anonymity of participants/students, and confidentiality of data were considered.

**Statistical Treatment and Analysis of Data**

The SPSS v25 software was utilized to statistically treat and analyze the numerical data. The *Chi-square test* particularly was used to determine significant differences in students' learning styles when grouped based on sex and subject strand. Moreover, simple frequency counts and percent equivalents were used to describe students' demographic profiles, learning styles, and preferred learning modalities. However, the association between learning style and learning modality was not statistically evaluated and established; all students reported multiple responses to items on preferred learning modality.

## Results and Discussion

This section includes tables of significant findings based on the research questions presented as well as a discussion that elaborates on the implications of the findings.

**Students' Demographic Profile**

Table 1 displays students' demographic profiles according to age and sex. Accordingly, the distribution of students varies.

**Table 1**

*Age and sex of the students*

| Age | f | % | Sex | f | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | 69 | 34.67 | Female | 175 | 87.44 |
| 18 | 101 | 50.75 | Male | 24 | 12.56 |
| 19 | 18 | 9.05 | | | |
| 20 | 11 | 5.53 | | | |
| Total | 199 | 100 | Total | 199 | 100 |

As shown, a little more than half (50.75%) of the students are 18 years old and 5.53% are 20 years old. In relation to learning, age is not a factor. It is often assumed that regardless of age, as in the case of the 20-year-olds, a student's career may be continually pursued.

Table 1 also shows that there are 175 female and 24 male respondents. Thus, more female students responded to the call of the research more than male students.

**Table 2**

*Subject strand of the students*

| Subject strand | f | % |
|---|---|---|
| HUMSS | 79 | 39.70 |
| STEM | 62 | 31.16 |
| GAS | 31 | 15.58 |
| TVL | 27 | 13.57 |
| Total | 199 | 100 |

Table 2 reveals the subject strand of the students. It reflects that HUMSS students (39.70%) dominate the group, closely followed by STEM (31.16%), with GAS (15.58%) and TVL students (13.57%) trailing along. These findings seem to be very interesting during this time of the pandemic. This might be indicative of the tendency of HUMSS students to be more inclined toward the humanities and the helping profession. This may also suggest that the curriculum appears to make ready female students do the job of helping in times of vulnerable circumstances like this pandemic. Moreover, when choosing a program of study, students tend to choose programs they believe will lead them to potential employment (Cabual, 2021).

**Students' Learning Styles**

The students' learning styles are reflected in Table 3. It is shown that the majority (52.76%) of the students are visual learners; 18.09% are auditory; 17.59% are kinesthetic, and 11.56% have reading/writing preferences.

**Table 3**

*Students' learning styles*

| Learning styles | f | % |
|---|---|---|
| Visual | 105 | 52.76 |
| Auditory | 36 | 18.09 |
| Reading/writing | 23 | 11.56 |
| Kinesthetic | 35 | 17.59 |
| Total | 199 | 100 |

According to Felder and Solomon (2007), visual learners remember best what they see in pictures, diagrams, flow charts, sketches, photographs, films, and demonstrations. They tend to see them as very useful to learn. In research entitled Learning Styles and Students' Achievement in Science, it was found that what is being taught has less impact on learners' achievement than the way materials are presented (Busilaoco et al., 2014). In other words, learning styles make an essential component of how the teacher would demonstrate the knowledge for the students to understand easily what is being taught. In another study, Learning Style and Its Relationship with Educational Achievement, Rezaeinejad (2015) found out that knowing students' learning styles helps the teacher deliver the lesson that students can cope with easily, make diverse teaching techniques, and lead to their educational accomplishment. This finding may imply that teachers must cater to the needs of visual learners by creating suitable instructional materials since students learn best when they see what they are studying. Teaching techniques and approaches must be compatible with the learning styles of the students. Learning style assessment must be undertaken at the beginning of each class. Since the pandemic is not yet over and done with, changes to lesson planning should focus on the most essential learning competencies to be achieved while maintaining the highest possible quality of content delivery.

**Students' Preferred Learning Modality**

Table 4 showcases the multiple responses about students' preferred learning modalities. Students preferred modular distance learning (195) the most; online/digital learning (155) is less preferred, and TV/radio-based instruction (25) is the least preferred. Modular distance learning encompasses a self-learning kit with hard copies of the modules; online/digital learning includes virtual classes either asynchronous/synchronous or blended learning conducted on Google classroom/Google meet virtual spaces, video recordings of topics, and e-copies of learning materials posted on Google classroom; and TV/radio-based instruction involves discussion of topics over television and radios conducted by teacher-broadcasters. The DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones indicated that "8.8 million parents preferred printed modules, 3.9 million parents preferred blended learning – a combination of modular learning, online classes, TV and radio, 3.8 million parents preferred online learning, and 1.4 million parents preferred educational television" (Magsambol, 2020).

**Table 4**

*Students' preferred learning modalities*

| Modality* | f | Rank |
|---|---|---|
| MDL | 195 | 1 |
| ODL | 155 | 2 |
| TRBI | 25 | 3 |

Legend: * multiple responses, MDL – modular distance learning. ODL – online/digital learning, TRBI – TV/radio-based instruction

This finding is based on the analysis conducted on the multiple responses reported by students to the questions presented in relation to preferred learning modality. The results indicate a close connection between learning style and learning modality. Since students are visual learners, it is a matter of fact that they prefer printed modules more than the others. This may imply that they are more likely to learn at their own speed and in their own time and most likely to fail in participating in virtual/online classes due to a lack of access to required technology and gadgets, particularly a stable internet connection. In addition, students' monetary difficulties may explain why they chose the free modular learning kit. Although a connection between learning style and preferred learning modality is somehow indicated, this connection nonetheless is not statistically evaluated and established.

**Significant Differences in Students' Learning Style**

The *Chi-square* test was used to determine significant differences in students' learning styles when grouped based on sex and subject strand. Table 5 and Table 6 present the findings, respectively.

Table 5
*Significant difference in students' learning style when grouped based on sex*

| Learning style | Female | Male | Total | *p-value* | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Visual | 90 | 15 | 105 | | |
| Auditory | 32 | 4 | 36 | | |
| Read/write | 20 | 3 | 23 | | |
| Kinesthetic | 33 | 2 | 35 | | |
| Total | 175 | 24 | 199 | .06 | Not significant |

Note: Significant at $p \leq .05$ level

Table 5 displays the difference in students' learning styles based on sex. The computed p-value = .06 indicates that students' learning styles when grouped based on sex do not have a significant difference. Females and males alike do not differ in how they acquire, comprehend, process, and retain information. Thus, Ho1 is accepted. This finding runs contrary to the study of Dobson (2010) which relates learning styles and sex, status, and course performance. The students were asked to select the single sensory modality they felt they preferred to use when internalizing information in the course. According to the findings, sensory modality preferences were related to both sex and course scores significantly. Notwithstanding, this finding may indicate that there may be some attribution factors that have influenced why there is no significant difference in the two variables. Whatever they may be, further study is necessary.

**Table 6**
*Significant difference in students' learning style when grouped based on subject strand*

| Learning style | H | S | G | T | Total | *p*-value | R |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Visual | 37 | 32 | 16 | 20 | 104 | | |
| Auditory | 17 | 12 | 3 | 4 | 36 | | |
| Read/write | 11 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 23 | | |
| Kinesthetic | 14 | 11 | 8 | 2 | 35 | | |
| Total | 27 | 31 | 62 | 79 | 199 | .46 | Not Significant |

*Legend: H- HUMSS; S- STEM; G- GAS; T- TVL; R – Remark*

*Note: Significant at $p \leq .05$ level*

Table 6 shows the difference in students' learning styles when grouped based on subject strand. With computed *p*-value = .46, the students' learning styles do not have a significant difference. Thus, Ho2 is accepted. This finding may suggest that students' learning styles are not impacted by the subject strand students chose to enroll in. Moreover, the finding may be interpreted based on students being visual learners. However, this finding runs counter to Dobson's study (2010) which revealed that sensory modality preferences were significantly related to course scores.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The following conclusions are drawn from the results and discussion as well as the implications of the study: (1) Most students are females and are 18 years old; (2) They enrolled in HUMSS (Humanities and Social Sciences) as their most preferred subject strand which is considered female-dominated based on enrollment during SY 2021-2022 notwithstanding other students enrolling in other subject strands (e.g., STEM, GAS, and TVL); (3) Students are mostly visual learners and preferred modular distance learning as their learning modality; (4) Students' learning styles when grouped based on sex and based on subject strand do not have significant differences.

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are put forward. Assessment of students' learning styles and preferred learning modalities should be undertaken before the start of each class. The objective is for teachers to be guided with benchmark information about students' interests, circumstances, and abilities. Teachers must address visual learners' needs by creating appropriate and suitable instructional materials since learning is best accomplished when students see what they are studying.

Students who manifested other learning styles and who preferred other learning modalities must also be given due importance. Teachers need to have various learning activities to respond to students' specific learning needs. Especially during this pandemic, there should be equity and equality in attending to students' abilities, interests, and life circumstances.

Teaching techniques and approaches must be aligned with students' learning styles and preferred learning modalities. In lesson planning, content/topics to be incorporated should cover the most essential learning competencies to be achieved without jeopardizing the quality of content/instructional delivery.

Both students and teachers must adapt to the demands of the current situation despite monetary and technological difficulties. School administrators must provide necessary technological skills advancement for teachers to be able to deliver quality education effectively and efficiently.

Further study is necessary to ascertain attribution factors that may influence why variables sex and subject strand do not impact students' learning styles. Future studies are recommended to determine the correlation between learning styles and preferred learning modalities. Lastly, further study is necessary to test the moderating effects of students' demographic profile (e.g., age, sex, program of study, and academic year level) on learning styles and preferred learning modality.

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EDUCATION

# The Implementation of Online Learning During COVID-19 Pandemic: A Multiple Case Analysis

Willan Keith A. Badidles

*Leyte Normal University*
williamk.badidles@lnu.edu.ph

## Abstract

The existence of the COVID-19 pandemic caught everyone, including the education sector, by surprise. As a result, the Philippines crafted a new learning continuity plan to address the educational delivery model problems. Online learning is one of the New Normal learning modalities identified as practical and efficient. However, despite the practicality and effectiveness that online learning promises to offer, students, teachers, and parents still face challenges concerning its implementation. Adhering to the Connectivism Theory and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), this study utilized the descriptive-multiple case study design modified from Descriptive Case Study by Yin (2013); Pattern Matching by Yin (1984); and Multiple-case study by Yin (2009) to understand the experiences of students, teachers, and parents on the implementation of online learning modality during COVID-19 pandemic. For the students' experiences, there were five identified themes, namely, a) academic engagements, b) learning support, c) barriers to learning, d) COVID-19 Pandemic Effects, and e) non-academic engagements. Furthermore, there were four recognized themes in the teachers' experiences: a) online teaching pedagogy, b) challenges in online teaching, c) management in online classes and d) non-teaching functions. Finally, for the parents' experiences, there were four identified themes viz., a) parents' plights, b) Perception of the implementation of online learning, c) Parents' observation towards students in online learning, and d) complaints.

**Keywords:** *COVID-19, Online Learning, New Normal, Multiple-Case Study, Heterogeneous cases, k-means Algorithm*

COVID-19 brought an immense challenge to all sectors of humanity. It started in Wuhan Province, China, and almost infected every country in the world (WHO, 2020b). The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 as a global communal health emergency of global concern on the 30th of January 2020 and as a pandemic on the 11th of March 2020 (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020)

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has retracted the educational system. This extant global concern made education specialists instantly craft alternate methods of didactics during the lockdown period. Control measures such as the temporary shutdown of schools were implemented globally. Institutions that were not able to adapt to the new educational standards filed for bankruptcy (Radha et al., 2020; Almarzoog et al., 2020). As of April 6, 2020; UNESCO (2020) reported that there have been 1, 576, 021, 818 affected learners out of 91.3% enrolled in 188 countries in all levels of education.

Effects of COVID-19 in the Educational System. COVID-19 caused a myriad of restructurings in the Philippine educational system which makes it tough for educators to implement the new normal educative process (Cahapay, 2020). With these changes, schools and educators are invigorated to maintain high-quality instruction and assessment. Cuaton (2020) emphasized the crafting of an education continuity plan which serves as an outline of procedures and instructions which should be followed especially during face-to-face contact on the delivery of learning materials. The abrupt planning of the government later then led to the production of a modified curriculum and the crafting of a new assessment method.

The Curriculum Shift and Newly Imposed Assessment Method. In the Philippine context, according to Cahapay (2020), it is observed that schools have new assessment practices such as using previous grades from mock exams, applying observational assessments of teachers, and considering prior grade expectations. However, these emerging assessment practices made education stakeholders in dilemma and dissonance. Teachers now conduct formative assessments through synchronous and asynchronous sessions. In synchronous form, teachers provide real-time feedback to students via video conferencing platforms or phones (Liberman & Luna-Bazaldua, 2020).

The Limited Capability for Online Learning Modality. A high percentage of countries have zero to minimal online education capabilities. Some countries have better capabilities but very few have integrated curriculum widely delivered with an online learning modality (Patrinos & Shmis, 2020) where a vast majority of learners are incapable to accessing the internet due to technical as well as monetary issues. Online education cannot produce desired results in underdeveloped countries (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). This adds to the great challenges faced by teachers in the quest to deliver quality education to learners.

Challenges Faced by Teachers on Online Learning During Pandemic. The adaptive strategies made by the education sector in the teaching and learning process fully affected everyone, especially the teachers. Online teaching is not simply putting learning materials online. Teachers must organize the content and learning strategies according to the new modality of delivery so students will not feel isolated and alone in the learning process. For that reason, teachers are required to possess pedagogical, content knowledge, and technological skills in order to successfully convey learning to students on the online platform (Aristovnik et al., 2020). The effectiveness of the online learning modality will depend on the preparation of learning materials and their design, the teacher's engagement in the online environment, and teacher-student and student-student interactions.

Parents' Challenges on the Online Set up of Learning. Parents also face hardships in the implementation of online learning like taking additional roles in the learning of students at home for example accessing online learning materials and learning new techniques via the internet to ensure students' learning. Inciso, (2021) specified that, in the demand for new normal education and online setup of learning, the parents face challenges and difficulties particularly with disrupted schedules; inadequate skills to assist students in learning technical concepts; and additional financial responsibilities. Abuhammad (2020) added that parents encounter logistics barriers due to the following: a) difficulties in applying online learning and lack of students' preparation for independent learning; b) discontentment with online learning modality, and c) failure of distance learning to meet students' needs.

Plight of Students on the Shift of Learning Modality. The shift from onsite to online learning paved the secondary school students' limited contact hours with teachers. Similarly, the lack of e-learning facilities that students need to use for online interaction with their teachers is the key factor in their low scholastic retention and performance (Sintema, 2020). Gonser (2020) stated that Wi-Fi connectivity is an issue for a big percentage of students even in first-world countries like the United States, especially for the marginalized citizens who are merely relying on the government's ration of food. Even though there is an issue with the students' connectivity during online classes, Karalis & Raikou (2020).

Raikou (2020) emphasized that there is greater participation of students during online sessions because they have more time available that they do not have in the usual traditional face-to-face class obligations like commuting. Gonzales et al. (2020) observed that students' problems in the implementation of online learning include the bulk of independent learning activities given during asynchronous sessions. This leads students to become less motivated to work on doing course requirements and at times triggers emotional stress on their part.

Students and Teachers' Psychological State During Pandemic. Learners and educators have been greatly affected by the existence of COVID-19. Talidong & Toquero (2020) thought that home quarantine, social distancing, and work-from-home scheme adds to the anxiety felt by Filipino teachers during COVID-19. The presence of different eventualities in 2020 such as the pandemic may have weighty impacts on the student's transition to adulthood (Cao et al., 2020) Interventions to upkeep mental health and psychosocial advances among teachers and students will increase their hopefulness and adaptability to the new normal practices. The changes in the system led to the plights of students, teachers, and parents. The limited capacity for online learning made teachers double their efforts to deliver quality learning opportunities to students; it made students experience the bulk of tasks and emotional stress, and add on a burden on the day-to-day endeavors of the parents. It is important to understand their predicaments in order to resolve the given problems.

## Theoretical Framework

The study adheres to two learning theories, the Connectivism Learning theory of Siemens (2005) and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) of Vygotsky (as cited by Dahms et al., 2007).

**Connectivism Learning Theory.** Siemens (2005) explains the complexity of a rapidly changing social digital world. The theory is an integration of principles that is explored by network, chaos, complexity, and self-organization theories, it is also defined as a process that occurs within the nebulous environments of shifting core elements that are not entirely under the control of the individual. The transfer of learning occurs by connecting to and adding nodes and developing personal networks. The theory speaks that learning is no longer an individualistic activity; knowledge is already across networks (social, technological, and informational) where information is distributed. In our digital society, the connections and connectivity within networks lead to learning. In a connectivist classroom, the teacher's role is a facilitator or is totally absent from the learning process.

**The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).** Vygotsky (as cited by Dahms et al., (2007) ) defined ZPD as the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers. The Theory Zone of Proximal Development will be useful in identifying assessment procedures and intervention programs in distance education as implemented in the new normal educational set-up of the Department of Education. The theory recognizes that students may achieve a higher level of learning with support from their teacher. To help learners achieve independence in learning, Vygotsky's scaffolding is a good tool to foster students' growth. Working in collaboration with a skilled instructor or more knowledgeable peers helps students make connections between concepts.

## Statement of the Problem

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly affected the teaching and learning process. It instigated the shift of the entire learning process from traditional education to online learning. At the present time, it is observed

that the students, teachers, and parents are struggling to adapt to the new modality used in the teaching and learning process. This affected teachers' facilitation of learning, students' learning performance, and parents' or guardians' responsibilities. Thus, this study aims to specifically provide answers to the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of teachers, and parents in the implementation of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What are the underlying relationships of the lived experiences of students, teachers, and parents in the implementation of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. How will the findings of the study improve the implementation of online learning?

**Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

The scope of the study will be limited to identifying the lived experiences of students, teachers, and parents focusing on the learning objectives, activities, and assessment of learning in the online learning modality used by the senior high school student of a Laboratory School in Tacloban City, Philippines.

## Methodology

This chapter discusses the research design, research locale, research participants, sampling, research instrument, research procedure, ethical consideration, data saturation, reflexivity, and data analysis.

**Research Design**

This study utilized the descriptive-multiple case study design modified from Descriptive Case Study by Yin (2013); Pattern Matching by Yin (1984) as cited by Hak (2009); and a Multiple-case study by Yin (2009) in order to understand the lived experiences of students, teachers, and parents on the implementation of online learning modalities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This followed three (3) major phases which include: (1) designing the case study protocol, (2) preparation, collection, and analysis; and (3) analyzing and concluding.

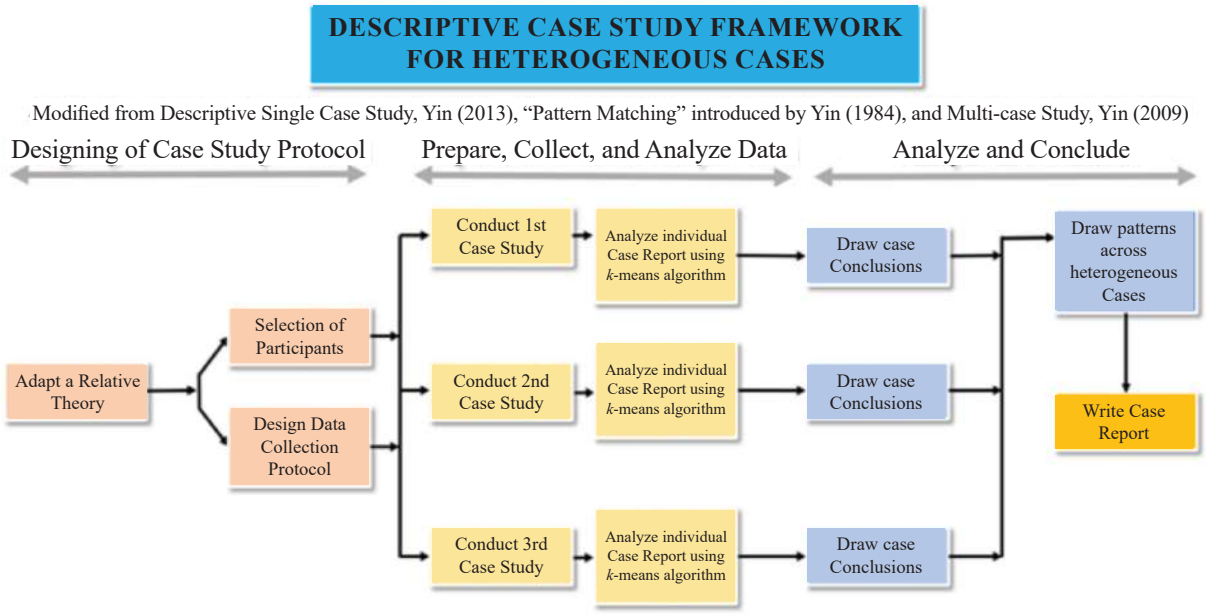


**Figure 1.** *Qualitative Case Study Framework for Heterogeneous Cases*

**Research Instrument.** The research utilized two main instruments to collect data. First, an interview guide was used for the semi-structured interview which was later then used with the participants. Because

of the surge of COVID-19 cases in the locale, the researcher decided to conduct the interview through Google forms. Observation Note for the Audit trail was done by the researcher to keep track of the interview and research processes.

**Research Locale.** The study was conducted in an Integrated Laboratory School (ILS) in a premier teacher training institution located in Tacloban City, Philippines. Known for its top-caliber pre-service educational training which was crafted through time, the Integrated Laboratory School as the teacher training laboratory of the university's College of Education has produced top-ranking individuals in different fields of expertise within the country and abroad.

**Research Participants.** The participants of the study were students, teachers, and parents who were subjected to the implementation of an online learning modality during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study involved students and their respective parents and teacher participants who were exposed to in-depth interviews in order to gather information regarding their experiences in the implementation of the online learning modality. Teachers were selected through purposive sampling but for the students, random sampling was utilized. On the other hand, the parents of the chosen participants were automatically asked to participate in the study. Theoretical saturation was the key basis for determining the number of participants (Fontanella et al., 2011).

**Sampling.** The researcher used purposive sampling by Fraenkel et al., (2012). There were 12 students, 12 parents, and 12 teacher participants who were identified through selection criteria set by the researcher.

**Ethical Considerations.** Important ethical concerns were taken into account while carrying out qualitative research: anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent (Truscott, 2004). In carrying out the study, the researcher did not divulge the name of the participants. Similarly, the permission of the participants was sought first by using the consent form. The participants were not coerced to engage in this research. As much as possible, the researcher made sure that the participants were comfortable before, during, and after the data collection.

## Trustworthiness

This section discusses some measures to ensure the integrity and authenticity of the findings of the study. Triangulation. To establish the validity of the study, the researcher looked into available documents such as school records, learners' outputs, pictures, and office documents that can serve as additional sources of data with the consent of the school head and teacher concerned. In this study, the researcher triangulated data by using three sources such as transcribed responses, documents, and observation notes.

**Reflexivity.** The researcher is an instructor in a higher education institution at the same time a teacher in the Senior High School program of a university. Thus, the researcher is aware of the common struggles that senior high school and online teachers encounter on day-to-day bases. However, the researcher believed that constantly reminding himself and trying to detach his experiences from the focus of this study helped him come up with an impartial analysis of data. Furthermore, the researcher followed a systematic process in conducting, collecting, and analyzing the data to avoid biases.

**Data Analysis.** The study used the *k*-means algorithm in analyzing the gathered data/information. The k-means clustering is a method of vector quantization that is originally from signal processing. It aims to partition *n* observations into *k* clusters. Each observation belongs to a cluster with the nearest mean or cluster centroids which serve as the prototype of the cluster. It later results in a partitioning of data into Voronoi cells. *k-means* clustering minimizes within-cluster variances in a squared Euclidean distance but not into regular Euclidean distances. Panwar et al., (2016) defined the process of data analysis using the k-means algorithm using the following process: a) Start the process; b) Randomly Select k-Cluster; c) Find the centroids; d) calculate all the data points to the centroid; e) Move data in an appropriate Cluster (if there are still changes in clusters there is a need to repeat process either go back to finding the centroid or find the appropriate cluster for the data Item) and f) the end of the procedure.

## Results and Discussion

### Students' Experiences

The online learning has been mostly a new experience for the students and educators. Students online learning experiences are particularly centered in the 1) Academic Works, 2) Non-academic Works, 3) Learning Support System, 4) Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic and the 5) Barriers of Learning.

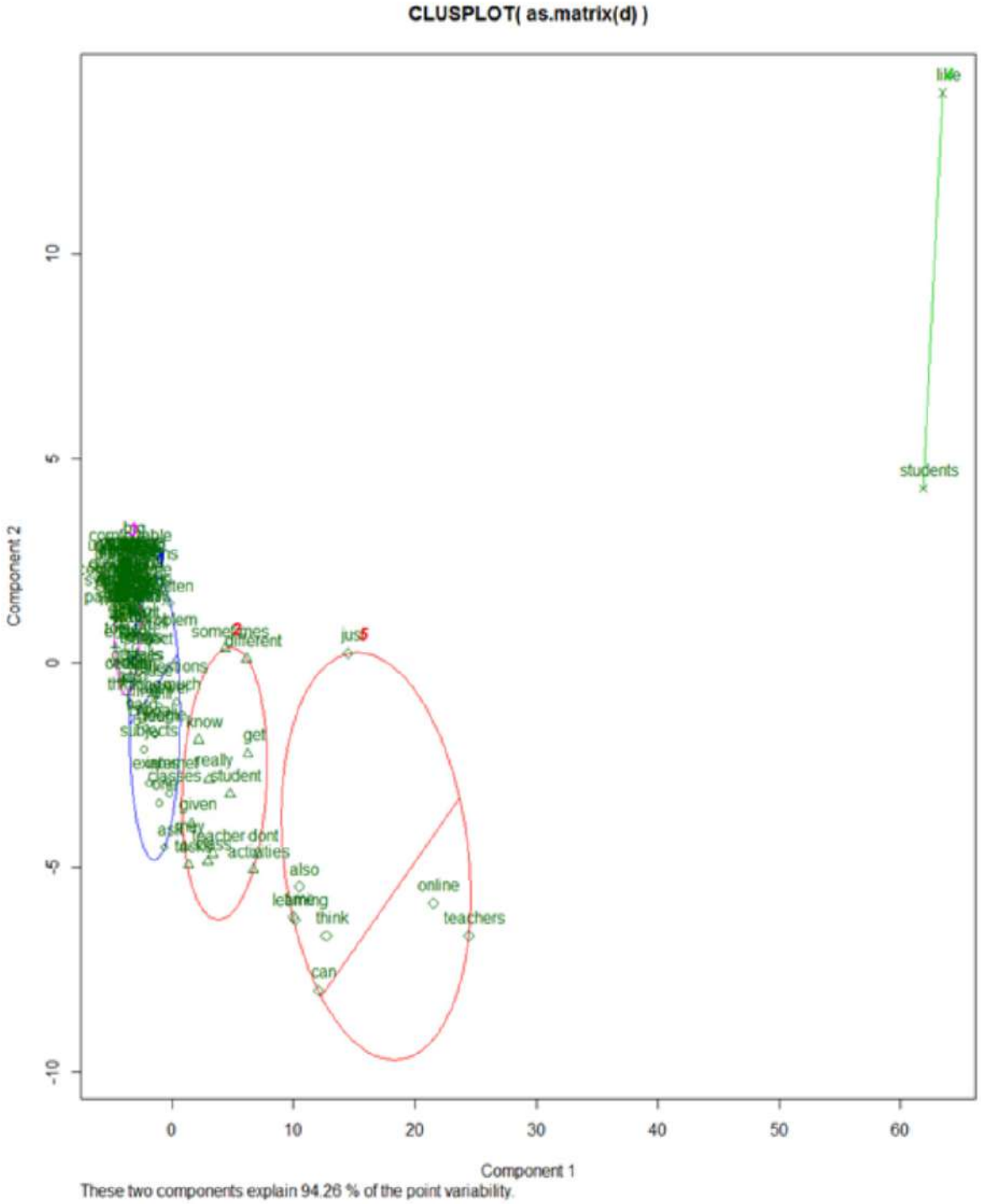


**Figure 2.** *k-means Algorithm Results Containing 5 Centroids for Students*

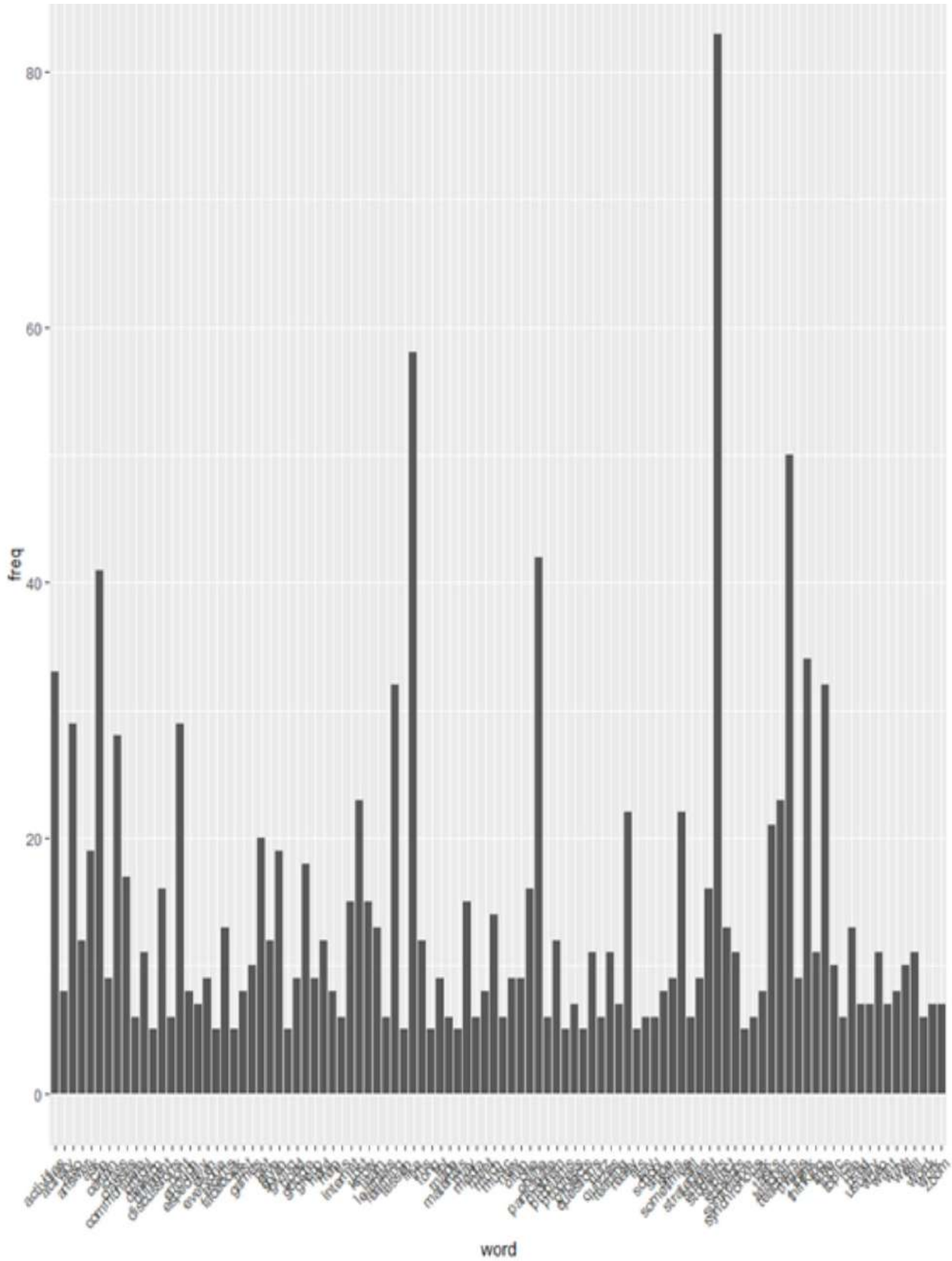


**Figure 3.** *Frequency of Word Distribution for Students' Experiences*

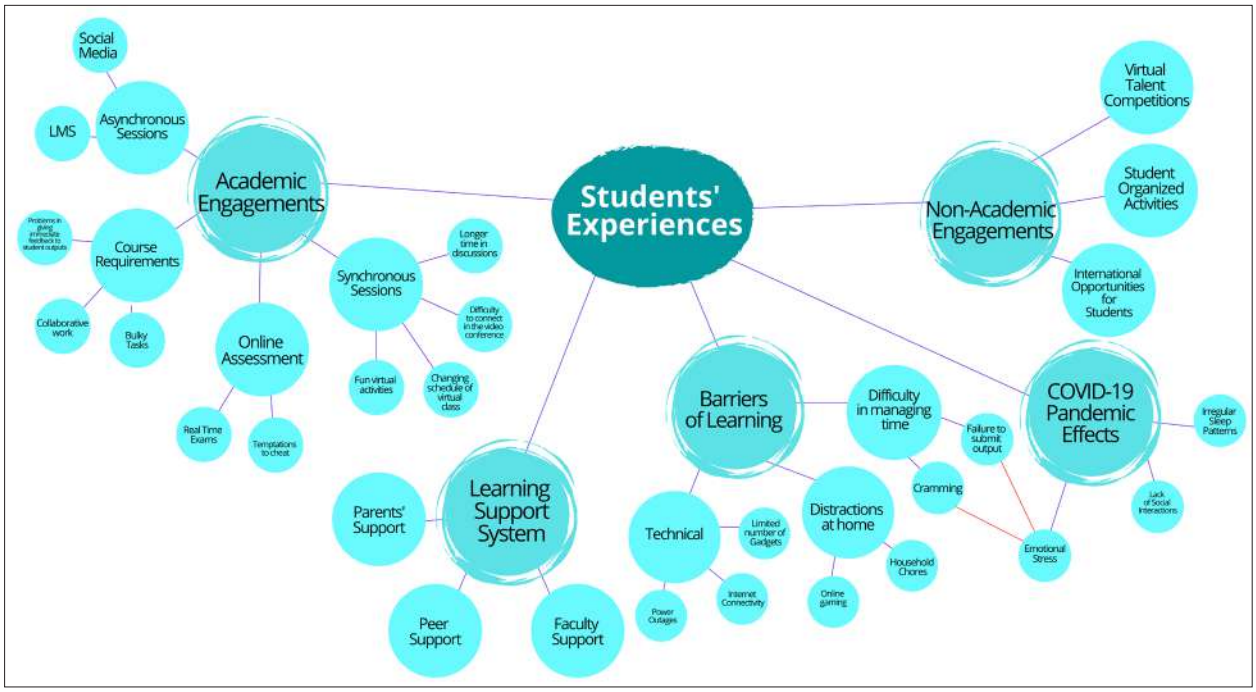


**Figure 4.** *Concept Map of the Underlying Themes and Sub-themes of the Students' Experiences*

***Theme 1. Academic Works***

Students' online academic life revolves around the synchronous and asynchronous class sessions (Quezada et al., 2020). Synchronous instructions are real-time classes which are conducted virtually through video conferencing platforms such as Google Meet, Zoom, Skype, Messenger and others. Students attend a class session each week per course. Online classes are filled with several fun virtual activities. Student can learn fundamental sport events rules and basic skills execution through a collaborative online volleyball and basketball games. Other face-to-face social activities are also conducted in virtual set-ups like class debates, storytelling, acting, acquaintance parties, meetings, talent competitions, cultural presentations, founding anniversary program, seminars and symposiums, orientations and international student participation.

> *"Interactive activities that involve both students and teachers." P5-L222 "In Earth Science we were given a project that consisted of storytelling and acting, in ICT and Contemporary Arts our teacher would instigate and engage in debates with us students (or student vs student) challenging our critical thinking, in Oral Com and Reading and Writing we were given activities wherein we had to do acting in the video tasks."P1-L12-15*
>
> *"…One of our mentors told us that we will be doing a folk dance to represent our country, when I heard about it, I was in deep frustration because dancing is one of my least favorite things to do. …It was an overall fun experience and it was the first time that I have really enjoyed doing something that I didn't like. Some things may be intimidating to do, but with the right support from the right people, this can be something remarkably fun."P6, L294-300*

While there is a positive side in the conduct of synchronous instructions, there are also some negative sides. For instance, there is a longer time taken for online discussions. Some instructors go beyond the two-hour screen time of students during class this usually happens when the instructors are discussing hard-to-understand concepts in the subject matter. Also, the presentation of outputs of the Field study students for the class routines like presentation of flag ceremony activities, attendance checking, conducting afternoon and morning exercise, and giving of ice breakers at times consume time allotted for class discussions and virtual activities. Changes of scheduled time for classes were also often observed by the students. At

times, an 8:30AM class is moved to 10:00AM, this usually happens when teachers experience trouble in their internet and have difficulty logging in the virtual conference platform. Lastly, intermittent internet connectivity causes students to experience difficulty in connecting to the synchronous class and this adds up to another challenge to the students which is running after missed session activities.

*"On the start of the school year, all teachers follow our time schedule for the synchronous classes but towards the end of the first semester, there were already some sudden changes on our schedule." P9, L466-469*

*"At times, our teachers extend beyond our scheduled time for synchronous class." P10, L500*

*"Internet connectivity can become a huge problem regarding this too, especially when I'm trying to answer or recite in class."P8, L368-370*

On the other hand, asynchronous sessions are also done in online learning. Asynchronous learning allows students independent learning. They can access and complete lectures, readings, homework, and other learning materials at any time during a one-or two-week period in the Learning Management System (LMS). The teachers also use some social media platforms such as Facebook, Messenger, Twitter, and YouTube as alternate learning management systems. With this strategy of using social media platforms, students could also perceive social media platforms as mediums for educational activities.

*"We often use … Facebook, Messenger, Google Meet, Zoom, Gmail, …ILS LMS, YouTube, PowerPoint, MS Word, Editing Programs, Google Docs, and Google Drive." P2, L51-52*

*"The internet is a cruel fickle thing. Sometimes it makes it its personal mission to mess with me… good we still have our LMS and Social media groups so I can still review our discussion." P8, L373-379*

Students' course requirements are given during synchronous or asynchronous sessions including quizzes, outcomes-based outputs, and others. Despite the limitations in conducting group activities online, the teachers still manage to create activities that cater to collaboration among students. They even do on-the-spot collaborative learning activities such as group activities as part of the class instruction. Teachers use social media platforms like messenger and Twitter as venues for group brainstorming. Collaborative activities also include but are not limited to topic presentations, group research, short filmmaking, vlogs, and radio dramas.

Giving students more opportunities for learning would create more avenues to discover new knowledge. But sometimes, due to the number of tasks given to students on a weekly basis in each course, students find the activities very bulky (Sintema, 2020). Some can't finish a task in half a day, later it leads to students having unfinished outputs. Not only teachers but also students face problems with the bulk of unfinished tasks. Teachers also encounter problems in giving feedback to students' outputs which leads to students being less knowledgeable about their academic standing.

*"At first, I found online activities very fun and exciting… we had group activities like topic reports, vlogging, and many more… but as time passes by, I already felt tired because there were already lots of things to be done daily." P1, L1-6*

*"It is very difficult to monitor my academic standing if I do not know what the results of my exams were. After some time, I am surprised how low my grades were because didn't know I failed in some of my quizzes." P12, L800-803*

Online assessment is defined as an evaluation of a person's abilities, behaviors, and/or characteristics. This test is steered over the Internet using available web technologies such as Learning Management System (LMS), Kahoot, Google forms, and Mentimeter among many. Most assessments were conducted simultaneously with the aid of video conferencing sites, teachers let the students answer their summative exams or quizzes with cameras turned on, in the same way, students are also given limited time to answer such exams.

***Theme 2. Learning Support System***

Learning Support System is one way to ensure that every learner is able to make progress and achieve according to their potential. Responsive learning support provides a platform to transform and guide learning towards the essential support system that the students need. Students identified three important support systems that aids their online learning- the parents' support, peer support, and faculty support.

Online learning entails home-based learning. When students learn at home, parents are automatically tasked to be the home counterpart of teachers. They also play a vital role in students' online learning. Parents serve as a coach for their students and support them by monitoring students in their online output submissions. In the same way, parents can mentor and encourage students. Students in Senior High are less monitored by parents since they are already capable of independent learning. But constant checking from them will help students be guided in their prompt compliance of outputs. Parents also give talks to students about their learning experiences.

*"Since both of my parents are absent in the household most of the time and I am the eldest amongst the children I don't seek help from anyone in the household. However, I would seek help online from classmates and friends. P1,L3-8*

*"My parents would talk to me mostly after work. They always ask if I was able to submit my activities for the day and how our class went for the day." P4, L5-L6.*

Peer learning should be mutually beneficial, and involve the sharing of knowledge, ideas, and experiences between the learners. It can be described as a way of moving beyond independent to interdependent or mutual learning. Students learn a great deal by explaining their ideas to others and by participating in activities in which they can learn from their peers. They develop skills in organizing and planning learning activities, working collaboratively with others, giving and receiving feedback, and evaluating their own learning. Learning with peers online comes with an extra challenge, students need strong internet connectivity in order to discuss topics in virtual format. But communication with peers is even harder when students are not yet well-acquainted with each other. Students without peers often feel alone during online classes.

*"As our teacher always emphasizes, we should help each other so everyone will be able to graduate on time… My classmates and I, communicate with each other through our Messenger Group Chat… at times many of our classmates would hesitate to ask for help because we are not that close yet." P4, L235-240*

*"Our class together with our class adviser planned to set a virtual assignment time where we can discuss and exchange ideas with regard to the tasks given to us by our teachers." P5, L235-240*

The broad perspective of the social support framework for learning defines teacher support as a teacher giving informational, instrumental, emotional, or appraisal support to a student, in an online environment. Teachers are the core manager of online learning and they decide on tasks to be given to the students. Teachers need to be understanding and at the same time strict in the implementation of school tasks or learning activities. They do counseling in classes especially when everyone seems to be less motivated. Teachers also organize an open forum in order to monitor students' well-being and talk about class needs.

*"…teachers really engage learners to participate or to motivate them to do their tasks and activities but some teachers don't. They do these by interacting with their students, either in online sessions or on different social media platforms. I think these strategies are not only relevant but also vital as well, it does not only help build character, but it also helps us learn more efficiently with less effort and stress." P5, L238-240*

*"There are teachers who really inspire us to do good and study hard every day." P5, L266*

***Theme 3. Non-Academic Engagements***

Despite being virtual, online learning still gives opportunities for students. Several activities like virtual talent competitions, student-organized activities, and international opportunities for students are among the usual practices.

Talent competitions are the avenue for students to express and discover their skills and talents, it is also where students develop self-esteem. Several activities organized by the school give a chance to every student to show and hone their innate gifts. One of the many virtually-organized activities this year are ILS Big Star, Tik-Tok dance Show-off, Bida Normalista, and Search for Dayaw Model Student. These activities paved the way for students to do something new aside from the usual online class set-up.

Students are also given a chance to create and organize their own school activities such as donation drives, acquaintance parties, and talent competitions. Students also participate in regional, national, and, international activities such as debate competitions, research presentations, fora, cultural exchange programs, and seminar workshops.

*"During the RitsMentor Discussion 2021, we were required to do a virtual presentation that represents the tradition and culture of one's country. One of our mentors told us that we will be doing a folk dance to represent our country…" P6, L296-300*

*"I attended the previous one where we went to Japan to present our research. So, having this whole thing in an online set-up was fun, I got to see a few of the people I met before and it was fun reconnecting with them. Also meeting new people and honing our skills for research was arguably tiring but fun." P8, L396-398*

***Theme 4. Barriers of learning***

The most significant barriers to online learning are students' difficulty in managing time, distractions at home like house chores, lack of gadgets, and technical difficulties like poor internet connection and power interruptions. Effective time management is associated with greater academic performance and lower levels of anxiety in students; however, many students find it hard to find a balance between their studies and their day-to-day (Abuhammad, 2020). Procrastination and lack of punctuality are the most obvious results of poor time management; students tend to lay down and wait for the deadline of tasks before actually working to finish outputs. This results in cramming, poor output quality, and even failure to submit tasks. These experiences lead to students' emotional stress.

*"…the only problem that I can think of is the strength of our internet connectivity and power outages which results in a late or delayed submission which sometimes can affect our grade incredibly." P6, L287-289*

*"…not only because there are a lot of distractions, but there are also a lot of responsibilities that need to be taken care of like our everyday errands which has been part already of the New Normal Home-based Online Learning". P6, L269-270*

*"Sometimes I have a hard time controlling my laziness to finish my school tasks, I often play mobile games first before working on my assignments" P4, L211-213*

*"I often have difficulty managing time, many times I sleep very late because I needed to finish tasks I previously ignored…" P4 L120-121*

***Theme 5. COVID-19 Pandemic Effects***

The effects of isolation brought by COVID-19 affect students' performance in school. Lack of social interactions, emotional stress, and irregular sleep patterns are some of the effects of the pandemic on students.

*"Since the pandemic, my friends and I have been talking using Google meet… we watch movies together when there is extra time and even discuss certain concepts about our courses at times." P3, L101-102*

*"Some of our classmates feel awkward when talking through Google Meet… maybe because we haven't met yet face-to-face." P3, L200*

Among students, one of the most common causes of irregular sleep patterns, i.e., students get inadequate sleep because they go to bed late and wake up early. This occurs for multiple reasons; some are physiologic and others behavioral. During online classes, students are observed to be sleepy, while at night mostly they are still awake. Emotional stress occurs when students have lots of activities to finish. Most of the time, they look unmotivated and found lying on the couch doing nothing all day long.

*"I am having a hard time sleeping nowadays. I even sometimes attend morning classes without sleeping" P4, 204-205.*

**Teachers' Experiences**

There are four major themes identified in the analysis of the responses from the teachers namely online teaching pedagogy, challenges in online teaching, management of online classes, and non-teaching functions.

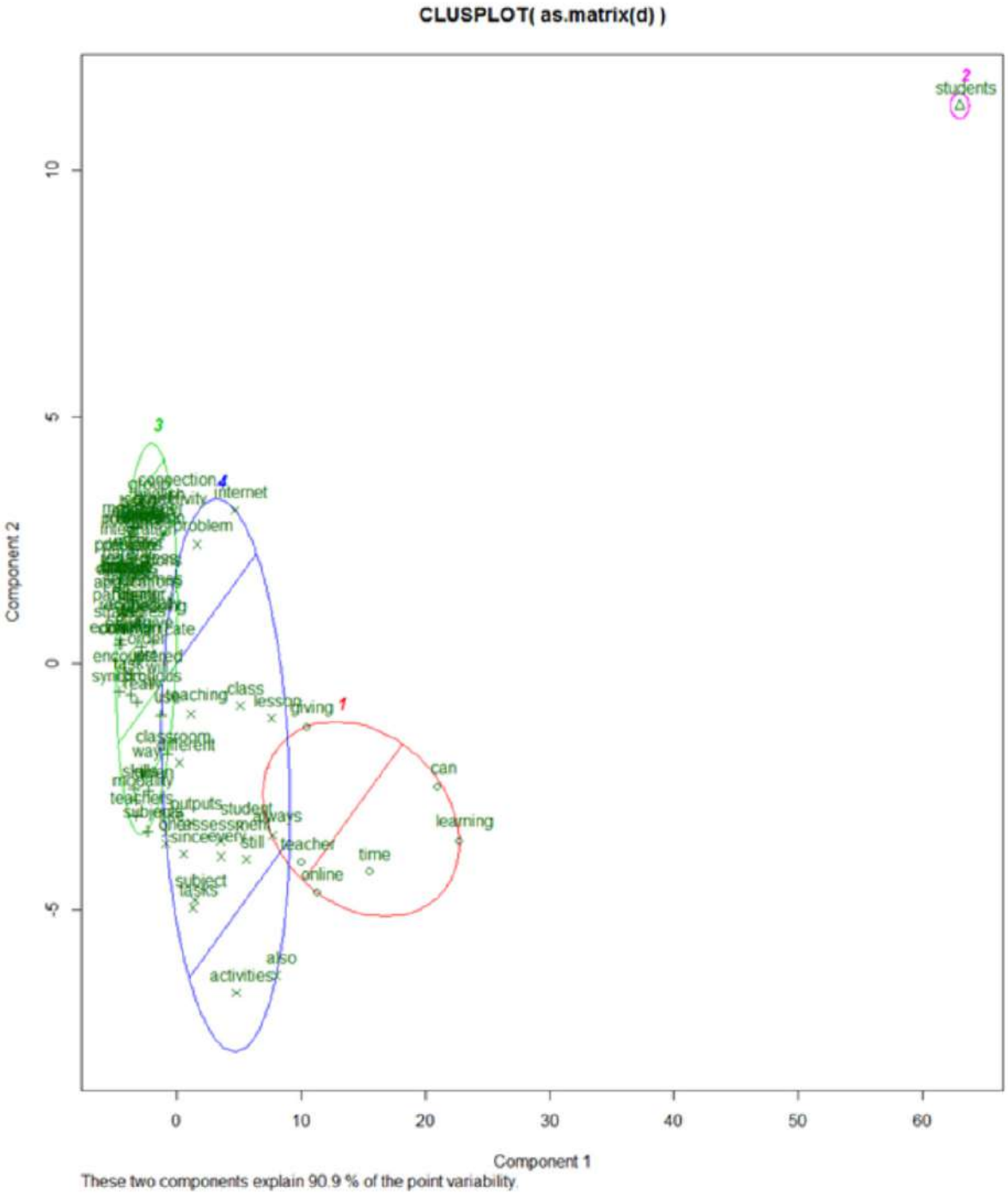


**Figure 5.** *Frequency of Word Distribution for Teachers' Experiences*

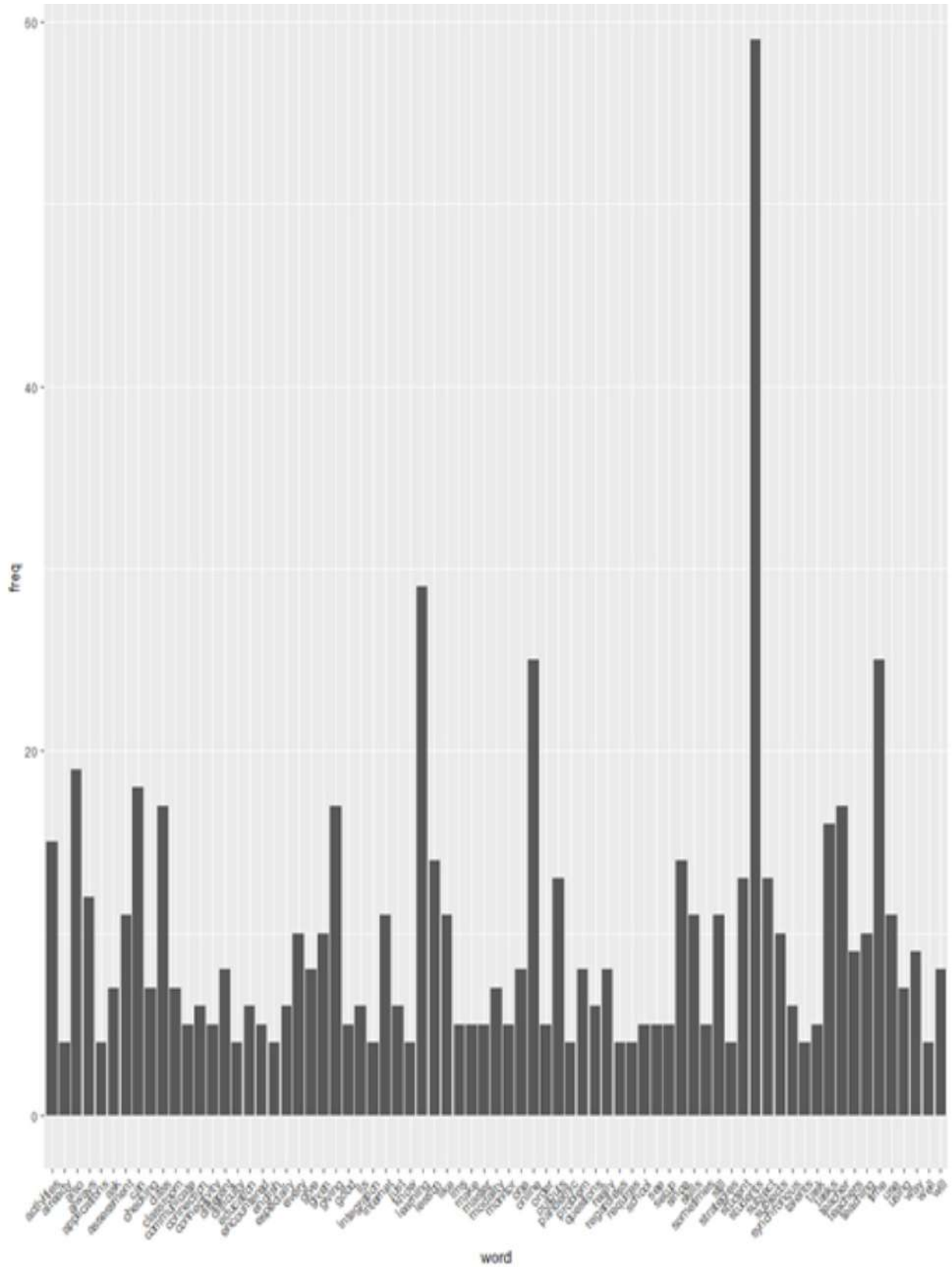


**Figure 6.** *K-means Algorithm Results Containing 4 Centroids for Teachers*

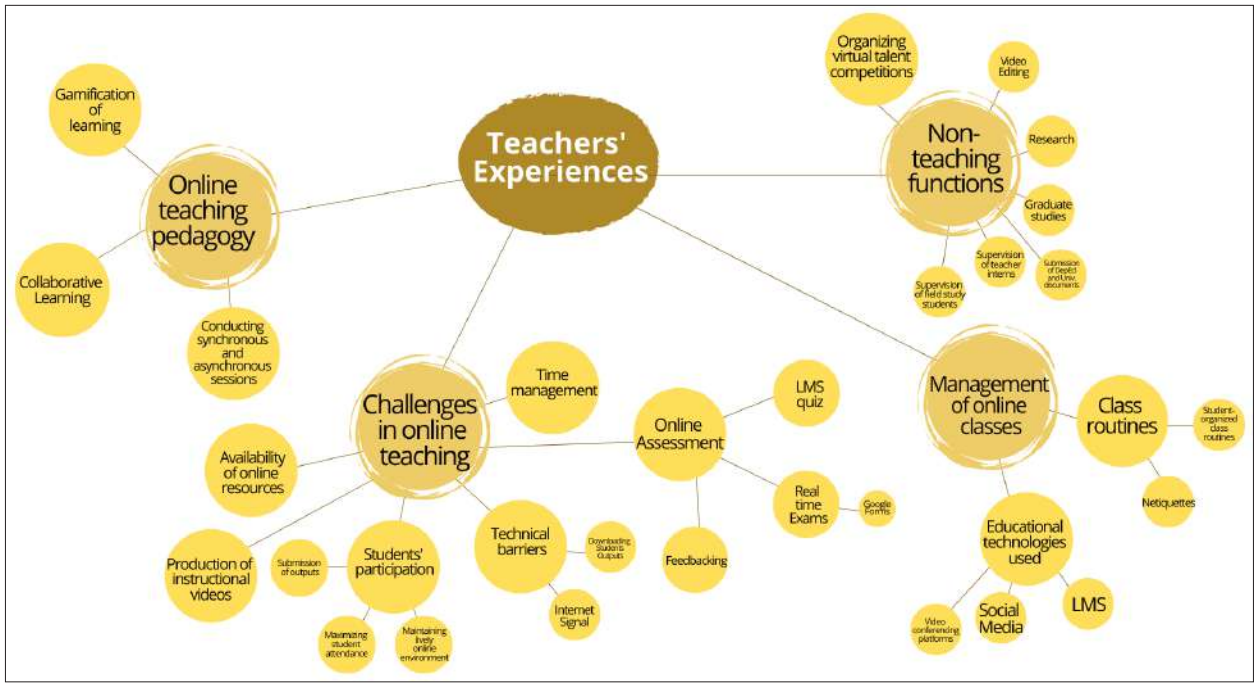


**Figure 7.** *A Concept Map of the Underlying Themes and Sub-themes of Parents' Experiences*

***Theme 1. Online teaching pedagogy***

With the transition from traditional to online learning, teachers have to adjust their teaching strategies. That is the know-how to deliver the teaching-learning process in a virtual set up whether asynchronous or synchronous. It is a great challenge for teachers to maintain the focus of the students. Thus, creative activities using gamification could be useful. This stimulates students to be more engaged. Also, letting students work together increases students' active involvement.

*"Whenever I give activities, I make use of online applications or websites to support them. In this way, students can still strive for the best. Students feel alive when they feel interested, so you always have to come up with ideas and new gimmicks in order to ignite their sleeping enthusiasm like having games." P2, L133-135*

*"Checking or recording the submission of outputs is of great concern since I also have other equally important matters to perform aside from online learning modalities. I set up doable tasks in asynchronous or synchronous and I see to it that I give them personal feedback by replying to their outputs." P1, L39-42*

***Theme 2. Challenges in online teaching***

Teachers must be aware of the things to consider in an online learning setup. These include the use of online resources that will support and facilitate learning for students (Wong et al., 2020) Also, they were bound to use the books. To make it more comprehensive and understandable, teachers have to make or provide video materials that could help students learn more. Teachers should be equipped with ICT skills (Zhu & Liu, 2020). Teachers encounter challenges such as time spent producing instructional videos/materials; poor internet connectivity; students with habitual absences/tardiness and less motivation. Students' prompt submission of outputs is also another challenge. In terms of assessment and feedback, teachers find it hard to give immediate feedback to student outputs due to the delay in submissions and the bulk of documents to be checked.

*"There is no support in the LMS with some mathematical symbols and the like. I have to buy a tablet with a pen to discuss thoroughly because math is an application subject." P1, L10-11*

*"For classroom instructions, I am using Edu Learn as the virtual classroom, Microsoft PPT, and Microsoft word and PDF format for sending hand-outs and paper-works. For instructional videos, I provide links from YouTube for documentaries and inspirational videos. I am also utilizing Filmora (video editor) in editing videos for my instructions (own-made videos) and Adobe Photo Editor for enhancing posters and pictures for LMS."P5, L240-244*

*"The problems I see with this kind of modality is the retention and the interest of the student to learn for a long period of time, the teachers' survival, patience, and effort might go to waste."P5, L290-291*

*"Sometimes, time management is a challenge. P1, L86.*

***Theme 3. Management of online classes***

With online learning, the use of educational technologies such as the Learning Management System, video conferencing platforms, and social media platforms was utilized (Khan, 2020). Announcements, written works, performance tasks, and online learning resources are posted in the LMS. The teachers use Google Meet and Zoom for them to meet their students in synchronous sessions. For immediate announcements, social media platforms such as Facebook and messenger were utilized.

Class routines are still evident in online learning setups. Netiquettes, and online class rules during class discussions, were presented at the beginning of the semester and are consistently introduced to students. Furthermore, teachers let students do some tasks like checking of attendance and reminding their classmates about the requirements and deadlines.

*"Always give the time when are they going to join the class, assign someone to monitor the attendance before and after the class, and offer time to ask the students about their struggles in online set-up" P1, L51-52*

*"In this style, students already know beforehand their role and responsibility every synchronous session e.g. prayer leader, recap leader, timekeeper, secretary, thus, my role as a teacher is mainly focused on instruction and giving feedback." P2, L79-82*

**Theme 4. Non-teaching functions**

Teachers were not limited only to instruction. They are bound to be actively involved in research by attending research conferences and publishing research articles and submitting DepEd and university documents. Also, as part of the Integrated Laboratory School program and objectives, teachers are to supervise teacher interns and Field Study students. They have to check the lesson plans of their interns, prepare them for their teaching demonstration, and supervise their assessment procedure with the students. Furthermore, they have to let them experience other teacher-related tasks like facilitating school activities. Field study students have to experience these at a minimum level. They were given other tasks like organizing virtual talent competitions and sometimes tapped to do video editing for some university activities like Foundation Days.

**Parents' Experiences**

There are four themes identified based on the responses from the parents: 1) parents' plight, 2) perception on the implementation of online learning, 3) parents' observation towards students in online learning, and 4) Complains.

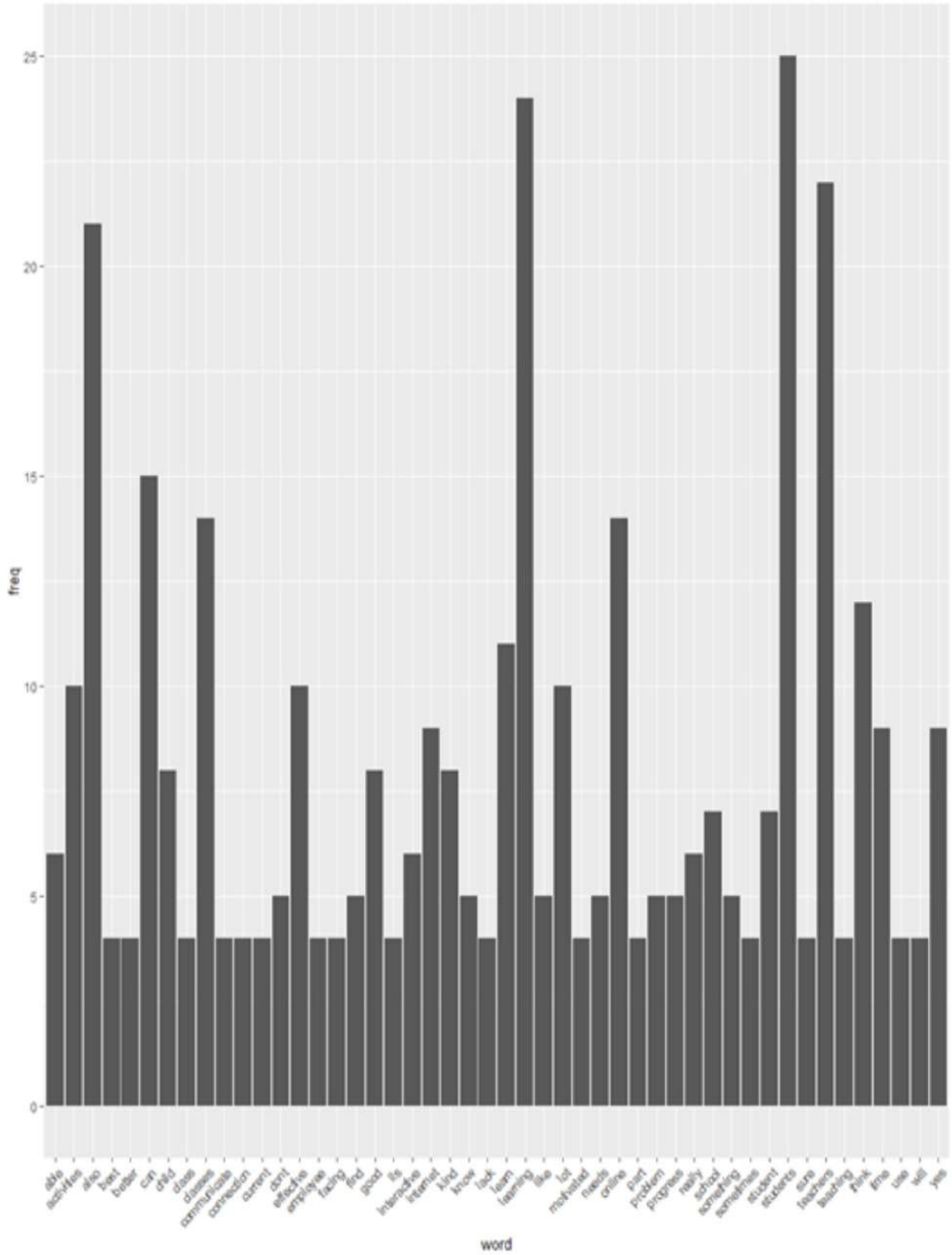


**Figure 8.** *Frequency Word Distribution Containing Centroids for Parents*

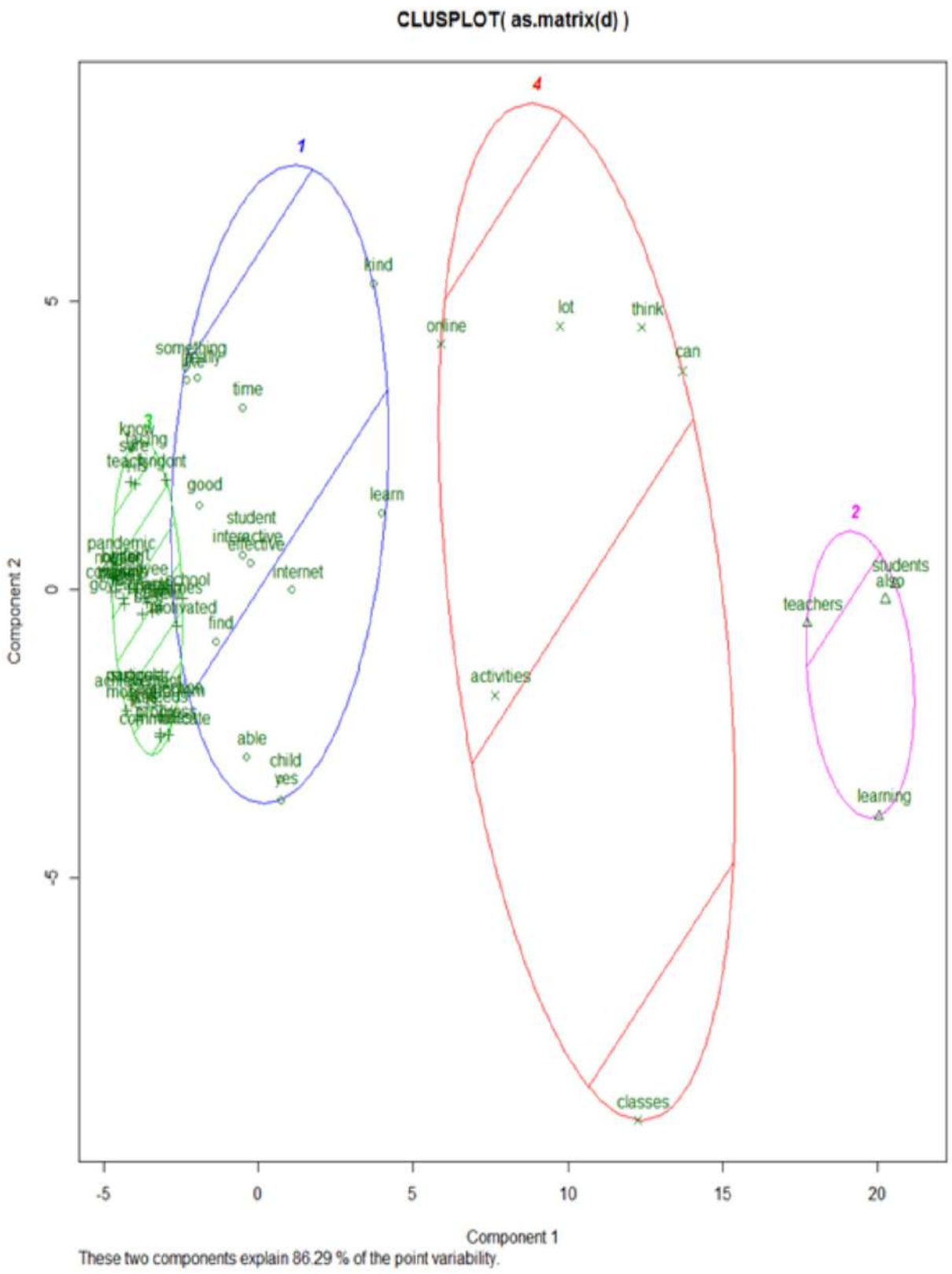


**Figure 9.** *K-means Algorithm Results for Parents*

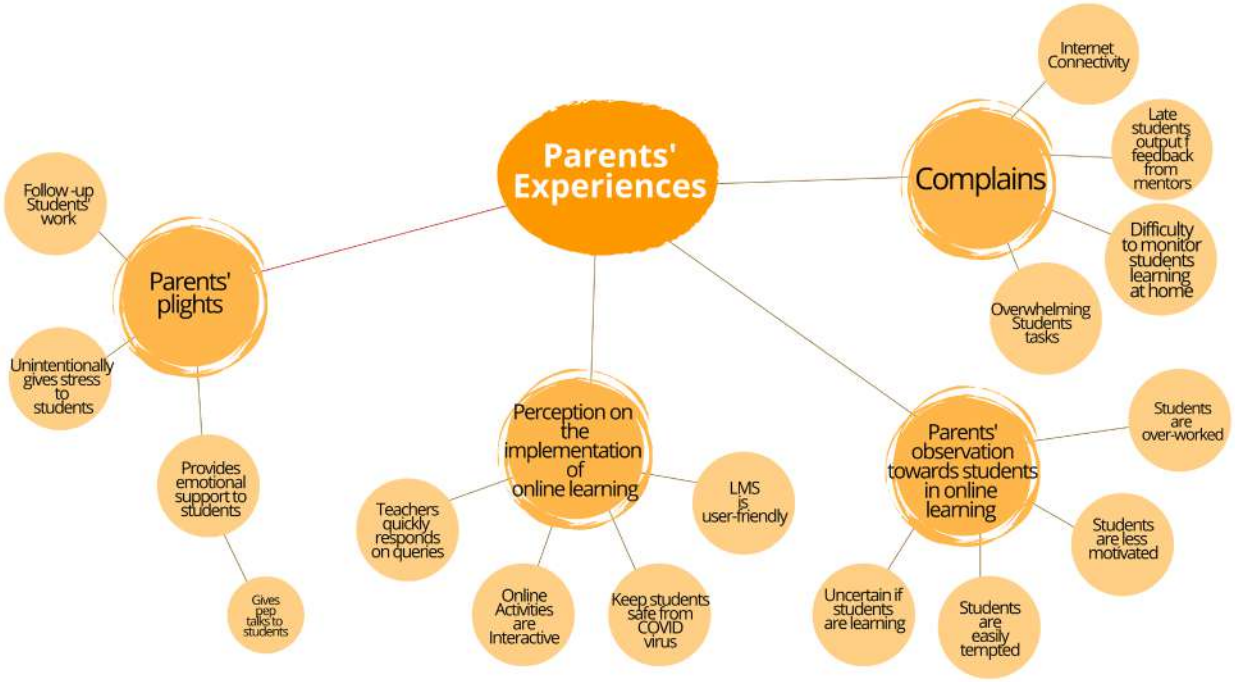


**Figure 10.** *A Concept Map of the Underlying Themes and Sub-themes*

***Theme 1. Parents' plights***

With the implementation of online learning, parents have to closely monitor their children's academic performance. This is an additional role they need to fill since they are the direct contacts of the students. Their support is really necessary to boost the interest of the students in schooling. However, parents' participation in online learning can give unintentional additional stress to students due to pressure.

*"My daughter updates me on her everyday classes."P2, L76*

*"Sometimes we often tend to forget their standpoints and we request something from them that can potentially stress them out even further."P2, L109-110*

***Theme 2. Perception of the implementation of online learning***

With the current situation, parents find online learning very effective. They have close communication with the teachers, and they find the activities interactive. Furthermore, they appreciated the use of the Learning Management System. With this mode of instruction, they are confident that their children are safe from the COVID-19 virus.

*"The particular online teaching/learning strategies that I find effective is the implementation of the online or distant learning in the ILS." P1, L3-4*

*"Yes, the teachers monitor and communicate with us the students' progress and needs by way of having a GC."P1, L34-35*

***Theme 3. Parents' observation of students in online learning***

Parents are uncertain if their children are really learning though they see them doing tasks that are overwhelming. They perceive that sometimes their children are bombarded with many tasks. Also, they noticed that with online learning, wherein there is limited teacher intervention, students are exposed to different recreational activities like playing online games that distract them to focus on their academic tasks (Lee, et al., 2021). Also, parents observed that their children became less motivated as time went by (Ghazi-Saidi et al., 2020).

*"Distracted with online games" P1, L44*

*"I think it's good but it is definitely not the best because of the effects that it can have on a student. There was a time when my husband asked my son if he was still learning in the ILS with this kind of modality then he frankly told us that some teachers are really inspiring and that "he learns a lot from them" but there are also some subjects that he finds it difficult to learn for some reason." P2, L129-132*

*"A mixture of positivity and negativity is what I saw from my son, there were times that he was really motivated in learning but as time goes by, I always see him stressed out lying down in bed feeling unmotivated. I'm not sure if it is because of some teachers or if it is only because E-learning is physically and emotionally draining." P3, L132-135.*

***Theme 4. Complains***

Even though they find online learning effective, they find the feedback of the teachers delayed and perceive their participation in monitoring students' progress as an additional burden (Reimers and Schleider, 2020; Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020; Garbe et al., 2020). They also think that students are given overwhelming tasks. Furthermore, they struggle with internet connectivity.

*"Most teachers do not provide feedback on the students' works. They only give grades and it causes students to not know in which part they lack."P2, L63-6*

*"I am not keen on how teachers monitor my daughter's learning progress and achievement but I heard scores are posted in EduLearn."P2, L75-76*

*"Some students I think cannot handle this much workload that is why I would like to ask the teachers for their kind consideration because it is really not that easy for some."P2, L115-117*

**Students-Teachers-Parents: A Triangle Pattern**

In online learning, there should be a collaboration between students, parents, and teachers (Daniel, 2020; Bryson & Andres, 2020; Parnia, 2020). Each has an important role to achieve academic success in an online learning set-up.

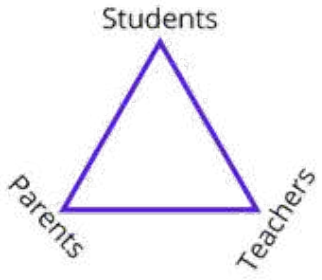


**Figure 11.** *Student-Teachers-Parents: A Triangles Pattern*

This illustrates the importance of parents and teachers working together to support the students. The parent and teacher form the solid base of the triangle, securely supporting the student, who is reaching upwards to achieve his or her highest potential. If any one of these parts in the triangle fails, the whole thing falls apart. Furthermore, this is supported by Connectivism Theory and Zone of Proximal Development. It clearly shows how students, parents, and teachers greatly affect online learning as described in Connectivism Theory. Parents and teachers provide the scaffolding for students to achieve academic success as discussed in Zone of Proximal Development.

## Conclusions

In online learning, students have to accomplish synchronous and asynchronous activities in the Learning Management System or on social media platforms like Facebook. Sometimes they are overwhelmed with the course requirements. And assessment procedure is being compromised because of the delayed

feedback on their performance. Indeed, a learning support system from parents, peers, and teachers is important in online learning. Also, students experienced technical problems in connecting to synchronous and asynchronous sessions. In the absence of a physical classroom, they find it hard to focus because of distractions in their homes. They struggle with time management. Aside from the absence of physical interaction with classmates and teachers, the COVID-19 pandemic brought them irregular sleep patterns and emotional stress.

Teachers have to adapt their teaching strategies to the online learning setup. They used Learning Management System, social media, and video conferencing platforms such as Google meet and Zoom to connect with students and establish class rules and policies. With the lack of available online learning resources, teachers have to produce instructional materials suited for online learning. They struggled with time management and internet connectivity. They have to make activities that would stimulate students' participation and provide online assessment thru the Learning Management System or Google forms without compromising its purpose and quality. Furthermore, teachers were not only limited to instruction. They were tasked to organize virtual activities, perform other roles like being a researcher and supervising teacher educators to interns and Field Study students, and submit needed documents for the DepEd or university.

Parents preferred online learning with the current situation which is the spread of the COVID-19 virus. However, they struggle with internet connectivity and monitoring their children's performance. Parents think that their children are becoming less motivated to learn, out of focus, and exhausted with school work. They are not sure if their children are learning and demand immediate feedback from teachers about their children's outputs.

It is necessary that there should be a collaboration between students, teachers, and parents in designing a curriculum framework for online learning. Students should be given all opportunities to learn with the support of teachers and parents. Teachers and parents should consistently monitor the well-being and academic performance of the students. Thus, it is important that parents and teachers should conduct intervention activities for students who find online school activities hard.

The outcomes of the study are also significant for the improvement of the current system being imposed in schools, particularly the institutions offering online learning modalities. It will support the developers of Learning Management Systems to upgrade their existing programs in accordance with the results and conclusions of the study. The identified lived experiences of students, teachers, and parents in the implementation of the online learning modality can be utilized by curriculum designers to come up with a problem-based or learner-centered curriculum that is adaptive to the occurrence of future pandemic crises, particularly in the use of Online Distance Education. The findings of the study can be used as inputs to recommend innovations or policy directions to improve the condition of learners, teachers, and parents with the use of new and adaptive learning modalities such as online learning during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, it is expected to strengthen the support of the parents in the implementation of new learning modalities - online learning, it particularly acknowledges the importance of parents' roles in the conduct of online learning.

## Recommendations

The school administrators, together with the teachers and students/parent representatives should create clear guidelines on the Implementation of Online Learning in the Laboratory School. Guidelines should include clear policies on the following:

1. Course and requirements
   1.1 Clarity of objectives and topics to be covered in every quarter
   1.2 Clear components of written works and performance tasks and summative evaluation
2. Specified activities to be accomplished per quarter
   2.1 Deadline submission of student outputs
   2.2 Deadline for submission of grades by the faculty

3. A clear schedule of school activities
   3.1 Well-presented and specified activities in the school calendar
4. Student intervention program
   4.1 Protocols on student guidance and counseling
   4.2 Assistance/intervention for students with poor internet signals
   4.3 Clear intervention guidelines for students with failing grades

The study hereby recommends that the course requirements will be thought of prior to the start of the next school year. Clear objective and topics to be covered per quarter should be identified and disseminated to the students during class orientation during the opening of classes, the weight and components of written works, summative examinations and performance tasks should be properly stated.

It was also observed in the study that there is lack of enforcement and identified dates for the deadline of coursework submission for students and submission of grades of the faculty. Hence, it is also suggested that the deadline for submission of student outputs and the deadline for submission of grades by the faculty members are identified and enforced properly. Notice or warning for future sanctions to students with habitual or neglectful manner on the submission of course works should also be part of the said policies.

Because of the many changes and at times failure of following activities stated in the school calendar the study proposes that the laboratory school should also plan with parents and faculty members to craft a well-presented and specified activities in the school calendar.

Further, because of the many instances of emotional stress and a number of students with habitual neglect on the submission of students' tasks, detailed student intervention programs should also be thought of by the teachers, parents, and student representatives. It should include a) protocols on students' guidance and counseling; b) Assistance and intervention for students with poor internet signals; and c) Clear intervention guidelines for students with failing grades.

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EDUCATION

# Student Team Achievement Division (STAD) as Cooperative Learning Strategy: Effect on Students Achievement In Mathematics

Ronald E. Mocorro[1], Danedhel R. Mocorro[2]

*Leyte Normal University, Philippines*
*[1]ronaldmocorro@lnu.edu.ph*
*[2]dhel.redona@gmail.com*

## Abstract

One of the most common problems faced by teachers in classroom instruction is the heterogeneity in student skills and learning rates. The problem arises due to some students lacking the necessary skills while others have already attained mastery. This study investigates the effectiveness of the use of Student Team Achievement Division (STAD) to resolve the issue of heterogeneity in skills and learning rate of students. The study is action research applying a quasi-experimental method using intact classes. Two Grade 6 classes were assigned into two groups, the experimental group using STAD and the control group using the conventional method of teaching. It was made sure that the groups are comparable in their mathematical skills and performance. Pretest and posttest were given to the groups to determine the effect of STAD. Analysis using t-test for independent samples was conducted. The result showed a test statistic of t = -4.735 and a p-value of less than .05, this means that there is a significant difference between the performance of the two groups. In addition, the control group has a mean of 18.45, while the experimental group that used STAD had a mean of 21.61. Hence, the result revealed that students taught using the strategy STAD performed significantly better than those who were taught with the conventional method of teaching.

**Keywords:** *Student Team Achievement Division, STAD, Strategy in Teaching Mathematics, Cooperative Learning, Team Learning*

One of the most difficult problems faced by most teachers in teaching is the heterogeneity in student skills and learning rates. The problem arises due to some students lacking the necessary skills while others have already attained mastery. This employs time in dealing with such and most are wasted, yet in most classrooms students fall into either category.

The most common method of dealing with heterogeneity is using individualized instructions, others are through differentiated instructions. Again, both strategies consume much time and would require more resources and time for preparations.

The heterogeneous class is the most common in the Philippines. These classes are usually composed of not less than 40 students. With this number of students and with different learning rates, it becomes difficult to satisfy their learning needs. Most often students with low learning rates would fall behind and only the fast learners gained mastery.

Teachers are searching for strategies that are beneficial in the teaching and learning process especially to address the heterogeneity of classes. These include a variety of teaching-learning strategies from passive lecturing to active and reflective instructional schemes. Teaching strategies are vital in the educational process for these may determine the type of students whether passive or active learners. Active learning is a method of educating students which confirms their active participation in the learning process. For mastery of the subject matter taught in the classroom, the teacher must engage students and provide them with the proper social skills needed to succeed beyond the classroom environment.

In recent years, studies involving cooperative learning, one kind of student-centered approach such as methods have emerged as an internationally important area of social science research among researchers (Slavin, 2011). Many studies have been conducted in different settings of education, using different kinds of cooperative learning techniques. Such techniques are Learning Together (LT), Jigsaw Grouping, Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT), Group Investigation (GI), Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD), and Team Accelerated Instruction (TAI). A series of research studies have found an appreciation of the relationship between higher cognitive and affective outcomes and cooperative learning approaches. (Tran, V. D, & Lewis, R., 2012a)

Cooperative learning is a method used by educators that help students develop necessary social skills. Healthy interaction skills, the success of the individual student and group members, and the formation of personal and professional relationships are the results of cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1999) and Zakaria, Chin, & Daud (2010), concluded that there are positive changes take place when a teacher changes his teaching method towards a more student-centered approach.

STAD (Students team achievement division) according to (Rai, & Samsuddin, 2007) is one of the many strategies in cooperative learning, which helps promote collaboration and self-regulating learning skills. The active learning model is characterized by students' more involvement in discovery learning or problem-solving than listening to lectures that permit direct transmission of factual knowledge; students' involvement in multiple small group activities, higher-order thinking processes, and students' exploration of their attitudes and values instead of spoon-feeding (Leu & Price-Rom, 2006). Consequently, active learning maximizes students' attention and increases the likelihood that learning is occurring (Stover, Neubert, & Lawlor, 1993). The net consequences of active learning emerge in the form of students' high level of engagement in learning tasks. Because active learning and engagement in learning are interdependent, engaged learning has high levels of active learner participation designed into the plan for learning; thus, learning engagement is also associated with positive academic outcomes, including achievement and persistence in school (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2009).

Cooperative learning is more successful as a teaching-learning practice as compared to the customary teaching method (Iqbal, 2010). The structural approach to cooperative learning is based on the construction, investigation, and orderly use of structures, or content freeways of organizing social interaction in the classroom.

STAD is one of the many strategies in cooperative learning, which helps promote collaboration and self-regulating learning skills (Rai, & Samsuddin, 2007). The reason for the selection of STAD is good

interaction among students, improved positive attitude towards the subject, better self-esteem and increased interpersonal skills. STAD also adds an extra source of learning within the groups because some high achievers act as tutors, which results in high achievements. Finally, it enables the students according to the requirements of modern society by teaching them to work with their colleagues competently and successfully (Balfakih, 2003). The findings have indicated that in teaching 10th-grade chemistry, student teams achievement division (STAD) is a more effective teaching method than the traditional teaching method (Balfakih, 2003).

Many researchers have used cooperative learning in the mathematics classroom because on the learning aspect, mathematics involves typical logic and argumentation, which require specific teaching-learning methodologies. Besides this, mathematics is given vital importance in pedagogies as it is considered inevitable for social life as well as the exploration of the universe.

For students to achieve success in learning mathematics, they should be given the opportunity to communicate mathematically, reason mathematically, and develop self-confidence to solve mathematics problems (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). One of the ways this can be done is through cooperative learning. In cooperative learning, students study in small groups to achieve the same goals using social skills. Many studies show that cooperative learning can improve performance, long-term memory, and positive attitudes towards mathematics, self-concept, and social skills. More opportunities should be given to discussion, problem-solving, creating solutions, and working with peers. Several educators in the field of mathematics education conducted studies using cooperative learning and found an increase in students' mathematics achievement (Brush, T., 1997), (Isik & Tarim, 2009; Nichols & Miller, 1994; Tarim & Akdeniz, 2008; and Tarim, 2009).

In general, many educators of the modern age have found "cooperative learning" as a beneficial teaching-learning technique for different subjects. Cooperative learning is a viable and effective instructional methodology for teaching and learning mathematics. It helps to make mathematics exciting and enjoyable for both students and teachers. Similarly, several studies have examined the effects of cooperative learning methods on students' learning. Research findings of the study conducted by Wyk in 2010 suggest that STAD as a cooperative learning technique is one avenue that effectively promotes a positive change in student perceptions and motivation.

However, among different cooperative learning methods, STAD is easy for teachers to apply and can be used to teach a variety of subjects from primary to university level. In this scenario, it seemed plausible to investigate the reflection of STAD (student team achievement division) in a mathematics classroom in terms of active learning strategy.

This study is anchored on social constructivist theory. Social constructivism is a variety of cognitive constructivism that emphasizes the collaborative nature of learning. Social constructivism was developed by post-revolutionary Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky was a cognitivist but rejected the assumption made by other cognitivist such as Piaget and Perry that it was possible to separate learning from its social context. He argued that all cognitive functions originate in, and must, therefore, be explained as products of social interactions and that learning was not simply the assimilation and accommodation of new knowledge by learners; it was the process by which learners were integrated into a knowledge community.

Vygotsky accepted Piaget's claim that learners respond not to external stimuli but to their interpretation of those stimuli. However, he argued that cognitivist such as Piaget had overlooked the essentially social nature of language. As a result, he claimed they had failed to understand that learning is a collaborative process. Vygotsky distinguished between two developmental levels: The level of actual development is the level of development that the learner has already reached and is the level at which the learner can solve problems independently. The level of potential development (the "zone of proximal development") is the level of development that the learner can reach under the guidance of teachers or in collaboration with peers. The learner can solve problems and understand the material at this level that they are not capable of solving or understanding at their level of actual development; the level of potential development is the level at which learning takes place. It comprises cognitive structures that are still in the process of maturing, but which can only mature under the guidance of or in collaboration with others.

In the constructivist classroom, the focus tends to shift from the teacher to the students. A classroom is no longer a place where the teacher ("expert") pours knowledge into passive students, who wait like empty vessels to be filled. In the constructivist model, the students are urged to be actively involved in their process of learning.

There is a great deal of overlap between a constructivist and social constructivist classroom, except for the greater emphasis placed on learning through social interaction, and the value placed on the cultural background. For Vygotsky, culture gives the child the cognitive tools needed for development. Adults in the learner's environment are conduits for the tools of the culture, which include language, cultural history, social context, and more recently, electronic forms of information access.

In social constructivist classrooms, collaborative learning is a process of peer interaction that is mediated and structured by the teacher. Discussion can be promoted by the presence of specific concepts, problems, or scenarios, and is guided by means of effectively directed questions, the introduction, clarification of concepts and information, and references to previously learned material.

Collaborative learning methods require learners to develop teamwork skills and to see individual learning as essentially related to the success of group learning. The optimal size for group learning is four or five people. Since the average section size is ten to fifteen people, collaborative learning methods often require breaking class into smaller groups, although discussion sections are essentially collaborative learning environments. For instance, in group investigations, students may be split into groups that are then required to choose and research a topic from a limited area. They are then held responsible for researching the topic and presenting their findings to the class. More generally, collaborative learning should be seen as a process of peer interaction that is mediated and structured by the teacher. Discussion can be promoted by a presentation of specific concepts, problems, or scenarios; it is guided by means of effectively directed questions, the introduction, clarification of concepts and information, and references to previously learned material.

This study enables the researcher to develop his mathematical pedagogy. In addition, the researcher wants to determine effective ways in helping pupils increase academic achievement in Mathematics. The primary focus of this study is to investigate the effect of STAD on the learning engagement of students and to examine the effect of STAD on the academic achievement of students in a mathematics classroom.

## Methodology

The study is action research applying a quasi-experimental method using intact classes. In a quasi-experimental design, the researcher uses control and experimental groups but does not randomly assign participants to the group (Creswell,2014). In this study, the quasi-experimental design uses particularly a nonequivalent (pre-test and post-test) control-group design. The Table below shows the quasi-experimental design.

**Table 1**

*Nonequivalent control-group design*

| Group | Pre-test | Treatment | Post-test |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental Group | O | X | O |
| Control Group | O | | O |

To control teachers' training and experience as sources of internal invalidity, the same teacher teaches both groups. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the schools that formed the study sample. Two classes of Grade 6 from a particular school in Leyte, Philippines were selected as the subjects of the study. Each class is composed of 40 and 41 pupils assigned to the control group and experimental group respectively. At the beginning of the experimental trial, a pretest was administered to determine whether the groups were matched or not. The pretest was given to the groups as a normal classroom test that the students regularly take during instruction while the post-test was given as a normal test after a topic has been covered.

In this study, the data were collected after seven sessions: one session for pretest, five sessions for the discussion of the topic - one group using direct instruction (traditional method) and the other group using STAD (Student Team Achievement Division), and one session for the post-test for both groups. The instrument comprises 30 items of multiple choice measuring the ability of pupils in solving areas of plane figures (polygon and circle). The problems are arranged according to the degree of difficulty, from easy to difficult. Validity is an important feature of an instrument (Wiersma, 2000). An instrument is said to have high validity if the degree of its ability to measure what it should be measuring is high. All the items were reviewed by expert Mathematics teachers for validation.

**Student Teams-Achievement Divisions Process**

STAD, according to Slavin in his book "Student Team Learning: A Practical Guide to Cooperative Learning" is made up of five major components: class presentations, teams, quizzes, individual improvement scores, and team recognition (Slavin, 1991).

1. *Class presentations*. The teacher initially introduces the material in a class presentation. In most cases, this is a lecture/discussion, but it can include an audiovisual presentation. Class presentations in Student Teams-Achievement Divisions differ from usual teaching only in that they must clearly focus on the STAD unit. Thus, students realize that they must pay careful attention during the presentation because doing so will help them do well on the quizzes, and their quiz scores determine their team scores.

2. *Teams.* Teams are composed of four or five students who represent a cross-section of the class in academic performance, sex, and race or ethnicity. The major function of the team is to prepare its members to do well on the quizzes. After the teacher presents the material, the team meets to study worksheets or other material. Most often, the study takes the form of students quizzing one another to be sure that they understand the content, or of students working problems together and correcting any misconceptions that may have caused teammates to make mistakes. The team is the most important feature of STAD. At every point, the emphases are on the members doing their best for the team and on the team doing its best for the members. The team provides important peer support for academic performance; it also provides the mutual concern and respect that are important for producing such outcomes as improved intergroup relations, self-esteem, and acceptance of mainstreamed students.

3. *Quizzes*. After one to two periods of teacher presentation and one to two periods of team practice, students take individual quizzes composed of course-content-relevant questions. The quizzes are designed to test the knowledge the students have gained from class presentations and team practice. During the quizzes, students are not permitted to help one another. This ensures that every student is individually responsible for knowing the material.

4. *Individual improvement scores*. The idea behind the individual improvement scores is to give each student a performance goal that he or she can reach, but only by working harder than in the past. Any student can contribute maximum points to his or her team in this scoring system, but no student can do so without showing definite improvement over past performance.

Each student is given a "base" score, the minimum score to achieve on each quiz. Then students earn points for their teams based on the amount their quiz scores exceed their base scores. After every two quizzes, base scores are recomputed to challenge students who start performing better to improve further and to adjust to a more realistic level than the base scores that were set too high for other students.

5. *Team recognition.* A newsletter is the primary means of rewarding teams and individual students for their performance. Each week the teacher prepares a newsletter to announce team scores. The newsletter also recognizes individuals showing the greatest improvement or completing perfect papers and reports cumulative team standings. In addition to or instead of the newsletter, many teachers use bulletin boards, special privileges, small prizes, or other rewards to emphasize the idea that doing well as a team is important.

## Results and Discussion

Prior to the treatment, data were collected from the subject in the experimental group and control group using the Teacher-made Test in finding the Area of polygon and circle to assess if the two groups have the same academic level before the application of the treatment or intervention.

**Table 2**

*Pre-test achievement mean score of the experimental and control group*

| Group | N | Mean | SD | t-value | df | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Control | 40 | 10.28 | 3.226 | .822 | 79 | .413 |
| Experimental | 41 | 9.68 | 3.251 | | | |

*Statistically significant at 0.05*

The result shown in Table 2 indicates that the difference between the mean score of the two groups was not statistically significant at a .05 significant level. The p-value is greater than .05 indicating that the groups were significantly the same academic level and thus suitable for comparison in their academic achievements after the intervention.

Table 3 shows the mean of the control group and experimental group which are 18.45 and 21.61 with a standard deviation of 2.511 and 3.434 respectively. The experimental group which is the group using the STAD is significantly higher compared to the control group which uses direct instruction. Hence, a statistical test using t-test at $\alpha$=0.05 significance level revealed that there is a significant difference between the means of the two groups since the P-value =.000 < 0.05.

**Effectiveness of STAD**

**Table 3**

*Post-test achievement mean score of the experimental and control group*

| Group | N | Mean | SD | t-value | df | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Control | 40 | 18.45 | 2.511 | -4.735 | 73.280 | .000 |
| Experimental | 41 | 21.61 | 3.434 | | | |

*Statistically significant at 0.05*

The results of this study indicated that using STAD as a cooperative learning approach resulted in higher achievement than the direct instruction approach (traditional teaching). The reason for the increase in students' achievement could be caused by the students' involvement in explaining and receiving the explanation in which the concepts can be easily understood.

Cooperative learning gives more space and opportunities for students to discuss, solve problems, create solutions, provide ideas, and help each other. The results were also in line with previous studies, as reported by some researchers such as Nichols and Miller (1994), and Tarim and Akdeniz (2008). Traditional teaching methods are teacher-based, therefore, less opportunity is given to students for discussion, problem-solving, creating solutions, and working with peers.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

STAD (Student Team Achievement Division) as a cooperative learning strategy shows significant improvement in mathematics achievement among pupils/ students. Therefore, teachers in school, especially teachers who teach mathematics need to be aware of the significance and benefits of this learning strategy and thus change the practice of teacher-centered teaching methods to student-centered teaching methods. STAD should be employed so that pupils can help each other in a small group. More research also shows that cooperative learning such as STAD helps students gain confidence and have a positive attitude towards mathematics (Zakaria, E., Chin, L. C., & Daud, Y., 2010). Therefore, teachers are encouraged to practice this method regularly and effectively.

This study lasted only seven sessions. This means that students are exposed to learning in a very short period. Therefore, research should take a longer period so that the result of this study can be validated.

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EDUCATION

# Development and Integration of Infographics in English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP) among Senior High School Students in the New Normal

Mari Angela C. Farcon, Leonardo B. Dorado

*Adventist University of the Philippines*
2048933@aup.edu.ph

## Abstract

Infographics, collective for information graphics, are used in this study as an instructional tool in a course/subject in Senior High School in the Philippines. The purpose of this study is to examine whether the integration of infographics in teaching instruction results in a significant difference in the academic performance of Senior High School students and to explore the student's perceptions of the infographics. The quasi-experimental design was utilized in this study. Forty participants that were equally divided into the experimental and control group were included in the study. The treatment persisted for the whole second quarter of the school year, approximately 8 weeks. Using a summative test and a questionnaire assessing students' perceptions, the data were collected and the results revealed significantly higher academic performance in the experimental group than in the control group. Further, infographics were found to have a positive impact on their intellectual, life skills, and affective development. This study definitively answers the question regarding the effect of infographics on the academic performance of Senior High School students in their English for Academic and Professional Purposes subject during the new normal.

**Keywords:** *infographics, multimedia learning, visualization, perception*

As the society in the state of globalization of this age requires a greater pound of English language, the need for competent English language skills in the professional and academic settings becomes a crucial concern amongst educators. Being proficient in English language skills amongst learners, senior high school students has been a prevalent problem and is an extreme challenge to the school administrators, teachers, and even parents.

Based on the teaching experience of the researcher, the students' English language skills, particularly comprehension and communication skills, are still low. Moreover, according to the EF English Proficiency Index (2021), the English proficiency of the Filipino workforce has declined. This implies that the English proficiency of Filipino graduates is categorized only at the basic working proficiency level.

The curriculum implemented in the Senior High School, particularly Grade 12 level, includes the teaching of English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP) as well as other language-based courses. This subject caters to the development of communication skills in English for academic and professional purposes (K to 12 Curriculum Guide - Department of Education, 2017). One of its objectives is to develop competencies in writing reaction paper, concept paper and position paper. The EAPP subject requires students to produce these papers to pass the course. However, it is revealed that students often end up submitting for compliance only, without evidence that they have maximized learning the content and concepts. One of the reasons is the difficulty of the students in contextualizing activities and the lack of resources particularly evident in the new normal where students are under the modular learning approach. Therefore, there is a strong need for educators to bridge this gap.

Teaching and learning in this information and digital age, and the Philippine education system in the new normal, the Philippine K-12 curriculum continues to embrace various technology platforms. Digital literacy is an important factor in education today as well as in lifelong learning. The ability to access, process, understand, and create information or media content in the digital environment is known as digital literacy (Hsieh, 2012). Many students, entering educational settings, make the learning process meaningful by using digital devices in digital environments (Yamada-Rice, 2011). Learning strategies can be innovated using technology in solving the problem of poor reading comprehension. In fact, innovation is made in the utilization of technology in language learning. Moreover, it has been evident that technology has given an amazingly positive effect on learners especially (Bani-Hamad and Abdullah, 2019).

The academic traditional setting has been largely dominated by texts. The digital age today demands the place of visual resources in education. Visual literacy has been a part of 21st-century skills as this generation is largely interacting with visual materials and information. In this information and digital age, the teaching and learning process is on the adaptation and creation of a methodology paradigm. Teachers are faced with the challenge of using interactive, effective as well as eye-catching materials to aid and reinforce student learning. The learners of today are exposed and immersed in a number of visual information through the pervasive use of social media and other visual cultures. Therefore, visual literacy is needed to be integrated into pedagogy.

**Infographics**

Infographics is described as 'a visualization of data or ideas that tries to convey complex information to an audience in a manner that can be quickly consumed and easily understood (Smiciklas, 2012). Additionally, it was described by Toth (2013) as a combination of visuals and texts that are prepared in order to provide easy and understandable information about a subject to their readers. Krum (2014) defines infographics as graphic design that combines data visualizations, illustrations, text, and images together into a format that tells a comprehensive description. Lamb and Jhonson (2014) describe infographics as a visual presentation of information, which is prepared for readers to visualize the information that is normally difficult to understand. Infographics simplify complex texts and make them easier for a reader to digest. It should be attractive to the readers and must be able to clarify the content clearly. Researchers found out that infographics are 'modern, written artifacts about collected resources in a dynamic, visual

format' (Davis and Quinn, 2014) Infographics offer new ways of engaging a logical sequence to present the content in an interesting way (Lamb & Jhonson, 2014; Yildirim, 2017)

The researcher considered the use of infographics as a tool to enhance the academic performance of Senior High School students in English for Academic and Professional Purposes. Infographics are a good pedagogical strategy that can enrich and nurture the development of students' reading comprehension skills (Cupita and Franco, 2019). Additionally, the use of infographics develops digital and visual skills, analytical thinking, creativity, and long-term memorization of vocabulary (Matrix and Hodson, 2014). A number of studies considered infographics as an effective tool both for communication and the transfer of information (Lazard & Atkinson, 2015). They also state that this pedagogical tool, consisting of text and visuals has a positive effect on the growth of the readers. With this deliberation, infographics have emerged as a popular visual approach to efficiently deliver abstract and complex instructional content to support students' learning (Lamb and Johnson, 2014; Smiciklas, 2012).

Infographics provide information to be a part of a certain flow (Krum, 2014). This way, information can be efficiently presented with a minimum explanation, and at the same time, the relationships of the content can be provided, as mentioned. Davidson (2014) as well as Lamb and Jhonson (2014) propose the basic features of infographics including infographics should be simple, being able to present complex information quickly and clearly, integrate visuals and texts for the presentation of information, self-explanatory and attractive for readers. Furthermore, they have explained that infographics should encapsulate sufficient details in one visual while still being clear and precise. Therefore, as infographics are widely accepted and used as a device for efficiently delivering content, it needs to be precise, and clear in delivering abstract, complex, and dense instructional content (Dunlap & Lowenthal, 2016).

A study conducted by Ozdamli, et al. (2016) determined students' views about infographics. The study revealed that when compared to traditional course visuals, infographics were practical visual tools. Further, the respondents perceived that it was easier to understand and more satisfactory when the subject was taught using infographics.

In another study of Alrwele (2017), it was revealed that the experimental group who experienced the use of infographics have significantly performed better than the control group. Accordingly, 90% in the experimental group claimed that infographics positively affected their intellectual, life skills, and emotional development. Additionally, the study suggested that infographics could have substantial education possibilities to enhance life skills and intellectual and affective dimensions among learners. The results of the above studies have presented pedagogical alternative tools for teaching abstract or complex concepts to students.

In this paper, the researcher has come out with a pedagogy of integrating infographics to enhance the academic performance in the Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP) of Senior High School students during this new normal where an alternative learning modality is implemented. The researcher adheres to the value that infographics could be an effective alternative and tool to enhance students' learning process and therefore improve their English language skills.

## Methodology

### Research Design

In this quantitative research, a quasi-experiment design was utilized in two groups with observations before and after the treatment. Also, a descriptive survey method was conducted to identify the impacts of infographics as perceived by the research participants.

### Population and Sampling

This pedagogical intervention involved two groups of students who are in Grade 12 –Technical Vocational Livelihood Strand at a public school in Biñan City. There were 40 participants aged between 17-20 years old. The students are under the blended distance learning modality wherein they learn through digital modules and online learning. These two groups of students were selected through a purposive

sampling method based on their performance in the EAPP subject (English for Academic and Professional Purposes) for the first quarter. All the research participants are either fairly satisfactory to satisfactory descriptors of the grading scale.

**Instruments**

This research consisted of both pre-test and post-test. Fifty test items were all derived from the self-learning modules. Both tests were administered to measure and analyze the student's ability in comprehending the lessons in EAPP for the second quarter. These tests were taken at the end of the quarter during the traditional intervention procedure.

An infographic evaluation checklist was utilized to evaluate the developed infographics in EAPP subject. The checklist was adopted by Arwele 2017 in his study about The Effects of Infographics on Student Achievement and Student's Perceptions of the Impacts of Infographics. Items on the checklist were based on standards of effective outstanding infographics that are commonly cited in related studies (Davidson, 2014; Davis & Quinn, 2014; Lamb & Johnson, 2014)

The study also adopted a questionnaire by Arwele 2017 to identify the student's perceptions of the infographics developed and utilized. The questionnaire was used to assess the student's feelings and thoughts about the infographics as a teaching and learning tool. The questionnaire included 19 items with positive statements assessing students' perceptions with respect to three dimensions of infographics' benefits: intellectual (items 1-10), life skills (items 11- 15), and affective benefits (items 16-19). Participants were asked to indicate to what degree they agree or disagree with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree).

**Data Gathering Procedure**

The researcher secured assent and consent forms from the respondents and their parents/guardians before conducting the research method. The primary study began during the second quarter of the school year 2021-2022 and lasted nine weeks. The pre-test was given without the intervention. This test consists of 50-item questions covering the lessons for the second quarter of EAPP in the academic year 2021-2022. The students were given two hours of maximum time to finish answering the questions using Google Forms. The test scores were collected and recorded after the students had taken the pre-test.

The self-learning modules were given to the control group, which consisted of 20 students. The self-learning modules, with infographics as intervention, were then given to the experimental group, which consisted of 20 students as well. Both groups were then given the post-test which was analogous to the pre-test administered before. Furthermore, a survey questionnaire, adopted from the study of Arlwele (2017) was provided to the research participants to identify the impacts of infographics. The scores were collected, recorded, and analyzed.

**Data Analysis**

Data were entered and analyzed using Jamovi (2019). The data were statistically examined utilizing mean, weighted mean, standard deviation, and t-test. The accepted significance level was determined to be $p<.05$.

## Results and Discussion

The level of reading comprehension was determined and analyzed before and after the use of modules with infographics in the experimental group. Likewise, the level of reading comprehension was also determined and analyzed before and after the use of modules without infographics in the control group. Their scores were compared to test the impact of infographics in the reading comprehension of the students. Discussion of the results are provided in this section.

**Pre-test Scores of the Control and Experimental Groups**

An independent sample t-test was used to analyze the difference between the two groups in terms of their scores in the pre-test. The descriptive statistics of the research participants' score in the pre-test and as well as the t and p values are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1
*Descriptive Statistics and Independent T-Test for the Pre-test*

| Group | N | Mean | SD | Mean Difference | t | df | p | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Control | 20 | 18.65 | 6.58 | -1.05 | -.526 | 38 | .602 | Not Significant |
| Experimental | 20 | 19.70 | 6.05 | | | | | |

The results in Table 1 show that there is no significant difference between the pre-test scores of the control group and the experimental group. The mean of the control group is 18.65 (SD = 6.58) and the mean of the experimental group is 19.70 (*SD* = 6.05) with $p$ = .602. This implies that the two groups have the same achievement levels before the treatment was conducted.

**Post-test Scores of the Control and Experimental Groups**

An independent sample t-test was used to analyze the difference between the two groups in terms of their scores in the post-test. The descriptive statistics of the research participants' score in the post-test and as well as the t and p values are displayed in Table 2.

**Table 2**
*Descriptive Statistics and Independent T-Test for the Post-test*

| Group | N | Mean | SD | Mean Difference | t | df | p | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Control | 20 | 22.75 | 7.33 | -10.05 | -4.69 | 38 | .000 | Significant |
| Experimental | 20 | 32.80 | 6.17 | | | | | |

After the treatment was conducted, the mean and the standard deviation of the two groups' scores were computed. To answer the question regarding the effectiveness of infographics to enhance the academic performance of Senior High School students, an independent sample t-test was conducted between the two groups' scores in the post-test.

The results in Table 2 show that the p-value of the difference is less than .05. This implies that there is a significant difference in the average score of the post-test between the control group and the experimental group. In the experimental group, the mean is 32.80 (*SD* = 6.17) while the mean of the control group is 22.75 (*SD* = 7.33). This result showed that the post-test scores of the students in the experimental group is significantly higher than the control group.

**Gain Scores of the Control and Experimental Groups**

Another independent sample t-test was used to analyze the difference between the two groups in terms of their gain scores from the pre-test to the post-test scores. The descriptive statistics of the research participants' gain as well as the t and p values are displayed in Table 3.

**Table 3**
*Descriptive Statistics and Independent T-Test for Gain Score*

| Group | N | Mean | SD | Mean Difference | t | df | p | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Control | 20 | 4.10 | 3.29 | -9.00 | 38 | 38 | .000 | Significant |
| Experimental | 20 | 13.10 | 3.01 | | | | | |

The results in Table 3 show that the p-value of the difference is less than .05. This implies that there is a significant difference in the gain score of the participants in the control group and the experimental group. In the experimental group, the mean is 4.10 (SD = 3.29) while the mean of the control group is 13.10 (SD = 3.01). This result showed that the use of infographics significantly improved the academic performance of the students in the experimental group compared to the control group.

This result affirms that infographics can be utilized as a learning tool in education for both learners and educators (Naparin & Saad 2017). It is also found to be an effective instructional tool in improving students' achievement and capacities (Young & Ruediger 2016). The result of this study is also consistent with the findings of Alrwele (2017) in his study on the effectiveness of infographics in students' achievement where the experimental group performed significantly higher and better than the control group.

**Impact of Infographics in Intellectual Development**

Table 4 shows the results of the students' perceptions questionnaire regarding the impact of infographics in their intellectual development. The grand mean is 3.89 with standard deviation of 0.88.

**Table 4**

*Descriptive Statistics in the Impact of Infographics in Intellectual Development*

| | Statement | Mean | SD | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I think that infographics capture my attention and keep me engaged. | 3.75 | 1.12 | Strongly Agree |
| 2. | I believe that infographics help me easily understand complex information. | 3.90 | .911 | Strongly Agree |
| 3. | I think that infographics enable me to determine key words and concepts in text. | 3.90 | .85 | Strongly Agree |
| 4. | I believe that infographics help me filter out irrelevant data. | 4.05 | .89 | Strongly Agree |
| 5. | I feel that infographics help me organize information into logical groups. | 4.00 | .65 | Strongly Agree |
| 6. | I think that infographics help me to understand hidden relationships. | 3.75 | .79 | Strongly Agree |
| 7. | I believe that infographics help me to easily connect new and old information. | 3.65 | 1.14 | Strongly Agree |
| 8. | I think that infographics improve my critical thinking. | 3.95 | .76 | Strongly Agree |
| 9. | I believe that infographics make it easier for me to recall information. | 3.70 | 1.03 | Strongly Agree |
| 10. | I think that infographics inform me about the responsible use of images. | 4.20 | .62 | Strongly Agree |
| | Grand Mean | 3.90 | 0.88 | |

*Legend: 1.00-1.50 Strongly Disagree, 1.51-2.50 Disagree, 2.51-3.50 Agree, 3.51-4.00 Strongly Agree*

As shown in Table 4, the respondents perceived that the developed and integrated infographics improve their knowledge in the responsible use of images.

This finding confirms that the use of infographics can develop digital and visual skills, analytical thinking, and creativity (Matrix & Hodson 2014). Also, the respondents perceived infographics as a helpful tool to filter out irrelevant data with a weighted mean of 4.05 (SD 0.887). In the last rank with a weighted mean of 3.65 (SD 1.14), the respondents strongly agree with the idea that infographics help them to easily connect new and old information.

In general, the respondents strongly agree on the favorable impacts of infographics on their intellectual development. The findings affirm that infographics can enrich and nurture the development of reading comprehension (Cupita and Franco, 2019), increase understanding in the learning process (Noh, et.al 2017), and guarantees an active acquisition of knowledge and intellectual activity stimulation (Pisarenko & Bondarev, 2016).

**Impact of Infographics in the Life Skills Development**

Table 5 shows the results of the students' perceptions questionnaire regarding the impact of infographics in their life skills development. The grand mean is 3.74 with standard deviation of 0.86.

**Table 5**

*Descriptive Statistics in the Impact of Infographics in the Life Skills Development*

| | Statement | Mean | SD | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I feel that infographics help me to communicate what I have learned to others. | 3.90 | .91 | Strongly Agree |
| 2. | I believe that infographics motivate me to search the web for appropriate images. | 3.60 | .99 | Strongly Agree |
| 3. | I feel that infographics improve my presentation skills. | 3.75 | .64 | Strongly Agree |
| 4. | I believe that infographics teach me to choose and apply principles of design. | 3.55 | 1.10 | Strongly Agree |
| 5. | I feel that infographics help me acquire teamwork skills. | 3.90 | .64 | Strongly Agree |
| | Grand Mean | 3.74 | 0.86 | Strongly Agree |

*Legend: 1.00-1.50 Strongly Disagree, 1.51-2.50 Disagree, 2.51-3.50 Agree, 3.51-4.00 Strongly Agree*

As presented in Table 5, the first and last indicator received the highest weighted mean of 3.90 (SD 0.64) which can be inferred verbally as strongly agree. This result interprets the infographics as a tool to help the respondents to communicate what they have learned to others and acquire teamwork skills. This finding confirms that infographics are effective for communication and the transfer of information (Lazaro & Atkinson, 2015).

In the last rank with a weighted mean of 3.55 (SD 1.10), the respondents strongly agreed that infographics teach them to choose and apply principles of design. This finding suggests that students create their infographics as the application of learning and application of the principles of design. This result also confirms that infographics increase productivity and creativity in the learning process (Noh, et.al 2017).

Collectively, the respondents strongly agreed on the impacts of infographics on their life skills development. This affirms that infographics helped the students to communicate what they have learned, motivated them to explore the web for images, improve their presentation skills, choose and apply principles of design, and acquire teamwork skills.

**Impact of Infographics in the Affective Development**

Table 6 shows the results of the students' perceptions questionnaire regarding the impact of infographics in their affective development. The grand mean is 3.71 with standard deviation of 1.01

**Table 6**

*Descriptive Statistics in the Impact of Infographics in the Affective Development*

| | Statement | Mean | SD | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I believe that infographics improve my ability to give and receive feedback. | 3.60 | .99 | Strongly Agree |
| 2. | I feel that infographics make me appreciate teamwork. | 3.80 | .95 | Strongly Agree |
| 3. | I think that infographics improve my motivation to learn. | 3.80 | 1.01 | Strongly Agree |
| 4. | I think that infographics give me more self-confidence regarding my ability to learn and succeed. | 3.65 | 1.09 | Strongly Agree |
| | Grand Mean | 3.71 | 1.01 | Strongly Agree |

Legend: 1.00-1.50 Strongly Disagree, 1.51-2.50 Disagree, 2.51-3.50 Agree, 3.51-4.00 Strongly Agree

Table 6 presents the perception of the respondents on the impact of infographics in terms of affective development. The respondents strongly agree with the idea that infographics make them appreciate teamwork and improve their motivation to learn. The findings affirm the students' view that infographics are practical tools that are easy to understand and make subjects more satisfactory (Ozdamli, et.al, 2016) In general, the respondents strongly agreed on the positive impact of infographics on their affective development. This confirms that infographics helped the learners to improve their ability to give and receive feedback, appreciate teamwork, improve motivation to learn, and improve self-confidence in their ability to learn and succeed.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, it can be inferred that infographics are useful and effective in terms of improving the academic performance of learners in English for Academic and Professional Purposes. The post-test results of the respondents in the experimental group improved significantly higher than the control group. Likewise, the gain scores of the students in the experimental group with the used of infographics is substantially higher than those in the control group.

The infographics have also the potential to improve students' intellectual, life skills, and affective development as perceived by the student who used the infographic materials. This study affirms that infographics are efficient for delivering abstract and complex instructional content (Lamb and Johnson, 2014).

Thus, the used of the developed infographic materials is recommended to aid teachers who teach complex and abstract instructional content to improve academic performance among learners. Educators may use this concept and discover further the potential of infographics in the teaching and learning process in other learning areas during the new normal.

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PSYCHOLOGY

# Parents as Teachers During Pandemic: Effects of Psychoeducational Intervention on Parent's Academic Involvement Among Parents of Teenagers

Orpha Jef S. Silvestre, Rhalf Jayson F. Guanco,
Mylene S. Gumarao, Sheryll Ann M. Castillo

*Adventist University of the Philippines*
orphasilvestre@gmail.com

## Abstract

One problem that arose during the pandemic is the concern of parents regarding the academic performance of their children. Parental academic involvement has a big factor in students' success. However, the COVID-19 pandemic affected the daily routine of families and challenged both the parents and their children in their academic activities. Quasi-experimental research, particularly the one-group pretest-posttest design was used to investigate the effect of psycho-educational intervention on parents' academic involvement among parents of students aged 13 to 21 years from Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro. Twelve participants completed the intervention program. The results of the study revealed that there is a significant difference in the pre-test score and post-test mean scores of the parents' academic involvement. The result confirms that psychoeducational intervention helps increase the parents' academic involvement with their teenage children. Thus, it is recommended that the intervention program should be administered to a bigger population size with coordination from schools and teachers.

**Keywords:** *Parental involvement, academic involvement, teenage children, COVID-19 pandemic*

The COVID 19 pandemic killed more than two hundred thousand people from 148 countries. The crisis has also affected the economy and socio-economic status of many citizens. Consequently, many issues emerged and need to be addressed like the closure of schools in most countries and its impact on the learning and burden of education to most students, parents, and teachers (Union, 2020).

In this unpredictable time of the pandemic, parents are challenged as they try to establish new norms in the household. Due to these changes, it is common to question the approaches of parents toward their children. Many parents are overwhelmed as they perform their roles in these challenging times.

A study in India (Sahitya & Roopesh, 2020) posited that there are 63% of parents who feel stressed since the COVID-19 pandemic because of much more work like taking care of their homes and families. Since interaction with the outside world is limited, families are spending much more time together than they normally do and this poses new challenges for parents-children's relationships (Abrams, 2021).

Adolescence can be a confusing time of change for teens and parents and parenting with teenagers can be challenging. Many parents find it hard to adapt to the changes in their child's behavior as they grow up, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic wherein parenting can be demanding since parents may find themselves in a challenging situation with their teenage children locked down within the house (UNESCO, 2020). They are experiencing challenges in finances, worries regarding the academic performance of their children, and even the behavior of their child. Even before the pandemic, many families experienced increased economic stress with 67% of mothers experiencing stress with their child's misbehavior (Sturge-Apple, et al.,2014).

On the other hand, this kind of challenge was also associated with the parents' problems when it comes to the academic performance of their children brought most likely by the new normal, i.e., online classes. Nevertheless, parents desire that their children excel academically despite these circumstances.

A study from the Philippines (Manlapaz, 2020) on distance learning difficulties of K-12 parents found that there are 50.31% who are keeping their children focused on schoolwork (instead of other online activities); establishing a daily routine (49.26%); balancing household responsibilities and teaching (41.83%); establishing a wake-up and bedtime schedule (33.40%), and balancing working from home and teaching (33.41%).

Aside from the attention needed to be given to the teenager, there are also technical issues and difficulties with online learning. At the very least, there are about 15-16 million K-12 public schools in the US with inadequate internet connections; this is even more challenging in the Philippines where distance learning can also be very expensive (Bueno & Pacis, 2020)

Parents need to be open to changes to anticipate the challenges of accelerating in the world of education which is mostly done online so that their children can continuously develop themselves—both in their chores at home and in their academic responsibilities. Lack of interventions and addressing the issue were found to be appropriate and need to be addressed specifically in rural areas where parents have a hard time when it comes to providing for the needs of their children, especially on the materials and expenses. Parents also are given the task of simultaneously doing their parental responsibilities and attending to the academic needs of their children.

For this reason, this study was conducted to determine the academic involvement of parents in nurturing their children during the pandemic. A psychoeducational intervention program was provided to at least ease the burden and cope with the situation. Specifically, this study determined the level of academic involvement of parents before and after the intervention program. It was also investigated if there is a significant difference in parental academic involvement as a result of the psycho-educational intervention program.

## Methods

### *Research Design*

Quasi-experimental research, specifically the one-group pretest-posttest design, was used to examine the effect of a psycho-educational intervention on parents' academic involvement. The intervention program

aimed to lighten the burden of the parents as they deal with the academic well-being of their children during the pandemic.

***Population and Sampling***

The research was conducted on the Island of Occidental Mindoro. The researcher gathered the data in a small community in Sablayan where minimal church gatherings are allowed but with strict compliance to the health protocols.

The researcher used purposive sampling in selecting the participants. The target population are parents of students aged 13-21 years old who are currently enrolled in a modular program or an online class.

The participants are parents aged 30-60 years old. During the pre-test, there were 22 participants, composed of mothers 16 (73%) and eight (27%) fathers. However, on the post-test, there were only 12 participants left. There are seven (7) mothers (58%) and five (5) fathers (42%) who completed the psycho-educational intervention program. Thus, only the responses in the pre-test and post-test of the 12 parents who finished the intervention program were included in the data analysis

Four of the 12 participants are 30-40 years old, five of them are 41-50 years old, and three of them are 50-60 years old. Among the participants, there were 7 (40%) whose children are aged 13-15, 5 (47%) were 16-18 years old, and 2 (13%) were 19-21 years old. Of these children, nine are male and six are female.

***Research Instrumentation***

The questionnaire used for the study is the Parent Academic Involvement Rating Scale consisting of 20 self-made questions to measure the parental academic involvement of the participants. The parents answered the Likert-scale questionnaire with the following responses: 1-Never, 2-Rarely, 3- Sometimes, 4-Often, and 5-Always

The weighted mean scores of each of the items and the overall computation were ranked and verbally interpreted as very low (1.00-1.50), low (1.51-2.50), moderately high (2.51-3.50), high (3.51-4.50), and very high (4.51-5.00)

***Data Gathering Procedures***

As soon as the church head elder approved the request, a hard copy of informed consent was distributed to each of the participants prior to the program. The parents of teenagers were surveyed using the paper and pencil survey method since the population is from a province with a very limited source of internet connection.

The psychoeducational intervention program was conducted for a whole month and a week. There was a pre-test given to the participants at the first session of the intervention, followed by a series of presentations every sabbath afternoon composed of lectures and activities. A post-test was given during the last day of the intervention program.

***Data Analysis***

Data were entered and analyzed using Jamovi computer software (2019). The mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of parent involvement on the academic well-being of their children. The paired sample t-test was utilized to determine if there is a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test scores of the respondents.

***Ethical Considerations***

A letter of consent was sent to the church head elder where the research was conducted. Before the intervention, informed consent assuring the confidentiality of the participants' identity and the procedures and risks were distributed and discussed. Participation is voluntary, and participants were given the choice to withdraw anytime during the research. The identities of the participants were also kept anonymous, and data were destroyed after the study was done.

## Results and Discussion

The level of parent's involvement before and after the psychoeducational intervention program is presented in this section. The difference between these scores was also evaluated. Discussion of the results are stated.

### Parent's Involvement Before the Psychoeducational Program

Table 1 shows the mean, standard deviation, and verbal interpretation of parental academic involvement. The overall mean score in the pre-test ($M$=3.45; $SD$=0.405) is interpreted as *moderately high*.

**Table 1**

*Level of Academic Involvement Before the Psychoeducational Program*

| *Statement* | Mean | SD | Scale response | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I talk to my child/ren whenever he/she has low score/ grades. | 3.17 | 1.030 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I help my child with his/her assignment/modules. | 3.42 | 1.160 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I give something to my child whenever he/she accomplish tasks. | 3.67 | 0.888 | Often | High |
| I make sure our house is clean every day. | 4.08 | 0.515 | Often | High |
| I monitor my child's study time. | 3.50 | 0.905 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I encourage my child, so he/she feels successful for simply working hard on modules | 4.08 | 0.793 | Often | High |
| I give my child a free time whenever he/she finishes his/her modules/online class. | 4.33 | 0.492 | Often | High |
| I am strict to my child's sleeping and wake up time. | 3.08 | 1.160 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I have difficulty helping my child with his/her homework. | 3.75 | 0.754 | Often | High |
| I let my child explains himself/herself whenever there are misunderstandings. | 3.50 | 1.170 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I support my child's expenses on school activities and online classes. | 4.25 | 0.452 | Often | High |
| I require my child/ren to finish modules/assignment first before participating in other activities. | 2.67 | 0.888 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I disturb my child whenever he/she tries to study. | 1.50 | 0.674 | Never | Very Low |
| I reward my child for good grades. | 3.50 | 0.798 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I check the grades of my child. | 4.17 | 0.577 | Often | High |
| I give my child a healthy meal. | 4.25 | 0.452 | Often | High |
| I give time to help my child on his/her modules/studies. | 3.25 | 1.060 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I discipline my child whenever the modules are not done. | 2.00 | 1.040 | Rarely | Low |
| I compliment my child's academic achievements. | 3.42 | 0.515 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I help my child to develop study habits. | 3.50 | 0.798 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| Grand Mean | 3.45 | 0.405 | Sometimes | Moderately High |

*Scoring Guide: 1.00-1.50 (Never: Very Low); 1.51-2.50 (Rarely: Low); 2.51-3.50 (Sometimes: Moderately High; 3.51-4.50 (Often: High); and 4.51-5.00 (Always: Very High)*

There are items that scored with the highest mean and these are items 7 (*M*=4.33; *SD*=0.492) *"I give my child free time whenever he/she finishes his/her modules/online class."*; item 11 (*M*=4.25; *SD*=0.452) *"I support my child's expenses on school activities and online classes."* and item 16 (*M*=4.25; *SD*=0.452) *"I give my child a healthy meal"*, which are interpreted as *high*. The items which scored the lowest are item 12 (*M*=2.67; *M*=0.88), item 13 (*M*=1.50; *SD*=0.674), and item 18 (*M*=3.00; *SD*=1.04) which are verbally interpreted as moderately high and low.

**Parent's Involvement After the Psychoeducational Program**

Table 2 shows the level of academic involvement after the psycho-educational intervention program. The results indicate the overall mean score of parental academic involvement (*M*=3.81; *SD*=0.284) which is interpreted as *high*.

**Table 2**

*Level of Academic Involvement After the Psychoeducational Program*

| *Statement* | Mean | SD | Scale response | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I talk to my child/ren whenever he/she has low score/grades. | 4.42 | 0.515 | Often | High |
| I help my child with his/her assignment/modules. | 4.33 | 0.492 | Often | High |
| I give something to my child whenever he/she accomplish tasks. | 3.75 | 0.866 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I make sure our house is clean every day. | 4.42 | 0.515 | Often | High |
| I monitor my child's study time. | 4.25 | 0.622 | Often | High |
| I encourage my child, so he/she feels successful for simply working hard on modules | 4.33 | 0.651 | Often | High |
| I give my child a free time whenever he/she finishes his/her modules/online class. | 4.50 | 0.522 | Often | High |
| I am strict to my child's sleeping and wake up time. | 3.83 | 0.718 | Often | High |
| I have difficulty helping my child with his/her homework. | 3.75 | 0.754 | Often | High |
| I let my child explains himself/herself whenever there are misunderstandings. | 3.75 | 0.965 | Often | High |
| I support my child's expenses on school activities and online classes. | 4.25 | 0.452 | Often | High |
| I require my child/ren to finish modules/assignment first before participating in other activities. | 2.67 | 0.888 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I disturb my child whenever he/she tries to study. | 1.50 | 0.674 | Rarely | Low |
| I reward my child for good grades. | 3.83 | 0.577 | Often | High |
| I check the grades of my child. | 4.33 | 0.492 | Often | High |
| I give my child a healthy meal. | 4.33 | 0.492 | Often | High |
| I give time to help my child on his/her modules/studies. | 3.58 | 0.996 | Often | High |
| I discipline my child whenever the modules are not done. | 3.00 | 1.04 | Sometimes | Moderately High |
| I compliment my child's academic achievements. | 3.67 | 0.651 | Often | High |
| I help my child to develop study habits. | 3.67 | 0.492 | Often | High |
| Grand Mean | 3.81 | 0.284 | Often | High |

*Scoring Guide: 1.00-1.50 (Never: Very Low); 1.51-2.50 (Rarely: Low); 2.51-3.50 (Sometimes: Moderately High; 3.51-4.50 (Often: High); and 4.51-5.00 (Always: Very High)*

Item 1 (*M*=4.42; *SD*=0.515) *"I talk to my child/ren whenever he/she has low score/grades"*, item 4 (*M*=4.42; *SD*=0.515) *"I make sure our house is clean every day"*, and item 7 (*M*=4.50; *SD*=0.522) *"I give my child a free time whenever he/she finishes his/her modules/online class"*, are verbally interpreted as *high*. Other items that have the lowest mean scores are item 12 (*M*=2.67; *M*=0.88), item 13 (*M*=1.50; *SD*=0.674), and item 18 (*M*=3.00; *SD*=1.04) which are verbally interpreted as moderately high and low.

Notice that responses to some of the statements changed from *"moderately high"* in the pre-test to *"high"* in the post test. These include: *"I talk to my child/ren whenever he/she has low score/grades"*, *"I help my child with his/her assignment/modules"*, *"I monitor my child's study time"*, *"I am strict to my child's sleeping and wake up time"*, *"I let my child explains himself/herself whenever there are misunderstandings"*, *"I reward my child for good grades"*, *"I give time to help my child on his/her modules/ studies"*, *"I compliment my child's academic achievements"*, and *"I help my child to develop study habits"*. Additionally, the statement *"I discipline my child whenever the modules are not done"* increased from low to *moderately high*. Hence, it can be seen that there was a higher involvement for parents after the psychoeducational program.

**Difference in the Parent Academic Involvement Before and After the Psychoeducational Program**

Paired sample t-test was used to evaluate the difference between the pretest and post-test involvement of the parents. Result of the analysis presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test*

| | Mean | SD | Mean Difference | SE Difference | t (df = 11) | p | 95% CI | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-test | 3.45 | 0.405 | -0.354 | 0.0479 | -7.40 | <0.001 | -0.459 | -0.249 |
| Pos-test | 3.81 | 0.284 | | | | | | |

The result shows that there is a significant difference in the pre-test score (*M*=3.45, *SD*=0.405) and on the post-test score (*M*=3.81, *SD*=0.284), *t* (10) = -7.40, *p* <0.001 (two-tailed). The mean difference is 0.354 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from (-)459 – (-)0. 249. The result implies that parental academic involvement increased after the program.

The present finding is consistent with the study done by Lawrence and Fakuade (2021) who showed that parental involvement and participation during COVID-19 online learning played a significant role among adolescent learners. The findings from Berge et al. (2010) also confirm that participating in a psychoeducational group on family functioning and child functioning is significantly effective and that parenting programs are feasible. Contrary to what was hypothesized that though the importance of parental involvement in educational society is widely acknowledged, many parents still are not involved effectively in their child's education whether in school or at home (Pek & Mee, 2020).

## Conclusion and Recommendation

The study on the effects of the psycho-educational program on parent academic involvement in teenage children concludes that there is a significant difference in the results of pre-test and post-test level of parent involvement. Overall, the participating parents in the psychoeducational program appeared to have improved from moderately high on the pre-test to high on the post-test which also demonstrates that the intervention program has a positive effect on the participants. This study further implies that a psychoeducational program helps increase the academic involvement of parents with their teenage children.

Although this study has strengths, the results of the present study had several limitations. First, despite the free parent training program, the number of parents who attended and completed the program was relatively small and the population does not guarantee the effectiveness of the program and representation of all teenage parents. Second, the schedule of the program which is Saturday afternoon before or after

the AY depends on the availability of the parents, programs in the church, and the location of the church. Third, since it was done face to face, there is no certainty that it does not affect the program since most of the sessions were also attended by the children (teenagers) over which the researcher has no control since it was part of the AY program, and this may have greatly affected the result.

Considering the findings derived from this study, the researcher recommends the continuance of the psychoeducational program to a bigger population. Also, future research must emphasize and explore parents' active involvement and how it might be related to educational attainment, and socioeconomic status (i.e., employed or unemployed). Lastly, future studies must also compare the parents' academic involvement among their teenage children who are enrolled in private and public schools.

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PSYCHOLOGY

# Building Personal Strength Program: It's Effect on Academic Self-Efficacy in the New Normal

Bibeth S. Castardo, Sheryll Ann Castillo,
Rhalf Jayson F. Guanco, Mylene S. Gumarao

*Adventist University of the Philippines*
bibeth.castardo5300@deped.gov.ph

## Abstract

Academic self-efficacy refers to the level of student's belief on their capability to learn and accomplish an academic task. Due to abrupt changes in learning modalities in the new normal, students surmounted many challenges that may have affected their way of learning. Thus, this study investigated the level of academic self-efficacy of the students and further determined the effect of the *Building Personal Strength Program*. This intervention program that was designed to help students build their personal strength and reach a higher level of academic self-efficacy. This quasi-experimental study involved 25 junior high school students who are enrolled during the school year 2021-2022 from one of the public schools in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines. Results of the descriptive statistics showed an increased in the level of academic self-efficacy from a mean of 5.18 during the pre-test to a mean of 6.42 during the post-test. Paired t-test resulted to a t-test value of -9.309, with df = 19, and $p<0.00$. These results suggest that the *Building Personal Strength Program* was effective in improving the academic self-efficacy of the students. The findings provide preliminary evidence that may encourage young researchers to investigate other types of participants to enhance the students' academic self-efficacy during the new normal.

**Keywords:** *Academic self-efficacy, building Personal Strength*

School life is always the best time for the lives of the students. The school is a place for the students to gain knowledge and skills they need, to nurture themselves emotionally and psychologically through enjoying face-to-face interaction with their classmates, friends, and teachers. Unexpectedly, the pandemic brought by the coronavirus (Covid-19) came and an emergency shift to all facets and routines of human lives was done. Social interaction and group activities help them grow into better persons they can be, however, due to this pandemic, they need to adjust to the new normal.

The COVID19 pandemic leaves us, humans, no choice but to accept the reality of life, especially the changes that have come in the educational modalities. Blended or online learning is a must to keep the education process continue while the students remain in their homes. Nowadays, self-efficacy plays a crucial role in the achievement of students in the blended learning. Yang et .al (2021) stated that COVID-19 seriously threatens the health of students and leads to anxiety and depression, which may affect the learning engagement of students isolated at home. Negative emotions such as anxiety may affect students' memory and academic progress.

Blanco et.al (2020) stated in their study that presence of coronavirus-19 disease has affected the physical and mental wellbeing of people worldwide. According to them, the many students had expressed that the pandemic has a remarkable effect on their self-efficacy, particularly towards academic performance. More so, Talsma and Robetson (2021) cited that the covid -19 pandemic can also cause student to experience study-related distress due to the changes of learning context. Thus, students may become more vulnerable and perform poorly.

Academic self-efficacy is an important concept among junior high school students. It deals with students' future goals and achievements, and it shows their abilities and academic performances. Self-efficacy is described as the belief in one's capabilities to learn or perform behaviors. In addition, Akhtar (2008) defines self-efficacy as the belief that one possesses, specifically in terms of one's ability to meet challenges ahead of themselves and the ability to complete given tasks successfully. Li and Lalani (2020) described it as the prevalent mode of learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They added that self-efficacy has actively been attention in educational psychology.

Academic self-efficacy is crucial as it determines students' performance and outweighs other cognitive processes (Schunck 1991). According to Robbins et. al (2004)'s meta-analysis of psychosocial and study skill factors, academic self-efficacy and achievement motivation have been the best predictors of academic performance.

Aldhahi (2021) stated that when academic-related self-efficacy is jeopardized, students are more likely to disengage from an assigned task and cease trying which may influence learning satisfaction. However, Arrebola et al (2020) concluded in their research that there is little research on the impact of the pandemic and its influence on levels of anxiety of the students, and even less related to expectations of academic self-efficacy. Thus, the objective of this study is to determine the academic self-efficacy level of the students during the new normal. Further, it was determined if the developed intervention program positively affects their level of self-efficacy in academics.

The study wanted to answer the following research questions: (a) What is the level of Academic Self-Efficacy of the students before the intervention program? (b) What is the level of Academic Self-Efficacy after the intervention program? and (c) Is there any difference in the level of Academic Self-Efficacy of the students before and after the intervention program?

## Methodology

The study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the Building Personal Strength program. The characteristics of the population, research instruments used and data gathering procedures are discussed in this section.

### Research Design

The aim of this study was to determine whether the Building Personal Strength Program can effectively help junior high school students to attain higher academic self-efficacy during the new normal. This

research adopted the one group pre-test- post-test design: O X O. It aims to obtain information on the level of academic self-efficacy of the students while learning in the new normal. The researcher observes and measures a single set of participants (O), introduces an intervention(X), and then measures the participants (O) again to determine whether the intervention resulted in any change.

**Population and Sampling**

In this study, a total of 25 junior high school students were given a questionnaire during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were (24%, N=6) male and (76 percent, N=19) female participants. Their ages ranged from 13-15 years old. In the final analysis, responses from participants who did not attend the intervention program were excluded.

**Research Instrumentation**

The study, which was conducted online, utilized validated research questionnaires. Age, grade level, and gender are included in the demographics. The level of academic self-efficacy in the new normal was measured using a modified version of the Self-Efficacy for Learning and Performance (SELP) subscale that is part of the Motivated Strategies Learning Questionnaires (MSLQ: Pintrich et al., 1991). The MSLQ consists of eight items that provide 7-point Likert scale responses.

**Data Gathering Procedure**

Due to the pandemic, the investigator considered the capacity of the students to participate online sessions via google meet. They were asked to complete the questionnaires given to them via google drive. Additionally, prior to administering the survey, written approval from the principal was secured and a signed parental consent form was collected with the help of their adviser.

**Experimental Manipulations or Interventions**

The Intervention lasted for two weeks via an online platform. The sessions were divided into six with different activities and lectures. These were entitled Good Vibes, The signature Strength Action Plan, Building Personal Strength (Self-Empowerment), Looking Back Activity, My Future Plan, and Three Things Exercise.

**Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics, particularly mean and standard deviation were used to evaluate the level of academic self-efficacy of the respondents during the pre-test and post-test. Paired t-test was used in this study to determine whether the difference on the level of academic self-efficacy before and after the intervention program is significant.

**Ethical Considerations**

The participants were rightly informed regarding the benefits, procedures, and purposes of the study. Additionally, this study demonstrated approved parental consent and permission from the principal of San Miguel National High School for the pre-test and post-test administration and the conduct of virtual intervention. Furthermore, the author's institution's Ethics Review Board (ERB) of the Adventist University of the Philippines approved the current study.

## Results and Discussion

To gain a clearer understanding of the results of the study, results are presented in this section. Discussions are also provided.

**Level of Academic Self-Efficacy During Pre-Test**

Table 1 illustrates the junior high school students' answers to the self-assessment profile. The results of the gathered data show the level of students' academic level of self-efficacy in the pre-test. The respondents got a total mean score of 5.18 with a standard deviation of .68.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics on the Level of Academic Self-Efficacy During Pre-Test*

| Indicator | Mean | Std. Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| I believe I will receive an excellent grade during this school year of pandemic | 5.45 | .83 | Somewhat high |
| I understand the most difficult subject matter presented in the modules provided for us weekly | 4.60 | 1.00 | Slightly high |
| I am confident I can understand the basic concepts taught in the printed modules | 5.40 | .88 | Somewhat high |
| I understand the complex material presented on the printed modules in all subject matter | 5.20 | .95 | Slightly low |
| I can answer my written assessments very well | 5.45 | .95 | Somewhat High |
| I expect to do well in class | 5.20 | 1.01 | Slightly low |
| I can master the skills being taught in all subject matter | 5.00 | .80 | Slightly low |
| Even during pandemic, I think I will still do well and accomplish the school year successfully | 5.15 | .88 | Slightly low |
| Grand Mean | 5.18 | .68 | Slightly High |

*Scoring Guide: 1.00-1.50(very low); 1.51 – 2.50(low); 2.51-3.50(somewhat low); 3.51-4.50(moderately low); 4.51-5.50(slightly high); 5.51-6.50(somewhat high); and 6.51-7.00 (very high).*

The results in Table 1 reveals that the students have a slightly high academic self-efficacy. Consequently, this means that the junior high school students' self-efficacy during the COVID-19 pandemic was slightly high. The analyses of academic self-efficacy of the junior high school students during the new normal implies that the students with high academic performances were slightly disturbed amidst challenges and changes in learning modalities.

This also suggests that even during the pandemic, students strive hard to hurdle challenges. Blanco, et. al (2020) also probed in their study that self-confidence and self-efficacy during Covid-19 were also high.

**Level of Academic Self-Efficacy During Post-Test**

Table 2 illustrates the level of self-efficacy after the intervention program. The respondents got a total mean score of 6.42 with a standard deviation of .56.

**Table 2**

*Descriptive Statistics on the Level of Academic Self-Efficacy During Post-Test*

| Indicator | Mean | Std. Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| I believe I will receive an excellent grade during this school year of pandemic | 6.10 | .97 | Very High |
| I understand the most difficult subject matter presented in the modules provided for us weekly | 5.75 | 1.12 | Somewhat High |
| I am confident I can understand the basic concepts taught in the printed modules | 6.30 | .92 | Very High |
| I understand the complex material presented on the printed modules in all subject matter | 6.40 | .88 | Very High |
| I can answer my written assessments very well | 6.45 | .83 | Very High |
| I expect to do well in class | 6.70 | .47 | Very High |

*{table continues on the next page}*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| I can master the skills being taught in all subject matter | 6.80 | .41 | Very High |
| Even during pandemic, I think I will still do well and accomplish the school year successfully | 6.85 | .37 | Very High |
| Grand Mean | 6.42 | .56 | Very High |

*Scoring Guide: 1.00-1.50(very low); 1.51 – 2.50(low); 2.51-3.50(somewhat low); 3.51-4.50(moderately low); 4.51-5.50(slightly high); 5.51-6.50(somewhat high); and 6.51-7.00 (very high).*

The results indicate that after the intervention program, the academic self-efficacy is already very high. The findings justify that the students are slightly affected by the new normal way of learning but are still striving hard to surmount the challenges and accomplish well their study amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the study of Wu (2020), he cited that motivation matters in students' academic performance. The challenges of the new normal became their motivation to pursue, to gain excellent performances and higher academic self-efficacy. Thus, their level of academic self-efficacy after the intervention program is very high.

**Comparison of the Level of Self-Efficacy of the Participants Before and After the Intervention Program**

**Table 3**

*Difference in the Level of Self-Efficacy of the Participants Before and After the Intervention Program*

| Self-Efficacy | Mean | SD | Mean Difference | T | df | Sig |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-test | 5.18 | .68 | -1.24 | -9.31 | 19 | .000 |
| Post-test | 6.42 | .56 | | | | |

Table 3 shows that the participant's academic self-efficacy before the intervention program had a mean rating of 5.18 and a standard deviation of .68, which was interpreted as slightly high. Additionally, the participants' academic self-efficacy during the post-test had a mean rating of 6.42 with a standard deviation of .56, which was interpreted as very high. The analysis showed that there was a 23.94% increase in the level of self-efficacy from pre-test to post-test.

It also shows that the test statistic is t=-9.309, with 19 degrees of freedom, and $p<0.00$. Therefore, there is a significant difference in between the level of academic self-efficacy before and after the intervention program. Thus, the Building Personal Strength Program resulted in an improvement in academic self-efficacy.

The study of Mosier (2018) posits that the students who have been academically threatened mounted higher self-efficacy in analyzing new ideas, managing complex problems, feeling inspired to achieve success in courses, and ensuring their academic abilities. In addition, Olave (2019) explained that one of the elements influencing students' success rates is the reliance on their capacity to result in intended results in the face of challenges. These findings demonstrate that the new normal situation appears to be one factor that elevates students' belief to work towards success. It also boosted their self-efficacy, and it plays an integral role in their academic motivation, learning, and success (Pajares & Schunck,2005). Thus, the level of academic self-efficacy of the students during the new normal was still high.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

The study's primary objective was to confirm if the level of academic self-efficacy of junior high school students is affected by the new normal. It also aimed to improve the level of self-efficacy to the highest level of academic self-efficacy.

This study concludes that the junior high school students' academic self-efficacy during the new normal had significantly improved after the Building Personal Strength program.

The features of the Building Personal Program have a positive impact on the academic self-efficacy of the students. Thus, the findings of the study support the recommendation of Kolo et al. (2017) that students should be exposed to the self-efficacy intervention program for the students to feel that they can really perform well and deal with all academic-related tasks positively, which in turn will improve their academic achievement.

Thus, it is critical to fully understand that an intervention is needed to augment the needed self-efficacy in academics. So, to augment students' self-confidence and self-efficacy levels and to guarantee optimal learning further research is recommended for schools to develop provisions and policies that will enhance self-efficacy of the students.

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PSYCHOLOGY

# WWW. Jesus and Me: A Spiritual Well-being Program for Children Ages 10-12 Years Old

Lester Ernest M. Lagabon, Rhalf Jayson F. Guanco,
Mylene S. Gumarao, Sheryll Ann M. Castillo

tiponglagabon868@gmail.com

## Abstract

The regular social and spiritual routine of children has been abruptly disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Lockdowns were strictly implemented which affected the church attendance of children. Religious programs on social media catered more to adults than to children. These affected the spiritual well-being of children whose weekends centered on worship, specifically those programs designed for them. This study investigates the spiritual well-being of children ages 10-12 years old in Christian churches on the island of Palawan. A total of 18 children, 8 boys, and 10 girls, willingly participated in the study. In this study, the one-group pretest-posttest design was used with an intervention program entitled "www. Jesus and Me" in-between tests. A validated spiritual well-being questionnaire for children was administered. The results gathered in the pretest and post-test indicate that the intervention program resulted in an improvement in the spiritual well-being of the participants. Statistical analysis yielded a $t(17)=-3.009$ with $p<.05$ having a medium effect size. Religious programs and activities for children are recommended to be continued and improved by church leaders which will help improve and strengthen their spiritual well-being.

**Keywords:** *pre-adolescents, religion, spiritual well-being, spirituality*

Children are a heritage. When a child is born, there is joy in every heart. Each day as he grows, he must develop the life skills needed to survive in this world. At ages 10-12 years old, he must have acquired the mental, physical, social, and spiritual development according to his age level. The parents play an important part in the development of such skills.

The spiritual well-being of a child is an important part of his growth and development. Studies have discovered a remarkable relationship between spirituality and the well-being of children. Researchers have asserted that adolescents who experience spiritual wellbeing have lesser incidences of malaise due to substance abuse, depression, disorderly conduct, and drunk driving. In short, it means that spirituality and religion have a positive influence on an individual's sense of self-worth.

The sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic affected everybody. Lockdowns of several months were implemented where children were not allowed to leave their homes. School and church attendance were restricted. The children were not allowed to attend church worships and fellowship with other children which affected them socially and spiritually.

According to research, spirituality has been distinguished as a link or confidence in God which gives value and purpose in life. The establishment and maintenance of spiritual well-being are essential to the overall well-being of a person therefore it is vital to cultivate the mental, physical, social, and spiritual identities throughout his lifespan.

Various fields of study have been interested in the well-being of children and pre-adolescents. It is believed that a child's well-being is dependent on the healthy development of his self-concept for his existence (Winkfield, 2009). But there is a limited study concerning spirituality and adolescents (Winkfield, 2009).

According to many people, the nature of spirituality and wellbeing are varied and elusive. But this has not stopped people from trying to give the meaning of spirituality and well-being and their interrelationship in the form of spiritual well-being. It was claimed that the personal domain deals with how one intra-relates with himself with regards to the meaning, purpose, and values in life (Fisher, 2009).

Fisher (2015) produced a study on God counts for children's spiritual well-being. In his study, 260 multi-item quantitative measures of spirituality and well-being have been developed and were used as assessment. Accordingly, 97% refer to relationship with self, whereas 64% refer to relationship with other people and with God, with only 28% for relationships with the environment.

Research has suggested that spirituality and religion have a positive influence on the sense of worth of an individual (Winkfield, 2009). Spirituality is the connection with God while religion is the means of practicing spirituality. Some researchers say that spirituality gives an individual a sense of importance and in turn affords personal peace. The development of both aspects begins during childhood. It is important that at an early age, children are exposed to the knowledge of God and learn to find meaning and peace in having a relationship with Jesus.

As God cares, children's spiritual well-being should be considered, as it does for youth and adults. Fisher (2015) goes on to say that "omitting God from any study of children's spiritual well-being would be like cutting out the heart whilst still expecting life". A child's spirituality may be shown through religious practices which are introduced to them in their growing years which is the reason why some researchers have looked at the relationship between religious involvement and spiritual programs and the different aspects of a child's well-being.

The protocols implemented by the government due to the pandemic restricted the children from attending religious services. This lessened their socialization and fellowship with other children their age in church programs. They had to stay home and watch worship services for and led by adults on televisions, laptops or cellphones. Worship services prepared specifically for children were rare and few.

It is not known how the pandemic has affected children's spiritual well-being. Therefore, the problem that this study seeks to address was to determine the level of spiritual well-being of the respondents before and after the study. Further, it finds out how well the planned intervention program has affected their level of spiritual well-being.

## Methodology

The determination of the effectiveness of the "www. Jesus and Me" well-being program were the main purpose of the study. Methodologies conducted are discussed in this section.

### Research Design

In this study, the researcher administered a quasi-experimental pretest and posttest research design. The researcher used a pre-experimental design, O X O which is the shorthand for a one-group pretest-posttest design. In this study, a single group of research participants is given a pretest (O) and then the same group is given an intervention or some treatment (X), then they are again given a posttest (O).

### Population and Sampling

The participants of this study are children ages 10 – 13 from different Christian churches in Puerto Princesa City. Six of them are 10 years old. There are seven who are 11 years old. Three of them are 12 years old. Lastly, two of the participants are 13 years old. Eight of them are boys and the other 10 are girls.

### Experimental Manipulations or Interventions

The spiritual well-being intervention program is entitled www.Jesus and Me. The program is divided into three topics: God's Love, God's Comfort, and God's Omniscience. Videos about Jesus, Creation, What Jesus is doing for sinners, and what He is preparing for us were shown during the intervention. The children were encouraged to ask questions about things they did not understand.

### Research Instrument

The researcher used a spiritual well-being scale intended for children between the ages of 10-12 and administered it in selected Christian churches in Puerto Princesa City. The survey questionnaire was modified and validated by three professional experts in the field of psychology and research.

The needs survey questionnaire was divided into two parts: Part I covers the demographic profile of the respondents including their age, gender, and grade level. Part 2 is made-up of 20 questions that deal with the social, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects of a child's wellbeing.

### Data Gathering Procedure

The pre-test, intervention program, and the post-test were administered in person with the assistance The questionnaire was administered within one week prior to the intervention program and another week after and was classified as pre-test and post-test respectively.

### Ethical Considerations

This study concerns the spiritual well-being of the children before and during the pandemic. Thus, to secure the safety of the children, the study was administered face-to-face in the presence of their parents and/or guardians who have voluntarily signed a consent form. No incentive was promised or given.

To determine the effectiveness of the intervention program. The spiritual well-being scale was utilized. The researcher reminded the respondents to answer as honestly as possible.

### Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS version 23). The mean and standard deviation were used to determine the spiritual well-being of the participants before and after the intervention. A dependent t-test analysis was used to determine the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores and find out whether the intervention program was effective in improving the spiritual well-being of the participants.

## Results and Discussion

The following are the results of the study. Tables are used to give a concise presentation of the analysis.

### Spiritual Well-Being of the Respondents Before the Intervention Program

Table 1 describes the spiritual well-being of the participants during the pre-test, before the intervention was given. The grand mean is 3.44 with a standard deviation of .21

Table 1
*Descriptive Pre-test Statistics of the Spiritual Well-being Scale of Children*

| Statement | Mean | SD | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. God listens to me. | 4.00 | 0.00 | Always Believe |
| 2. God listens to everyone. | 3.56 | 0.98 | Always Believe |
| 3. I feel better about things when I pray to God. | 3.61 | 1.04 | Always Believe |
| 4. I pray to God when I feel sad. | 3.28 | 1.27 | Frequently Believe |
| 5. God is everywhere and watches everybody. | 3.78 | 0.55 | Always Believe |
| 6. I pray to God when I am worried about something. | 3.50 | 0.79 | Frequently Believe |
| 7. I ask God for help. | 3.67 | 0.69 | Always Believe |
| 8. God knows how I feel even without talking. | 3.89 | 0.32 | Always Believe |
| 9. God gives me strength and support. | 3.67 | 0.97 | Always Believe |
| 10. God helps me by making me feel strong. | 3.78 | 0.43 | Always Believe |
| 11. When bad things happen, I know God will show me the answers. | 3.72 | 0.46 | Always Believe |
| 12. God helps me by giving me advice. | 3.50 | 0.86 | Frequently Believe |
| 13. God does not know what I am thinking. | 0.28 | 0.67 | Never Believe |
| 14. I pray to God when I want to feel better. | 3.78 | 0.73 | Always Believe |
| 15. God created all the people and knows each one. | 3.83 | 0.38 | Always Believe |
| 16. God cannot listen to all the people in the world. | 4.00 | 0.00 | Always Believe |
| 17. God cannot watch over everybody. | 3.78 | 0.94 | Always Believe |
| 18. I pray to God to thank Him for all the good things in my life. | 3.50 | 0.86 | Frequently Believe |
| 19. God helps me by making me think of new ideas. | 3.67 | 0.69 | Always Believe |
| 20. There are too many people in the world for God to know all of them. | 2.06 | 1.86 | Sometimes Believe |
| Grand Mean | 3.44 | 0.21 | Frequently Believe |

*Scoring Guide: 0-0.50 I never believe this; 0.51-1.50 I seldom believe this; 1.51-2.50 I sometimes believe this; 2.51-3.50 I frequently believe this; 3.51-4.00 I always believe this.*

Results show that before the intervention program, the children always believe on the statements “God listens to me” and “God cannot listen to all the people in the world”. This goes to show that though the children support the idea that God listens to them, they cannot believe that He can listen to everyone. Thus, they could not grasp the idea of an all-powerful God.

On the other hand, the participants never believe in the statement, “God does not know what I am thinking”. Yet, collectively, the spiritual well-being of the children indicates that they frequently believe in God even before the intervention program.

**Spiritual Well-Being of the Respondents After the Intervention Program**

Table 2 shows the result of the post-test mean and standard deviation of the well-being of the respondents after the intervention was given. The grand mean is 3.63 with a standard deviation of .16

Table 2.
*Descriptive Post-test Means of the Spiritual Well-being of Children (10-12)*

| Statement | Mean | SD | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. God listens to me. | 4.00 | 0.00 | Always Believe |
| 2. God listens to everyone. | 3.94 | 0.24 | Always Believe |
| 3. I feel better about things when I pray to God. | 4.00 | 0.00 | Always Believe |
| 4. I pray to God when I feel sad. | 3.67 | 0.59 | Always Believe |
| 5. God is everywhere and watches everybody. | 4.00 | 0.00 | Always Believe |
| 6. I pray to God when I am worried about something. | 3.78 | 0.65 | Always Believe |
| 7. I ask God for help. | 3.89 | 0.32 | Always Believe |
| 8. God knows how I feel even without talking. | 3.89 | 0.47 | Always Believe |
| 9. God gives me strength and support. | 4.00 | 0.00 | Always Believe |
| 10. God helps me by making me feel strong. | 4.00 | 0.00 | Always Believe |
| 11. When bad things happen, I know God will show me the answers. | 3.72 | 0.58 | Always Believe |
| 12. God helps me by giving me advice. | 3.83 | 0.38 | Always Believe |
| 13. God does not know what I am thinking. | 0.44 | 1.29 | Never Believe |
| 14. I pray to God when I want to feel better. | 3.94 | 0.24 | Always Believe |
| 15. God created all the people and knows each one. | 4.00 | 0.00 | Always Believe |
| 16. God cannot listen to all the people in the world. | 0.39 | 1.14 | Never Believe |
| 17. God cannot watch over everybody. | 0.44 | 1.29 | Never Believe |
| 18. I pray to God to thank Him for all the good things in my life. | 4.00 | 0.00 | Always Believe |
| 19. God helps me by making me think of new ideas. | 3.94 | 0.24 | Always Believe |
| 20. There are too many people in the world for God to know all of them. | 1.56 | 2.01 | Sometimes Believe |
| Grand Mean | 3.63 | 0.16 | Always Believe |

*Scoring Guide: 0-0.50 I never believe this; .51-1.50 I seldom believe this; 1.51-2.50 I sometimes believe this; 2.51-3.50 I frequently believe this; 3.51-4.00 I always believe this.*

The result shows that after the intervention program, more items have been considered as "always" believed by the participant. These include: "God listens to me", which shows that the activities in the intervention program helped in improving the spiritual well-being of the respondents.

The lowest mean is 0.39 for item #16, "God cannot listen to all the people in the world." This is a huge improvement from the result of the pre-test which was M=4.00. Collectively, the grand mean of spiritual well-being also increased to 3.63. This is an indication that the intervention program helped increase or improve the spiritual well-being of the respondents.

**Comparison of the Spiritual Well-Being Before and After the Intervention Program**

Table 3 presents the results of the comparison of the well-being of the children before and after the intervention program. The test statistic is $t(17) = -3.009$, and $p<0.01$.

Table 3
*Paired Samples T-Test*

| | Mean difference | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pretest - Posttest | -.19167 | .27021 | .06369 | -3.009 | 17 | .008 |

The paired sample t-test resulted in a p-value that is less than 0.05. This implies that there is a difference, in children's spiritual wellbeing between the pre-test and post-test results. The results from the pre-test (M = 3.44, SD = 0.211) and post-test (M = 3.63, SD = 0.160) results indicate that the spiritual well-being program resulted in an improvement in the spiritual well-being.

Specifically, the belief of the students on praying when they are sad and worried, and that God can help them increases after the interpretation program. Additionally, the beliefs of the respondents in the ability of God to listen to all people in the world and to watch over everybody vividly increased. Thus, the influence of the www.Jesus and Me intervention program is very evident.

According to Winkfield (2009), "depending on the developmental stage of a child, he or she may think very concretely and frequently demonstrate their spirituality through religious practices." This shows the importance of cognitive and psychosocial development to the spiritual formation of the child.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

After the intervention program which exposed the children to stories and videos from the Bible, the results of the study show that there is a significant increase in the spiritual well-being of the participants as shown in the comparison of the pre-test and the post-test scores of the respondents. From this study, it can be said that an intervention program is recommended to increase the spirituality of children.

The researcher recommends continuous follow-up spiritual programs for the children at home and in the church. Online religious programs for children would also be of help in the development of their spiritual well-being.

The researcher acknowledges the following limitations of the study which may affect the results. The expected number of respondents was not reached, the length of the intervention programs had to be shortened, regularity of attendance of respondents, availability of parent/guardian during the program; all these because of the lockdowns and other health protocols implemented by the government due to the pandemic. Thus, future studies may be conducted to address the limitations of this study.

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PSYCHOLOGY

# Effects of a Psychosocial Intervention Program on Teachers' Socioemotional Well-being During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Alisa May D. Lagabon, Rhalf Jayson F. Guanco,
Mylene S. Gumarao, Sheryll Ann M. Castillo

*Adventist University of the Philippines*
almadala888@gmail.com

## Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has modified our understanding of the world as we knew it. It has changed almost everything and has affected the education sector more than others. Not only has it affected the mental and emotional state of the students but more so that of the teachers. Recent studies have shown that during the lockdown, teachers have suffered stress which has been accompanied by anxiety and depression having to abruptly adapt to new methods of teaching. The present study investigated the effects of a psychosocial intervention program on teachers' socioemotional well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic using the one-group pretest-posttest design. A total of 22 elementary and secondary teachers from selected Christian schools in Palawan participated in the study. Due to the lockdown, an online questionnaire was developed via Google Forms. The questionnaire consists of four indexes with statements expressing emotional states the teachers experienced during the pandemic. The results gathered showed that there is a significant difference in the socioemotional well-being of the participants in terms of their status, self, and burnout indexes. This result implies that psychosocial intervention is effective in reducing the sub-dimensions of socioemotional well-being. Furthermore, the study revealed a significant increase in the power index of the participants, implying that the intervention program is effective in improving the socioemotional well-being in this sub-dimension. The summative socioemotional well-being of the participants before the intervention was m=3.77 and increased to m=3.86 after the intervention. It is recommended that follow-up programs be organized and implemented since the effects and aftereffects of the pandemic are still progressing and affecting everyone.

**Keywords:** *COVID-19, teachers' socioemotional well-being, psychosocial intervention, pandemic*

Due to the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic, the educational system, not only in the Philippines but also in the world, has been largely affected. The closing of schools, the dramatic increase in teacher workload, and the abrupt changes in the teaching and learning methods, have resulted in teachers experiencing anxiety and stress. Also, the strict measures of social distancing and lockdown have greatly affected social relationships, which, for many teachers have created feelings of isolation and loneliness (Ozamiz-Etxebarria, et al., 2021).

Studies have shown that working from home using different internet platforms has created feelings of tension, anxiety, confusion, and decreased job satisfaction. Teachers were forced to learn to use the internet because it was the only teaching tool available during the pandemic. Teachers in schools who did not have stable internet connections were forced to write modules for every subject without attending seminars and workshops on module-making. For many teachers, their socioemotional well-being has been affected by the general fear that they or someone in their family would contract Covid-19 and their stress in managing their own needs and that of their family while at the same time working from home and getting used to new technologies for teaching (Tabasa, et.al, 2020).

There is also increasing evidence that suggests that the pandemic has greatly affected the well-being of students and teachers as well. Countries like China, the United Kingdom, and Chile among others have conducted studies that found that teachers have presented moderate to high symptoms of anxiety, stress, and negative effect on the quality of life, especially among women and younger teachers (Hidalgo-Andrade et al., 2021).

The well-being of a teacher contributes to work satisfaction and efficiency and influences student well-being and academic achievement. It relies on having access to community resources and participation in a shared experience. There are studies that argue that work-related stress is aggravated by the fact that many teachers are exposed to environments that negatively affect their well-being. Most certainly, well-being, when exposed to COVID-19, adds further anxiety and stress to the daily role of teachers (Dabrowski, 2020). Adding to that is the uncertainty of expectation in the future of the teaching and learning situation and not knowing when all these emergency schoolings will last.

Teacher well-being is important because teachers who are experiencing anxiety and stress are less effective in supporting student well-being and outcomes. The teaching profession already faces unique challenges and pressures from students, parents, administrators, and the constant changing system in education, and with the pandemic already a part of the present, it will lead to more anxiety and weariness in the teaching profession and could greatly affect the socioemotional well-being of the teachers. Pandemic has aggravated the stresses facing teachers and as the country figures out a way to provide a quality education through distance learning, recognizing, and supporting teachers' well-being should be a key priority (Dabrowski, 2020).

It is a fact that teachers are important in children's academic lives and there is evidence that teacher well-being has significant effects on children's socioemotional adjustment and academic performance (Split, Koomem, et.al, 2011).

With the pandemic already a part of the present situation, it is important that teachers' socioemotional well-being be given importance to ensure that the teachers will continue to provide quality education and produce quality students. Therefore, this study seeks to determine the socioemotional well-being of the participants before and after participating in the psychosocial intervention program.

## Methodology

A psychosocial intervention program was given to the teachers who agreed to participate in the study. Methodologies conducted are discussed in this section.

### Research Design

In this study, the researcher used a pre-experimental design, O X O which represents the one group pretest-posttest design. A single group of research participants is given a pretest (O). and then the same group is given intervention or some treatment (X), then a posttest was administered. (O) (Choueiry, 2019). No control was applied in-between the tests and all the participants were subjected to the same intervention program.

**Population and Sampling**

In this study, the researcher purposively selected teachers from Christian schools in Palawan who had good internet connections because the study would be through Google Forms and Zoom. The respondents were chosen also because of their willingness to participate in the study.

Participants in this study include 22 elementary and secondary teachers teaching in Christian schools in Palawan; 19 females and 3 males, 12 with regular status, and 10 with contractual status; 15 are married and 7 are single; 9 have 1-5 years of service, 3- 6-10 years, 2 – 11-15 years, 4 – 21-25 years, 3 – 16-20 years and 1 – 30-35 years. These teachers come from the different municipalities in this region. All participants have willingly volunteered to participate in this study.

**Research Instrumentation**

A questionnaire composed of possible concerns of teachers which may affect their well-being/stress level was developed. This questionnaire entitled, Socioemotional Well-being Questionnaire has four sub dimensions and with positive and/or negative statements under each index expressing different emotional states that the teacher may experience or is experiencing during the pandemic. Teachers were asked to rate each statement based on their emotional experience using the following scale: 5 – *Always*; 4 – *Often*; 3 – *Sometimes*; 2 – *Seldom*; and 1 – *Never.*

**Data Gathering Procedures**

The questionnaires were administered one week prior to the intervention program and another week after and were classified as pre-test and post-test, respectively. The questions were arranged according to the four indexes showing the different emotional states the teacher might have experienced during the pandemic.

**Experimental Manipulations or Interventions**

The psychosocial intervention program is entitled A Psychosocial Intervention Program on the Socioemotional Well-being of Teachers During the COVID-19 Pandemic. The program is composed of five webinars on the five indexes of socioemotional well-being, with each index expressing different emotional states, like Status (Sadness, Depression, Loneliness), Situation (Enjoyment and Happiness), Self (Pride, Optimism), Burnout, and Power (Rest, Calm, Energy).

The participants were invited to join the webinar and encouraged to react, clarify, or ask questions. All participants were in the same experimental group with no control group employed.

**Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS version 23). The mean and standard deviation were utilized to determine the score for each index. These were ranked and interpreted verbally using the following scale: 4.51 – 5.00 *Very High*; 3.51 – 4.50 *High*; 2.51 – 3.50 *Moderate*; 1.51 – 2.50 *Low*; and 1.00 – 1.50 *Very Low*.

A dependent t-test analysis was used to determine and interpret the difference in each of the four indexes and find out whether the intervention was effective in improving the socioemotional well-being of the participants. The probability values were tested at a .05 level of significance.

**Ethical Considerations**

The participation of the teachers is purely voluntary. No incentive was given or offered to them.

## Results and Discussion

The results of the study are discussed in this section. Table 1-6 presents the socioemotional well-being of the participants in terms of status, situation, self, burnout, power as well as the summative.

**Table 1**
*Socio-emotional Well-being in Terms of Status*

| | Pretest | | Posttest | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| 1. I feel lonely. | 2.76 | .539 | 2.70 | .470 |
| 2. I feel sad. | 2.57 | .507 | 2.57 | .507 |
| 3. I feel depressed | 2.43 | .507 | 2.43 | .507 |
| 4. I cry without any reason. | 1.62 | .805 | 1.62 | .805 |
| 5. I am not okay. | 2.62 | .669 | 2.62 | .669 |
| 6. Modular teaching makes me feel stressed. | 3.05 | .590 | 3.00 | .562 |
| 7. I feel sad when my students don't understand the lesson. | 3.71 | .845 | 3.40 | 1.174 |
| 8. My students do not cooperate with me. | 3.05 | .669 | 2.82 | .529 |
| 9. I feel stressed when board members visit the school. | 1.86 | .727 | 1.86 | .727 |
| Grand Mean for Status | 2.63 | .319 | 2.49 | .359 |

*Scoring System: 1-1.50 – Very Low; 1.51-2.50 – Low; 2.51-3.50 – Moderate; 3.51-4.50 – High, & 4.51-5.00 – Very High*

Table 1 describes the socioemotional well-being of the participants in terms of their status. The status in this study is measured in terms of sadness/loneliness/depression. All items in this sub dimension are negatively stated.

Item #7 has the highest mean, 3.71, which is interpreted as high in the pretest and 3.40 as low in the posttest showing that respondents are mostly affected by how their students respond to the lesson taught. Based on theories on interpersonal relationships, it is suggested that teachers internalize experiences with their students in class and this, in turn, guides their emotional responses in their everyday interaction with their students and eventually changes the well-being of the teacher (Spilt, et al., 2011).

In the pretest and post-test, item #4 got the same low mean of 1.62 which shows that before and after the intervention, the participants do not easily cry without any reason.

Comparing the results of both tests show that there is a decrease in status in terms of sadness/loneliness/ depression. The result showed that the status of the respondents in terms of sadness/loneliness/ depression is low ($m$=2.63) before the intervention program and decreases to very low (2.49) after the psychosocial intervention program. It also shows that the participants have moderate status. This reveals that they experienced loneliness, sadness, and depression, like the majority. It also shows that after the intervention program, a significant change in their status is manifested as indicated in the result from 2.63 to 2.49.

**Table 2**
*Socioemotional Well-being in Terms of Situation*

| | Pretest | | Posttest | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| 1. I am happy. | 4.24 | .700 | 4.45 | .934 |
| 2. I enjoy life. | 4.62 | .590 | 4.87 | .516 |
| 3. I love modular teaching. | 3.48 | .814 | 3.31 | .873 |
| 4. I enjoy using technology in my teaching delivery. | 3.52 | .680 | 3.29 | .726 |
| 5. My teaching job gives me happiness. | 4.48 | .680 | 4.71 | .726 |
| 6. The attitude of parents give me a sense of joy. | 4.24 | .700 | 4.45 | .934 |
| 7. I can relate with my students well. | 4.05 | .669 | 4.11 | 1.054 |
| Grand Mean of Situation | 4.09 | .437 | 4.14 | .752 |

*Scoring System: 1-1.50 – Very Low; 1.51-2.50 – Low; 2.51-3.50 – Moderate; 3.51-4.50 – High, & 4.51-5.00 – Very High.*

The socioemotional well-being in terms of Situation refers to the enjoyment and happiness of the participants. The items in this sub dimension are positively stated.

Item #2 in the pretest and posttest have the highest mean with 4.62 and 4.87 respectively, which implies that before and after the intervention in terms of their situation, the participants were satisfied with their situation and experienced happiness and enjoyed life.

The lowest mean in the pretest was Item #3 which shows that before the intervention the participants did not enjoy writing modules and the new teaching method with digital technologies because of the lack of training and the situation which they were forced into by the pandemic. But in the posttest, Item #4 received the lowest mean showing that after the intervention the participants decided that the use of technology in teaching did not give them as much enjoyment and happiness.

The results revealed that the participants' well-being in terms of their situation (enjoyment and happiness) slightly increased from 4.09 to 4.14 after the intervention program. These results revealed a high level of enjoyment and happiness both before and after the intervention program.

**Table 3**

*Socioemotional Well-being in Terms of Burnout*

| | Pretest | | Posttest | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| 1. I feel emotionally drained at the end of the day. | 2.95 | .669 | 2.71 | .470 |
| 2. I feel tired when I wake up in the morning. | 2.57 | .870 | 2.33 | .686 |
| 3. I feel nothing I do makes a difference. | 2.67 | .658 | 2.67 | .658 |
| 4. I feel exhausted all the time. | 2.38 | .865 | 2.21 | .713 |
| 5. I easily get irritated by little things around me. | 2.52 | .602 | 2.52 | .602 |
| Grand Mean of Burnout | 2.62 | .569 | 2.52 | .471 |

*Scoring System: 1-1.50 – Very Low; 1.51-2.50 – Low; 2.51-3.50 – Moderate; 3.51-4.50 – High, & 4.51-5.00 – Very High.*

In terms of burnout, in the pretest Item #1 has the highest mean, 2.95, showing that before the intervention, participants usually felt emotionally drained at the end of the day. In the post-test, after the intervention, Item #1 still has the highest mean of 2.71 but compared to the pretest, it shows a lower level of burnout.

The lowest mean in the pretest is Item #4, 2.38 as compared to the posttest, 2.21 which implies that the participants feeling of exhaustion all the time has lowered after the intervention.

The socioemotional well-being in terms of burnout of the participants of the psychosocial intervention program revealed a moderate level of burnout even before and after the intervention program as revealed in the mean of 2.62 and 2.52, respectively.

The result showed that before the intervention program the participants had a moderate level of burnout (m=2.62) and became low moderate (m=2.52) after the intervention program. It reveals that the participants experienced burnout even before the pandemic which is also experienced by others who work 8AM-5PM every day dealing with students. But as shown by the results, the intervention program is effective because although the burnout before had a moderate mean it lowered after the intervention program.

**Table 4**

*Socioemotional Well-being in Terms of Self*

| | Pretest | | Posttest | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| 1. I feel positive about myself. | 4.24 | .700 | 4.45 | .934 |
| 2. I am optimistic about my future. | 4.19 | .680 | 4.40 | .966 |

*{table continues on the next page}*

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3. I am accepted by my colleagues. | 4.52 | .680 | 4.73 | .704 |
| 4. I am bothered by my relationship with my students. | 2.14 | .854 | 2.05 | .759 |
| 5. My students don't like me. | 1.57 | .676 | 1.57 | .676 |
| 6. I am liked by most parents. | 3.86 | .793 | 3.70 | 1.160 |
| 7. I feel comfortable with the use of technology. | 3.95 | .740 | 3.91 | 1.044 |
| 8. My students like me. | 4.05 | .740 | 4.09 | 1.044 |
| Grand Mean of Self | 3.57 | .226 | 3.26 | .422 |

*Scoring System: 1-1.50 – Very Low; 1.51-2.50 – Low; 2.51-3.50 – Moderate; 3.51-4.50 – High, & 4.51-5.00 – Very High.*

In the socioemotional well-being in terms of self, Item #3 in the pretest has the highest mean of 4.52 and in the posttest, the same Item #3 got the highest mean of 4.73 which implies that their feeling of acceptance by their colleagues improved after the intervention. This could be because teachers had more time to connect and relate with each other having no students in the school due to the pandemic.

Item #5 has the lowest mean of 1.57 both in the pretest and posttest which could imply that before and after the intervention the participants' feeling about their students not liking them remained the same.

Based on the result garnered, it can be said that the participants' Self index in terms of pride and optimism was high (m=3.57) before the psychosocial intervention program but decreased to moderate (m=3.26) after the intervention program. This shows that the relationship of the participants feeling regarding how their students felt about them is affected due to distance learning.

**Table 5**

*Socioemotional Well-being in Terms of Power*

| | Pretest | | Posttest | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| 1. I feel energetic at the start of the day. | 4.10 | .625 | 4.25 | 1.035 |
| 2. I feel rested. | 3.71 | .561 | 3.25 | .707 |
| 3. Being in school scares me. | 4.24 | .831 | 4.24 | .831 |
| 4. I experienced embarrassing situations in school. | 3.81 | .928 | 4.00 | .745 |
| 5. I experienced being rejected. | 4.05 | .805 | 4.05 | .805 |
| 6. I feel stressed when technology is not functioning. | 3.19 | .928 | 3.39 | .850 |
| Grand Mean of Power | 3.85 | .462 | 3.899 | .520 |

*Scoring System: 1-1.50 – Very Low; 1.51-2.50 – Low; 2.51-3.50 – Moderate; 3.51-4.50 – High, & 4.51-5.00 – Very High.*

In terms of power, Item #3 has the highest mean of 4.24 and in the posttest Item #1 has the highest mean which means that before the intervention being in school scared them maybe because of the stresses they expect to meet. After the intervention, Item #1 had the highest mean showing that the participants had the energy they needed at the start of the day.

The lowest mean was Item #6 in the pretest and in the posttest was Item #2 which implies that before the intervention the participants were not stressed at all about malfunctioning technology. After the intervention, with the challenges of producing modules, the use of modular teaching and mastering digital technologies, feeling rested no longer was an option (Klapproth, et al., 2020).

The socioemotional well-being in terms of power (rested, calm, energy) of the participants of the before the psychosocial intervention program is high (m=3.85) and remained high (m=3.899), after the program. This shows that the power index of the participants was high before the program because of the challenges they normally face each day but remains high after the intervention program due to the additional challenges in the new mode of teaching using modules and technology.

**Table 6**
*Socioemotional Well-being*

| | Pretest | | Posttest | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Socioemotional Well-being | 3.77 | .335 | 3.86 | .407 |

*Scoring System: 1-1.50 – Very Low; 1.51-2.50 – Low; 2.51-3.50 – Moderate; 3.51-4.50 – High, & 4.51-5.00 – Very High.*

The overall socioemotional well-being of the participants before the intervention is m = 3.77 which is interpreted as high and increases to *m* = 3.86 still interpreted as high after the intervention. The negative items for the subdimensions were recoded to positive items before the composite scores were computed. The overall results revealed that the socio-emotional well-being of the participants of the study was high before and after the intervention program.

According to Spilt et al. (2011), "personal relationships with students afford teachers internal rewards and give meaning to their work." It is further said that teacher-student relationships are often mentioned as one of the main reasons for staying in the profession. This is the reason why isolation from students caused by the distance teaching situation can affect the socioemotional well-being of teachers. It was also found that relationships with students were the most important source of enjoyment and motivation for many teachers (Spilt et al., 2011).

**Comparison of the Socioemotional Well-being Before and After the Intervention**

The result of the comparison of the well-being of the participants of the psychosocial intervention program is presented in Table 7. These results revealed that psychosocial intervention is effective in reducing the subdimensions of the socioemotional well-being of the participants.

**Table 7**
*Paired t-test Analysis*

| | | Mean | SD | t | df | p | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Status | Pretest | 2.629 | .31882 | 5.185 | 20 | .000 | Significant Decrease |
| | Posttest | 2.487 | .35861 | | | | |
| Situation | Pretest | 4.088 | .43677 | -.560 | 20 | .528 | The difference is not significant. |
| | Posttest | 4.137 | .75246 | | | | |
| Burnout | Pretest | 2.619 | .56888 | 2.420 | 20 | .025 | Significant Decrease |
| | Posttest | 2.524 | .47051 | | | | |
| Self | Pretest | 3.565 | .22576 | 4.604 | 20 | .000 | Significant Decrease |
| | Posttest | 3.257 | .42254 | | | | |
| Power | Pretest | 3.849 | .42254 | -1.524 | 20 | .000 | Significant Increase |
| | Posttest | 3.899 | .46220 | | | | |
| Socioemotional wellbeing | Pretest | 3.765 | .33540 | -3.115 | 20 | .005 | Significant |
| | Posttest | 3.859 | .40594 | | | | |

There is a significant decrease in the socioemotional well-being of the participants in terms of their status (sadness/loneliness/ depression), burnout, and self (pride and optimism). Furthermore, the result also indicates that significant changes were noted in reducing the status of the participants regarding sadness, loneliness, and depression.

Table 7 further revealed that there is a significant increase in the power of the participants, which implies that the intervention program is effective in improving the socioemotional well-being in terms of power.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

The results show that certain subdimensions of the socioemotional well-being of the participants have been improved after the intervention program. The difference in the level of sadness/loneliness/depression, burnout, and pride among the participants exhibit a significant decrease. In terms of enjoyment and happiness, there was an increase but the difference between the pretest and posttest was not significant. In terms of rested/calm/energy, a significant increase was seen. The overall socioemotional well-being of the participants showed an improvement all in the posttest due to the psycho-social intervention program.

These results matter because according to research, "It is next-to-impossible to expect teaching and learning to occur in a crisis without attending to our emotions" (Tabasa, et al., 2021) The pandemic is a crisis that almost everyone, most especially educators, experiences mixed emotions of intense grief, greater anxiety, stresses, fears, and burnout. Thus, it is important to attend to their socioemotional well-being since teacher's behavior can also affect the emotional well-being of the students.

The researcher acknowledges the limitations of the study which may affect the results. First, not all expected participants were able to join the study because of the absence of or weak internet connection in certain places on the island. Second, is the available time of the participants since the only time possible for the intervention program was after class hours and this was the time they had for their families. But despite these, the researcher is grateful for the time given by the participants in the study.

The researcher recommends follow-up programs for the participants since the effects and aftereffects of the pandemic are still progressing and affecting everyone; regular intervention programs and mental/emotional health assessment for all Christian teachers at the elementary and secondary levels; interactive and training seminars on topics concerning the writing of modules and the use of the different online platforms.

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HUMANITIES

# Phonological Features of Manobo Spoken in Davao Occidental

Catherine Palmera-Blanco

*Mountain View College*
blancocatherine3@gmail.com

## Abstract

The study provides a description of the phonological features projected in Manobo that is spoken in Jose Abad Santos, Davao Occidental as an effort to monitor the status and vitality of the language. In eliciting the segmental and suprasegmental features, the respondents translated the questionnaire, a pre-determined word list of Cebuano vocabularies and sentences, and it was documented through audio-recording. The transcribed words were rated through International Phonetic Alphabet symbols. For the suprasegmental features, those focused on length, stress, and intonation in statement form and in answering WH/Yes-No questions. The study identified a total of 42 phonemic units in Manobo language's phonetic code: nine (9) vocoids, four (4) vocoid chains, 15 contoids, four (4) contoid-clusters, and 10 supra-segmental phonemes. Also, factors such as age somewhat affect their phonological features. Native speakers were observed borrowing words from the dominant languages –Bisaya, Tagalog, and English, clipping some of the native words, and code-switching to other languages when speaking. Manobo language is still used in home and community; however, it is not being sustained in the formal institution. Finally, the paper echoes the call for future studies of Manobo morphophonemic features of various Manobo speakers.

**Keywords:** *Phonological features, Manobo, vitality of language, segmental, suprasegmental*

Manobo language belongs to Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian linguistic family and it is one of the 170 languages spoken in the Philippines. In 2018, there are approximately 375,870 Manobo speakers distributed throughout the country (Eberhard, et al., 2018; Simons & Fennig, 2017) and the majority live in the regions where it is their native tongue, namely: Agusan, Surigao, North Cotabato and Davao. Manobos have heavily migrated in Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Sur, North Cotabato, Southern parts of Davao del Sur and Sarangani (DuBois, 1976, 2016; Ethnic Group of the Philippines, 2018; Gelacio et al., 2000; Havana et al., 1978; Otanes & Hale, 1988; SIL International, 2018).

In Jose Abad Santos, the people speak multiple languages such as Bisaya, B'laan, Sangil and Manobo. These languages, however, embody Tagalog and foreign (English or Spanish) sounds [a, e, u, f, o, ng] in its phonetic code (DuBois, 1976). These sounds are in the phonetic systems of the Bisaya and B'laan languages. Also, borrowing of words, such as Tagalog words, and bilingualism are visible in their speech repertoire. This means to say that these linguistic phenomena have significant implications for Manobo morphophonological structure. According to Arto Anttila (2018), language is a system that maps meaning to forms; however, mapping does not always mean that one meaning corresponds to one form, because there is variation. This variation can be traced in a variability of both at the segments and at the prosodic level. It is changes that affect different features of phonological system, such as composition of the phonemes and allophones, phonotactic patterning of phonemes, and their lexical distribution in the language system (Aviles, 2008; Chomsky,1965; Chomsky & Hale, 1968; Ohala, 2019; ) In this case, the reason for this phenomenon must be traced back to recent and rapid standardization and to the prolonged contact with other languages (Vietti, 2019). Variation in language phonology can be traced back to two dimensions: geographic and social contacts, in which long-term contact with other languages can consequently lead to outcomes such as bilingual mixed languages and 'indigenized' varieties of the colonizer's language (Thomason, 2011; Thomason & Kaufman, 1988; Winford, 2012).

Many researchers have studied the morphological and grammatical structures of the Manobo language spoken in some parts of Mindanao. However, most studies on the Manobo language were conducted decades ago and these studies were limited only on classifying and describing the existing phonemic units of the Manobo language spoken in Agusan, Cotabato and Sarangani (DuBois, 1976; Gelacio, Kwook Long, & Schumacher, 2000). Like all languages, Manobo language and the speakers of the language face various challenges in the light of the contemporary world where young people are greatly exposed to quad media. Ronald Wardhaugh (2006) maintains that language usage is changing rapidly because of continued contact and exposure to other languages. These inevitable circumstances could result in language change, which could also lead to language extinction (Alvanoudi, 2018; Brighton, Kirby, & Smith, 2005; Haspelmath, 2009; ). Hence, constant monitoring and efforts for language preservation are important quests to maintain the developing language and save the dying one. The study aimed to describe and classify the phonetic and phonemic features of Manobo spoken in Jose Abad Santos, Davao Occidental.

## Methodology

### Research Design and Participants

The study was a descriptive study that aimed to describe the phonological features of Manobo. It was conducted in Jose Abad Santos, Davao Occidental. Before the identification of the informants, a Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) had been sought from the Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative (IPMR) of Jose Abad Santos and from the National Commission on the Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) head of Davao Occidental. These two offices assisted the researcher identify the respondents. The 10 respondents of the study were residents of Jose Abad Santos who are Manobo and speak the language as their mother tongue and native language. The informants were 50 to 70 years old and above and 20 to 30 years old.

**Research Procedure**

In this study, the first task was to record the raw material of speech, then to identify the recurring speech sounds and to describe how they are produced. Through the recorded corpus, the researcher conducted a phonetic analysis; in which there is segmentation of the sample Manobo language into phonetic units and described the production and characteristics of each unit. In the phonemic analysis, the phonetic units were classified into phonemes of the Manobo language. Finally, it was followed by the generalization of the phonological rules. A mobile phone with audio-recorder and microphone were used to record the sounds of the utterances and conversations. The word lists were Cebuano translations of Manobo-Agusan vocabularies taken from the book, Agusan Manobo Vocabulary, compiled by Havana, Torres, Gonzales & Schumacher (1978).

Further, the analysis of this study is based on Tagmemic theory of Keneth L. Pike. Pike (1955) believed that there are components in a language that are distinctive. A specific language has a unit that is unique and plays an important role within the structure. To identify their distinctiveness, each unit must be differentiated from the other units. Thus, it is called contrast. The distinctiveness of a unit is classified by its position, articulation, and obstruction during speech production (Young et al., 1970). Aside from that, the theory aims to identify the variants of a phoneme; and to determine how it is distributed in the phonological system of a language. In this study, the theory applies to the phonemic units of the Manobo language and to the phonological variations among the Manobo speakers.

Kenneth Pike (1955) suggested having two different distinctions: one is strictly phonetic, and the other is based on function, or phonological criteria. For phonetic distinction, he advocated using the words vocoid and contoid (de Souza, 2010; Hornéy, 2012). In this study, the researcher used the term vocoid instead of vowels and contoid instead of consonants to identify and classify the phonetic alphabet of the Manobo language. Vocoid is defined as the air passes through the oral cavity without constriction, while contoid is defined as the breath stream that passes through the oral cavity with constriction (Anttila, 2018; Brosnaha & Malmberg, 1976). According to Hockett (1960), the function of sound in language is to keep utterances apart. This means to say that the phonological system of language is a "network of differences between sounds' '.

All Manobo words that were recorded were transcribed to identify the phonetic units. The coding sheet was in the form of a checklist. It contains lists of phonetic features, such as voiced, voiceless, stops, plosives, fricatives, bilabial, labiodentals, etc., that helps determine the range of variation of each phoneme. Each phonemic unit was described according to its phonetic features. The analysis was done by contrasting the phonetic codes, classifying their variation, and describing their distribution in the language system. Vowels and consonants were contrasted first to enable further specification of each phonemic unit by describing its variations and distribution of allophones in the Manobo language system. The second procedure was the variation and distribution of these phonemic units in the language system of the Manobo language.

## Result and Discussion

This study made use of the conventional symbols of the International Phonetic Association. However, some of the signs and symbols have been modified to suit the grammar of the Manobo language under the study. Thus, the symbols [e] and [ɑ], which have the qualities of [ɛ] and [æ] are used in the study since, in Manobo, there is no contrast involved between [e] and [ɛ], and [ɑ] and [æ]. The symbols: [ɪ], [ə], [o], and [U] stand for [ɪ], [ə], [o], and [ʊ], respectively.

**Segmental Symbols**

| Symbol | | | Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| [ɑ] | inay | [‘i’nɑɪ] | ‘mother’ |
| [a] | wayeg | [wa:yəg] | ‘water’ |
| [e] | alasdose | [alasdo’se] | ‘noon’ |
| [ə] | teptep | [təp’təp] | ‘spit’ |
| [i] | metinaw | [məti:naU] | ‘praise’ |
| [ɪ] | banis | [‘banɪs] | ‘legs’ |
| [u] | suwat | [‘su’wat] | ‘comb’ |
| [U] | koda | [‘kU:dʔ] | ‘horse’ |
| [o] | soso | [soso] | ‘breasts’ |
| [b] | balad | [bal’lad] | ‘hands’ |
| [d] | dekdek | [dəkdək] | ‘beat’ |
| [g] | getek | [gət’tək] | ‘belly’ |
| [ɦ] | maho | [ma’ɦʔ] | ‘smelly’ |
| [k] | kagnan | [kaʔnɑn] | ‘run’ |
| [l] | logay | [lu:gaɪ] | ‘hair’ |
| [m] | minukit | [minu:kɪt] | ‘pass by’ |
| [n] | netongan | [nəto:ŋan] | ‘fall down’ |
| [ŋ] | ngipen | [ŋi:pən] | ‘teeth’ |
| [p] | pingin | [pi:ŋin] | ‘kaluha’ |
| [r] | tinidor | [‘tinidor] | ‘fork’ |
| [s] | sebed | [‘səbəd] | ‘one’ |
| [t] | tito | [ti:tʔ] | ‘puppy’ |
| [w] | wedad | [‘wədad] | ‘none’ |
| [y] | niyog | [nɪ’yog] | ‘coconut tree’ |

**Segmental Symbols and Signs**

Symbol Description

[‘] - phonetic stress (before the stressed syllable)
[ʔ] - glottal stop
[:] - length: the sound represented by the preceding letter is long
[‘] - length: the sound represented by the preceding letter is short
[3] - high pitch level
[2] - normal pitch level
[1] - low pitch level
[↑] - rising intonation
[↓] - falling intonation
[ ] - brackets to enclose phonetic transcriptions
[.] - single dot to mark syllable
[©] - loan words

**Manobo Vocoids**

In vocoids, the sound is produced by a continuous stream of air that passes through the larynx and finally out through oral and nasal cavity without producing any audible fiction. The air is relatively unimpeded (Rowe & Levin, 2014). All the vocoids in Manobo are pure and simple. The quantity of [a, e, i, o, u] is modified by the strength of pronunciation. The articulatory description and assessment of quality of

the vocoids of Manobo are treated in terms of the Cardinal Vowel Scale. The treatment also includes the examples of distributional features in utterance and syllable. Table 1 below shows the Manobo vocoids in the Cardinal Vowel Scale.

**Table 1**
*Manobo Vocoids*

| | Front | Center | Back |
|---|---|---|---|
| High | [i], [ɪ] | | [u], [U] |
| Middle | [e] | [ə] | [o] |
| Low | [ɑ] | | [a] |

The frontal vocoids of the Manobo language are never rounded.

For example, [i] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| idong | [i:doŋ] | 'nose' |
| ipanawa | [i'pɑ'naU] | 'journey' |

[ɪ] occurs in unstressed syllables in all positions.

[ɪ] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ispiho | [ɪs'pi:ho] | 'mirror' |
| isalem | [ɪ'saləm] | 'morning' |

[e] is produced with the tongue positioned in the middle and lower than the standard English vowel [e]. The mouth is half-open and the tongue is humped toward the front of the mouth. It is tense and spread. It occurs in unstressed syllables. [e] in Manobo is mostly borrowed words, such as:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| alas dose | [alas 'do'se] | 'noon' |
| megeskwela | [məgəs'kwe'lɑ] | 'schooling' |

During the collection of data, the researcher found out that [e] is seldom spoken in the language because it is confused with the characteristics of [ɪ]. In Manobo writing, [e] usually pertains to stressed, centralized, laxed and briefed in duration. It has a similar projection as schwa [ə].

[ɑ] is the most open of the front vocoids. This open, lax, front vocoid occurs in stressed – initial syllable and unstressed – middle and final syllables.

[ɑ] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| apo | ['ɑ'pʔ] | 'ancestors' |
| agaw | ['ɑ:gaU] | 'cousin' |

[a] occurs in stressed syllables in the initial position of the two- or polysyllabic-word when the final syllable does not have ended in plosive. If a word ends in plosive, the strong stress is in the final syllable.

[a] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| amay | [a'mɑɪ] | 'father' |
| sablag | [sab'blag] | 'plate' |

The Manobo [ə], a central, unstressed, and lax vocoid, is articulated in neutral lip and tongue position. However, [ə] following a contoid in a syllable is uttered with subordinated force and not with strong prominent utterance. Unless when it is a question form, such as aden? [ad''dən?] 'what?', the final syllable is uttered with stronger stress. The vocoid [ə] is in initial and final syllable positions only in Manobo native word forms, never in loan words.

[ə] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| teptep | [təptəp] | ‘spit’ |
| legdeg | [‘ləg’dəg] | ‘light’ |

[u] occurs in stressed syllables in initial and medial positions.

[u] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| bulaw | [‘bu:laU] | ‘two or more persons are fighting’ |

[U] occurs in stressed syllables in initial and medial positions.

[U] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ©sukli | [‘sUklɪ] | ‘money returned when payment’ |
| omay | [‘Umɑɪ] | ‘year’ |

In Manobo, [o] occurs in stressed syllables in initial and medial positions and unstressed syllables in final position, unless it is following a contoid-cluster.

[o] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| toyang | [‘toyɑŋ] | ‘dog’ |
| tobed | [‘to:bəd] | ‘root of the plant’ |

[o] in final position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| inog | [‘i:nog] | ‘riped’ |

**Manobo Vocoid Chains**

In this study, vocoid chain is a diphthong: [aɪ], [əɪ], [aU] and [oɪ]. Table 2 below shows the Manobo vocoid chains.

**Table 2**

*Manobo Diphthongs*

| | Front | Central | Back |
|---|---|---|---|
| High | | | |
| Middle | | [əɪ] | [oɪ] |
| Low | [aɪ] | | [aU] |

Two sub- types were distinguished in describing this type of Manobo speech sounds:

1. those with syllabics which have as their center on one of a large choice of vocoids followed by a close-front offglide; hence, the movement from syllabic to offglide is forward or upward, and backward, as in [aɪ] in amay [a’mɑɪ] ‘father’; and
2. those with close-back offglide, i.e., the movement from syllabic to offglide is either backward or upward, as in [aU] in miyaw [mi’yaU] ‘cat’. [aɪ] only occurs in unstressed syllable in final position.

[aɪ] in final position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| balay | [‘bɑ:laɪ] | ‘house’ |
| alosay | [a’losaɪ] | ‘spoon’ |

This fronting vocoid [əɪ] only occurs in the morpheme nemeypey [nəməɪ’pəɪ] ‘shout.’

[aU] is classified as lax, half-close and rounded. It occurs only in unstressed syllables in the final position.

[aU] in final position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| utaw | [‘u:taU] | ‘man’ |
| aldaw | [‘ɑldaU] | ‘day’ |

[oɪ] occurs only in unstressed syllable in final position.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| apoy | [‘a:poɪ] | ‘fire’ |
| menongkoy | [mə’noŋkoɪ] | ‘on the top of a thing’ |

**Manobo Contoids**

Contoids are articulated with varying degrees of obstruction of the breath stream. It ranges from a complete stop to a slight narrowing which produces audible friction as it passes the lungs (Levin, 2006; Hocket, 1960; Williamson, 2015). In this section, the Manobo contoids are analyzed in some detail according to the place of which the obstruction is made and how it is made. This includes voicing or non-voicing. Table 3 below shows the chart of the Manobo contoids.

**Table 3**
*Manobo Contoids*

| | Labial | Dental & Alveolar | Velar | Glottal |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Plosives | [b] , [p] | [d], [t] | [k], [g] | [ʔ] |
| Fricatives | | [s] | | [ɦ] |
| Nasalized | [m] | [n] | [ŋ] | |
| Lateral | | [l] | | |
| Semivocoid | [w] | [y] | | |
| Flap | | [r] | | |

The Manobo plosives are aspirated or with audible release in all positions. Other general features of Manobo plosives are:

1. When followed by nasalized contoid, a plosive release is nasal. e.g., pangatobong [paŋa'toboŋ] 'shoulders', and taking ['tɑ:kiŋ] 'go'.
2. Manobo plosives that are followed by vocoids [o] and [a] in unstressed syllable in final position tend to end in a glottal stop. e.g., intetodo [in:tə'todʔ] 'fingers', malipa [mɑ'lipʔ] 'dirty', onto ['on:tʔ] 'very'.
3. When followed by alveolar sound, [r], Manobo plosives tend to be generated in stressed syllable when it is located in the initial and medial positions, e.g.,

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| tr | trapohay | ['trapohɑɪ] | 'rug' |
| pr | timprano | [tim'pra'no] | 'early' |

4. When followed by the alveolar sound [l], the stress is stronger in the final syllable, example

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| [bl] | sablag | [sab'blag] | 'plate' |

5. When [ə] is following the plosives, usually in the medial and final positions of the syllable, the air rushers out from the mouth with an explosive force after the release of the obstructions.

In Manobo native words, [b] is uttered with an explosive force that the air rushes out from the mouth and [p] is uttered with slight force unless when it is followed by vocoids [i and o] and it is located in the initial and medial positions of the syllable.

[p] and [b] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| pangatobong | [paŋa'toboŋ] | 'shoulders' |
| pilek-pilek | [pɪləkʔ'pi:lək] | 'eyebrows' |
| balisi | [ba'lisʔ] | 'noisy' |

[p] and [b] in medial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| dipanog | [di'pɑ:nog] | 'blood' |
| nebayat | [nə'bɑ'yɑt] | 'laughing' |

**Dental and Alveolar Plosives**

In Manobo, [t] is articulated with the tongue contacts against the upper teeth; hence, it is dental plosives. [d] is articulated at the alveolar ridge. There is a slight vibration in the larynx of production of [d] and in the production of [t]. [d and t] are voiced. Just like the case for [p] and [b], the lips position is conditioned by that alveolar plosive sounds. e.g., spread lips for tiyo [‘ti’yoʔ]‘uncle’, and lip rounding for tito [ti:tʔ] ‘puppy’. A sudden separation of the tip and rim of the tongue and the upper teeth closure allows the air stream to escape with force, unless it has been blocked by a second and directed elsewhere in anticipation of contoid following it, e.g., when there is a glottal stop before the final syllable, such as tuminggaten [tUmiŋ’gat’tən] ‘about face’; when the back of the tongue articulate with the soft palate, as for [g] in legdeg [‘ləgdəg] ‘light’; [k] in dekdek [‘dəkdək] ‘beat’.

**Velar Plosive**

A complete obstruction of the air stream is formed by a closure made between the back of the tongue and the soft palate or the velum. The obstruction compresses the lung air behind the velar closure, during this the vocal bands are wide open for [k], but are set in vibration producing the voicing [g]. The adjacent sounds of [k, g] conditions its labialization, that is there is an anticipatory lip spreading for the plosives before the semi-contoid [w] and front vocoids, e.g., kwani [‘kwa’ni] ‘later’, kwalta [‘kwal:tɑ] ‘money’ ; and an anticipatory lip rounding for the plosives before the back vocoids and semi-contoid, e.g., kowa [‘ko:wɑ] ‘uhm’ ,podok [‘po:dok] ‘knife’. The articulation releases a compressed lung air with force upon sudden separation of the lingua-velar closure.

**Glottal Stop Plosive**

Carl DuBois (1978) emphasized that a grave accent must be written over the preceding vowel and a hyphen must be written between a plosive and the following vowel to emphasize the glottal stop in a Manobo word and so that the person reading the Manobo words would understand the correct meaning and would read the word correctly. Glottal stop is a form of plosive in which the closure is made by bringing the vocal folds together, as when holding one’s breath (Brosnaha & Malmberg, 1976; Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018). David Crystal (cited in Honéy, 2012 p. 67) informed that glottal stop is part of humans’ phonetic ability and is waiting to be used.

Manobo glottal stops are often used to reinforce voiceless plosives, such as [t] as in mangitngit, tuminggáten ; [k] nakalid ; and to enforce voiced plosives [d] as in eden [ʔe.dən] ‘what’ and [g] as in beget [bʔgət] ‘heavy.’ Glottal stop in Manobo occurs:

(1) at the beginning of the word, such as ikan [ʔi’kan] ‘fish’ , odan [ʔo’dan] ‘rain’
(2) in between the vowels [a, e, i, o, u], such as bitoen [bi’toʔ’ən] ‘star’
(3) at the end of the word, such as apó [a.’poʔ] ‘grandparent’ , olo [o’loʔ] ‘only’
(4) before a consonant, such as mámis [‘maʔmis] ‘sweet’, kánen [‘kʔnən] ‘food.’

Manobo glottal stop often occurs in initial and final unstressed syllables in the syllable patterns:

(1) initial position: CV and VC

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| sísí | [‘sʔsʔ] | ‘lips’ |

(2) final position: CV, VC, CVC, cV

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| kinitá | [kɪ’ni:tʔ] | ‘seen’ |
| lieg | [‘li:əʔ] | ‘neck’ |
| dipanog | [di’pɑ:noʔ] | ‘blood’ |
| yáyá | [‘yʔyʔ] | ‘shy’ |

where:

C = contoid
V= vocoid
c= semivocoid

**Fricative**

In Manobo, fricatives are produced in the position of alveolar and glottis. The simultaneous combination of vibration and fiction and resonatory transmission through the nasal tract result to nasal voiced fricative [ɦ] (Brosnahan & Malmberg, 1976). [ɦ] is the result when the glottis is just partially closed, such as heman [‘ɦeman] ‘also’.

**Nasals**

Manobo nasal contoids are nasalized except when it is in final position of the syllable, such as [ŋ] in toyang [‘toyɑŋ] ‘dog’. Manobo nasal contoids are also articulated in a manner similar to the plosives; however, they are different in two features: 1. nasal contoids are voiced when it is in the initial and medial positions of the syllable and are voiceless when it is in the final position of the syllable; 2. the velum is lowered which gives the outgoing breath stream a nasal resonance. Nasal accommodation in contextual adjustments is seen frequently when nasal contoids follow a vocoid articulation.

**Velar Nasal**

A complete oral closure is formed between the soft palate and the back of the tongue in [ŋ], resembling that for the plosive [k] and [g]. In this position, the voiced air stream emitted through the nasal cavity. The preceding vocoid determines the lip position, i. e., spread and withdrawn lips, slightly spread, and rounded. Manobo [ŋ] occurs in pre- and post-vocalic in all position.

[ŋ] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ngadan | [‘ŋadɑn] | ‘name’ |

[ŋ] in medial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| kadangan | [ka’daŋ’ŋan] | ‘long time ago’ |

[ŋ] in final position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| owang | [‘owaŋ] | ‘open’ |

**Lateral**

Manobo [l] is an alveolar lateral. It is articulated with a complete velo-pharyngeal closure shutting off the nasal resonator, and with a partial closure between the rim and the upper teeth. With this position, the voiced air stream is released.

[l] in initial position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| leba | [lə’bɑ] | ‘happy’ |

**Alveolar Flap**

The Manobo [r] is produced with a single flap. The tip of the tongue is raised towards the alveolar ridge, but not touching it. This closure completely blocked the nasal resonator. In Manobo, [r] is seldom observed and used in native words of the language system. [r] only occurs in the following words:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| timprano | [tim’pra’no] | ‘early’ |
| ©tarbaho | [tar’bɑ’ho] | ‘job, work’ |
| ©tinidor | [‘tinidor] | ‘fork’ |
| ©barko | [‘barko] | ‘ship’ |

The lip position for [w] depends on the adjustment of the vocoid, but usually, in Manobo, it is rounded, such as wayeg [wa: yəg] ‘water’ is devoiced after [k], such as kwalta [‘kwal:tɑ] ‘money’, kwani [‘kwa’ni] ‘later’.

**Palatal Semi-vocoid**

Manobo [y] is voiced. The tongue assumes a similar position as of [i], and glides immediately to the position of the following vocoid. [y] is always unstressed in all positions.

[y] in initial, medial and final positions:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| yaya | [‘yaʔyaʔ] | ‘shy’ |
| meyaman | [mə’yɑ’mɑn] | ‘rich’ |

**Manobo Contoids Cluster**

Contoid cluster is a sequence of two or more consonants without an intervening vocoid or syllable division that constitutes a contoid cluster (Rowe & Levin, 2014). In the phonological system of Manobo, the initial is plosives, such as [b, k, p, t], followed by [l, r and w]. However, some of the words are loan and have been acquired by the native speakers of Manobo; thus, these become part of the daily conversation and language system of the natives. The following examples illustrate the point:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ©kwalta/kwarta | [‘kwal:tɑ] | ‘money’ |
| ©eskwela | [əs’kwelɑ] | ‘schooling’ |
| kwani | [‘kwani] | ‘later’ |

**Manobo Supra-segmental Prosodemes**

This study restricts the supra-segmental features to the phenomena of stress, length, pitch and intonation.

**Stress and Rhythm**

Manobo stress is either strongly stressed (‘) or weakly stressed (unmarked). In the polysyllabic Manobo word, such as: nakadogso [na.ka.’dog.sʔ] ‘to trip in walking or running’ the third syllable is given prominence by strong stress, the others are subordinated by weak stress; katadogihen [katado’gihən] ‘sleepy’ the strong stress is in the fourth syllable. The following examples will tell that the Manobo stress is fixed, in the sense that the stress is strong when the word is a two-syllabic, the strong stress is in the first syllable. When the word is a polysyllabic, the stress is strong in the position before the final syllable. Unless when there is a schwa [ə] in all position of the word, the stress may be before or after the schwa, such as:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| salep | [saləp] | ‘stream’ |
| megenaw | [məgə’nɑU] | ‘cold’ |

When there is a contoid cluster in a polysyllabic word, there is a strong stress in the first or second syllable depending where the contoid cluster is located. However, when the contoid cluster is the final syllable of a word, it is always unstressed. In the Manobo phonological system, the final syllable of a word is always unstressed.

(1) on the vocoid initial word in the two-syllabic word

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| inay | [ʔi:nɑɪ] | ‘mother’ |

(2) on the contoid initial word in the three-syllabic word

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| balangay | [balaŋaɪ] | ‘small boat’ |

(3) on the contoid cluster word in all positions

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| trapohay | [‘trapohɑɪ] | ‘rug’ |

When there is a glottal stop before the contoid in the final syllable of a two-syllable word, the stress in the final syllable, such as sosó [so’sʔ] ‘mollusk’; and oló [o’lʔ] ‘only’.

Rhythm results in the recurrence and occurrence of strongly stressed and weakly stressed syllables in utterances that are longer than the word. In Manobo, in connected speech or in a discourse, the syllable stress found at a word level retains its base syllabic stressed form. For example, amang, ayas ka una. [a.’mɑŋ̩. a. ‘yɑs. ka. ‘u.na] ‘Mother, come here for a while.’

**Length**

Length, [:], [‘] pertains to the duration of the articulation of the sounds or syllables. It is a feature of prominence, which is a complex of length and stress. In Manobo, length is either long or short. A Manobo word could be confusing or could have different meaning if it is incorrectly uttered; thus, a speaker must identify the duration of the articulation of the sounds, particularly the glottal stop. For example,

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| soso | [‘so:so] | ‘breasts’ |
| sosó | [so’sʔ] | ‘mollusk’ |

Vocoids are generally lengthened at the beginning and at the end of the syllable. However, a syllable in the final position is always shortened, whether or not it is a stressed or unstressed syllable. In the first syllable of a two-syllable word, the length is longer, especially when the initial of a word is a vocoid [ɑ, ə, i, o and u]. The length is longer in the second syllable of a polysyllabic word where there is a vocoid [ɑ, o and u]. For example, ipanaw [ipɑ:naU] ‘walk’

The contoid length of Manobo is often and is realized as gemination. The beginning of the articulation of the first contoid of a geminate is followed by a hold, and then the second syllable, with a renewed momentum across the syllable boundary, is realized as the release, which blends with the next speech sound. For example:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| dangnga | [daŋ:’ŋa] | ‘play’ |
| dallem | [dal’ləm] | ‘under’ |

**Pitch and Intonation**

In Manobo speech, only the natural speech which makes use of the pitch phones [3, 2, & 1] is used, because emphatic and emotional speech characterizes the pitch level 4. For example, the syllable [ba] in dibaloy [di.’ba.loɪ] ‘behind’ when utter monotonously is not prominent even with exaggerated stress. Hence, stress should be associated with the pitch change, such as [¹di.²’ba.¹loɪ]. The example below may illustrate the combined supra-segmental features of pitch and intonation.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. Ayas ka uná diyá. | [¹a.²’yaska.³u.²naʔ ‘dɪ.²yaʔ↓] | ‘come here for awhile’ |
| b. kenen? | [¹kə.³’nən↑] | ‘where?’ |
| c. doton | [²’do.¹ton↓] | ‘there’ |
| d. doton? | [¹do.³’ton↑] | ‘there?’ |
| e. domoton ka? | [²domo.¹ton ³ka↑] | ‘are you going there?’ |
| f. moton ka? | [¹mo.²ton ³ka↑] | ‘are you going there?’ |
| g. domoton ka man basi? | [¹do.²mo.³ton ²Kaman ba.¹si↓] | ‘you are going there, aren’t you?’ |
| h. abati una sa baso. | [¹a.²’bati’u.¹na sa ²ba.¹so↓] | ‘kindly, take the cup’ |
| i. mapakay abati una sa basa? | [¹ma.²’pakay ¹a.²’ba.¹ti ²’u.¹na sa ²ba.³so↑] | ‘could you take the cup?’ |
| j. si Randi, si Lisa, aw si akə. | [¹si ²Ran.¹disi ²Laɪ.¹sɑawsi ²a.¹kəʔ↓] | ‘Randi, Lisa and I’ |

The combined supra-segmental features of pitch and intonation can be summed up in the following patterns:

| Communication/situation | PLPattern | examples |
|---|---|---|
| command | 123212↓ | (a) |
| request | 12121↓ | (h) |
| | 121212123↑ | (i) |
| yes or no question | 213↑ or | (e) |
| | 123↑ | (f) |
| open-ended question | 13↑ | (b) |
| echo question | 21↑ | (d) |
| tag question | 12321↓ | (g) |
| statement of fact | 21↓ | (c) |
| series | 1212121↓ | (j) |

In a Manobo discourse, the intonation is simple and fixed. If the speech is a statement such as command, tag question, series, and statement of fact, the intonation that falls at the end of the sentences falls.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The study described a total of 42 phonemic units in Manobo. Clipping, code-switching, and borrowing of words are detected. Interestingly, [r] as an alveolar flap has inhabited the phonological system, which is commonly identified in some loan words. Manobo is still actively learned and used in home and in the community by children, but it is not being sustained in the formal institution.

It is recommended that a further study, with large corpus, in the morphophonemic variations of various native speakers. Finally, it is important that the language policy maker of such as that of MTB-MLE policy should actively promote local languages like Manobo language in schools where this language has been spoken by most students to be used in instructions to help strengthen its vitality.

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HUMANITIES

# Beginner's Piano Chinese Students: Parents' Challenges and Successes

Shen Zhongyi, Leonardo Dorado, Vicky C. Mergal, Elmie Lynn V. Lagajino

*Adventist University of the Philippines*
2043398@aup.edu.ph

## Abstract

This study aimed to identify parents' challenges in encouraging their children to learn piano and determine what causes them to succeed in piano training among their children. The study utilized phenomenological design with 13 participants aged 5-12 piano students' parents. The findings identified the following challenges for parents for their children to learn piano: a) lack of interest; b) lack of focus; c) poor grasp of staff; and d) low rate of progress. On the other hand, parents discovered that what leads to some success are: a) parents' support; b) equity; c) freedom; and d) encouragement to work harder. Based on the results, it is concluded that piano teachers should not only focus on nurturing children to learn piano skills, but also on teaching parents and significant others how to engage them to motivate these children.

**Keywords:** *parents' challenges, parents' successes, piano learning, music education*

As the king of musical instruments, the piano is known by more and more people. There are many studies about music training that impacts various aspects of cognitive development such as perception, memory, and language skills. Parents have gradually learned the benefits of learning piano for children. The motivations of parents are one of the important effects of learning piano.

The difficulty and boredom of piano learning greatly reduce children's motivation for piano learning. When piano children change their understanding of the piano from the initial sense of mystery and freshness to boring basic practice, it is easy to happen that they don't want to continue learning the piano under the pressure of learning tasks. Children have the characteristics of weak self-control, inattention, and heavy play, so it is not easy for them to learn the piano independently. It is not surprising that there was psychological resistance to the piano (Qi, 2017). Most students are unwilling to practice the piano because it is boring and hard, but they still love music in their hearts. In this case, parents can't force them but should cultivate their children's interest in music in their daily life. They don't have to be limited to classical music. They can contact music from many aspects and angles, and let their children listen, see and feel more (Li, 2019).

In the Simply Music program, Parents are called "Life Coaches" and are held accountable for supporting and encouraging the child's progress both during the lessons and in the time between lessons. "Without the encouragement, support, and cooperation of parents, music lessons can be short-lived and frustrating to everyone" (Zha, 2019). Sha (2007) believes that parents should cooperate with teachers, by paying attention to the influence of attitudes, concepts, and educational methods on children and make scientific piano training plans for children. Zhang (2009) believes that children are naturally naughty and active, which requires parents and teachers to have enough patience to guide and supervise them correctly. Lei (2010) believes that parents should establish a long-term belief in learning piano. Parents' guidance plays an important role in piano learning for children. Parents have to pay attention to the communication of children and make a suitable plan for them.

Parents play a key role in piano education. They have to cultivate the initiative of children. Parents should use a variety of methods to make children fall in love with the piano. Parents can let their children participate in music performances and let children receive applause through their performances. Parents can also take part in concerts with their children and let them experience the wonderful music from musicians. Let them know that learning the piano is an interesting thing. It is normal for children to give up when they face difficulties. At this time, the role of the parents is very important. Parents should opportunely encourage children, let them realize the difficulty of learning the piano, and learn to control their emotions (Zhou, 2010). When children want to give up, parents can tell stories or give examples of the people around them about how they overcome difficulties. Parents can encourage children and learn with them together. It is difficult for children to study alone but it is easy for children to study with parents. It is also convenient for parents to correct and remind children at home. Children are easy to make mistakes. So, some parents always reprimand children loudly without knowing that this will greatly reduce the enthusiasm of children to learn the piano. Yin (2009) said, "Allow children to make mistakes because every child has the right to be free and respected to arouse the child's self-confidence". When children make mistakes while playing the piano, let them practice more on that part until there is no mistake. When children make mistakes because of their inattentiveness or half-heartedness, let them concentrate on practicing. Parents should help children to reflect on the cause of mistakes rather than blindly accusing. One of the important factors in the learning progress is the practice duration on the piano. Enough practice is important to get success in learning piano. Parents must arrange a practice time for the children. Parents should be active guides and improve children practicing efficiency in a limited time (Xu, 2010).

Parental involvement in instrumental learning is compelling evidence that musical achievement is linked to high levels of parental involvement, which is provided in studies, for example, Ericsson et. Al, (1993) and Davidson et. al, (1996). Davidson and her colleagues found that once children start learning an instrument, parental involvement is critical as to whether the child persists or gives up. They reported that all children selected for entry to a specialist music school had parents who took an active participatory role in music lessons and daily practice. The most successful children are those who had parents involved in

lessons, spoke to the teacher at the end of the lesson, took notes, and supervised practice, often for up to 15 years. (Davidson et al., 1996) High levels of support and challenge have a positive effect on teenagers in all talent areas. Children in all age groups, including secondary school students, welcome parental support (Crozier, 1999). However, it seems to be important that parental involvement is based on negotiation and is optional rather than obligatory. According to O'Neill (2001), it helps young people if they believe their parents are supportive of their involvement in musical activities.

Parents act as overseers in piano education. Some parents require children to practice for a few hours every day. If children do not practice well on that day, they cannot go out to play or eat dinner. This kind of behavior will greatly damage the emotions of children in learning and may also have a negative mentality when children practice the piano. Zheng (2014) said "As far as human nature is concerned, no one likes to have an authority in front of him all day long. All obedience to authority is accompanied by repression and displeasure." The writer thinks that if parents are always in a high level of parental involvement in children's education and always nag them, will arouse the disgust of children and let children lose interest in piano. Most parents spoil things with undue haste when children are learning piano. As a result, children do not have a good foundation in piano skills. And it also reduces the interest of children in piano learning. Parents hope to pass the piano grading test and get the certification in a short time and force children to participate in the tests which are not good for children on piano education (Zhou, 2010). Though parents have to let their children go on piano grading tests, they should know that the certificate is not the most important because that the ability and interest of children are more important than the certifications. Listen to the suggestions of the piano teacher and let the children choose: Parents want their children to be perfect in their ideals. But this will lose the original happiness in their childhood. The study by Shi (2016) found there are no omnipotent parents or perfect children. Many parents want to shape their children into what they want, but they cannot see their unique talents, and they do not think about how to make children better themselves. The children are still young. If children have been growing up under the pressure of parents, it is impossible to have a healthy state of piano learning. Parents should set up a positive and healthy learning attitude for their children. Let children be independent and happy.

There are various problems with family education which are also reflected in children's piano education. This paper focused on the challenges and successes of parents encouraging beginner piano students. Nowadays, there are more children learning the piano so the research on the strategies of parents will help children learn piano better.

This study aims to answer the following research objectives.

1. To determine the challenges encountered by parents in encouraging children to learn piano.
2. Find out the successes in motivating the children's piano performance.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The researcher utilized in this paper is a qualitative research approach, specifically Phenomenological design. A Semi-Structured Interview is used to find out the motivation strategies implored by parents to increase the interest and performance of their children in piano. The Semi-Structured Interview allows for open-ended responses from participants for more in-depth information (Bert &Suzanne, 2002).

### Population and Sampling Technique

Participants in this study were parents of aged 5-12 children learning piano for at least one year already and parents are naturally using strategies to encourage or motivate their children to learn piano. Participants were purposively selected based on their willingness to participate and availability. A total of 13 participants were chosen. The reasons they were chosen were because their children were piano beginners and belonged to the conventional level.

**Instrumentation**

This research study utilized an interview with parents of piano students to determine the challenges and successes in motivating their children. The interview questionnaire has questions and during the interview of parents, follow-up questions were made to verify the information they are giving. The data were also validated through observation and triangulation.

**Analysis of Data**

After the interview of the parents and the gathering of data, the researcher transcribed the interview and did a thematic analysis of the data gathered during the interview. The emerging theme then was discussed and presented in the discussion of findings.

**Ethical Consideration**

In the conduct of research, ethical issues were considered. To ensure the quality and integrity of the research, the researcher requested only the participation of the target respondents of the study. They were also informed that participation is voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity were also strictly observed.

## Results and Discussion

### Parents' challenges in encouraging their children to learn piano

***Lack of interest***

During the Focus Group Discussion of parents, they were asked about the challenges they experienced with their children when they tried to encourage them to learn piano. Participant 1 said: "In order to avoid piano lessons, my child pretends to be ill every time before class, either with a headache or a toothache". Participants 3&6 agreed with that. They said their children also try to find various reasons to avoid practicing the piano." From the comments of those participants, we realized that their children lack interest in learning piano. That is the major challenge of piano learning. Learning interest refers to an individual's positive cognitive tendency and emotional state of learning. It is the psychological characteristic that students tend to know, study and obtain certain knowledge. It is an internal force to promote students' knowledge seeking and a strong driving force for individuals to engage in learning activities. Learning interest is both the reason and the result of learning (Li, 2019).

Lack of interest leads to many challenges for children in learning piano. Participant 10 said: "Every time my child needs my reminder to practice the piano, and when practicing the piano, he needs to drink water and go to the bathroom." P4 agreed with her totally, "sane with mine. My child was distracted when practicing the piano. Sometimes She doesn't even know where she plays now."

Participant 7 had a challenge with the reading staff with her child. "My child has a particularly hard time learning new pieces because she reads the staves very slowly and each note takes a long time to read." Participant 9 has the same problem, "Even though the teacher has taught it many times, my children still often confuse the bass clef with the treble clef."

Those parents could feel that their children didn't like the piano now. But before they started to learn the piano, they did ask for the children's wishes and began to learn with their consent. Interest is the best teacher for children. This finding is supported by Jia (2016), who mentioned that a child will only be motivated to learn in piano lessons if he or she develops an interest in piano learning. Parents develop a musical interest in children's piano education so that they can relax and enjoy learning piano in piano class. Musical interest is the tendency of a person to know music when he or she is actively exploring the history of music. This cognitive tendency gives priority to music and related things with a strong and clear direction and inquiry.

If a child has a great interest in music, then he is likely to be on the path of learning music for a longer period of time. After he develops an interest in music, he may actively participate in practical music performance activities in school or the community, thus achieving good learning outcomes. If a person does not develop an interest in music and is often forced to learn, the musical activities he engages in are not conducive to learning efficiency, and over time he may also develop an aversion to music. If a child does

not like piano lessons, the activity of learning the piano cannot become an activity that comes from his inner needs, and even a good piano teacher will not mean much to the child. The consequences of losing interest are obvious.

***Lack of focus***

Parents of piano beginners feel very helpless because their children have not formed good habits, due to their toddler age they are uncooperative and restless thus, making learning piano difficult. Participant 2 commented that her child tends to be uncooperative, does not want to sit down during practice, and cannot practice efficiently. Participant 3 said: "My boy was only 4 years old when he started to learn the piano. He couldn't even listen to the teacher quietly." Participant 6 said: "my child needs to be reminded all the time when he practices the piano. What bothers me most is that he cannot practice on his own. Whenever I am not with him, his practice is not progressing at all". Participant 10 said: "Every time my child needs my reminder to practice the piano, and when practicing the piano, he always drinks water or goes to the bathroom." P4 agreed with her totally, " My child is distracted when practicing the piano. Sometimes She doesn't even know where she plays now."

If a child appears to be very inefficient in not wanting to practice, parents need to understand that these are normal physical or mental activities exhibited by young children. Parents should allow their children to indulge occasionally and should not use verbal or physical violence in their child's piano practice. For young children who may not have enough self-control, parents should understand the physical and mental developmental characteristics and learning patterns of children in that age group, and use the length of time the child has to concentrate to help the child practice effectively. Parents should understand that it is only temporary that their child does not want to practice the piano because it is the child's nature to play. Parents should actively guide their child's interest and enthusiasm in learning the piano, rather than just criticizing from the sidelines.

***Poor grasp of music Staff***

The staff is a set of lines and spaces that runs horizontally across a page of music. All written music is located on and around the staff. If everyone is going to start learning to read music, it makes sense to start reading staff! Participant 7 said, "My child has a particularly hard time learning new pieces because she reads the staves very slowly and each note takes a long time to read." Participant 9 has the same problem, "Even though the teacher has taught it many times, my children still often confuse the bass clef with the treble clef." The root cause of poor mastery of students is Children do not have a correct understanding of the staff and do not recognize its important role in piano learning. At this time, parents and teachers need to correct their children's wrong ideas. The most important thing is to encourage children to practice constantly and practice makes perfect. Parents can find some music scores they are interested in and play some music games to improve their children's interest in music.

***Low rate of progress***

Participant 11 said that my child has been studying for 2 years, and he feels that he has not improved much compared to the first year. Participant 12 also felt deeply about this, "My child's learning progress is also very slow, and even a simple new song is not proficient enough to practice for more than a month".

Children of different ages have different learning progress. As a parent, don't force the learning process too much. No matter how slow the child's progress is, don't emphasize it too much in front of the child, so that the child feels depressed and lost. Parents can work with teachers to find out the reason and then apply the medicine to the case. Effort is a prerequisite for success. The world-renowned musician Chopin said: "I practice the piano for more than ten hours every day, and finally the world sums up all my sweat with the word "genius". When children lack practice, their learning progress will be slow. Increasing the length of practice will improve the learning progress (Participant 1).

**Successes encounter of Parent**

In every field, interest plays a key role, because interest is the best teacher. With the guidance of interest, piano children will be curious about new things and give full play to their subjective initiative, to actively learn piano, feel the music and drive their consciousness of practicing piano. The interest mentioned here is that after having a certain understanding of the piano, piano children voluntarily learn new knowledge, rather than the freshness of just beginning to contact the piano. It is difficult to insist on learning piano only by freshness, which will soon disappear in boring practice. To protect this interest, parents need to make efforts in the following areas:

***Parents Support***

The age of musical initiation is around 4 years old, these children have insufficient self-learning ability and are unable to master the contents of the class, or they forget the contents of the class because they are not focused enough, so they cannot master the key and difficult points taught by the teacher in the class, and cannot find appropriate methods of piano practice. participant 9 said, "There is a big difference between whether to accompany them when practicing the piano. When I sit beside her, even if I don't say anything, it can bring her peace and encouragement ". Therefore, parents need to practice with them.

Parents should arrange a reasonable time for their children to practice the piano, and they can let them practice when they are full of energy. This focused practice activity will ensure the quality of your child's practice and help them develop good music behavior habits. Xu (2010) mentioned that parents should arrange the time for their children to practice the piano and improve the efficiency of their children's practice within a limited time. The amount of time spent practicing the piano each day depends on how long the child can concentrate. As your child grows older, the amount of time spent practicing piano can be increased accordingly. For the common challenges of parents: children can't sit still and have poor efficiency in practicing the piano, Participant 3 has its own way: play the piano for only 5 minutes a day in the first week, 10 minutes a day in the second week and 15 minutes a day in the third week. As the difficulty of the repertoire increases, the playing time is slowly extended. The time of practicing the piano every day should be fixed as much as possible and should be constantly hinted at and reminded at ordinary times so that children subconsciously think that practicing the piano is the same as eating and sleeping, which must be done at the time of every day. "My children only practice the piano for one hour at most every day. I hope he can maintain his interest in learning the piano and develop the habit of practicing the piano before he goes to primary school. That's enough" (Participant 3). The practice time for piano practice should be rationalized and scientific, and the practice time should be consistent with the child's psychological and physiological activities. Parents can let their children practice the piano in the morning when they get up or in the period before dinner because such a short practice time allows children to focus their attention. In addition, the increase in the number of practice sessions will also help the child to consolidate and master the musical pieces, and the child himself or herself will be more receptive. Parents can adjust the practice time according to the actual situation. Whether or not you can arrange the practice time for your child scientifically may directly affect your child's learning progress.

In addition, the initial introduction is boring, and the children's patience is not enough to see the results immediately, so they need their parents' support and encouragement. Music is like a special secret language that communicates with them and is an important way to promote emotions during this special parent-child time. Participant 9 reported that after a long day of work, spending time with their children practicing every day greatly improves the parent-child relationship and brings the family closer together. The family is often filled with laughter.

The phenomenon of parental supervision in piano education is manifested by the fact that some parents make it mandatory for their children to practice piano for several hours a day so that their children's enthusiasm for practicing the piano is greatly reduced. If parents play a supervisory role in their child's piano learning process, it can greatly damage the child's learning mood and may cause the child to have a negative mentality during practice. Even a very musically talented child's interest in music is most likely to

be stifled by improper parental discipline, or even an extreme aversion to music. Parents need to find ways to mobilize their child's inner interest in practicing piano so that the learning can be sustained. If parents are always on top of their children's piano education, they will cause their children to resent it and lose interest in learning the piano.

Children can adjust their mentality under the guidance of their parents. When playing etude, let children imagine that they are playing on the stage and practicing the piano with a positive and pleasant mood, to gradually develop a positive musical behavior habit. Lang Lang, a famous Chinese pianist, loved playing piano etudes when he was young. "I don't think it's boring. He said that playing the piano means interest. Playing the piano is like sitting on a merry-go-round, bringing out a series of music. I want to express myself through music (2018, p33). Only when children develop a positive habit of practicing the piano will they feel that practicing the piano is a very fulfilling thing. Therefore, parents can adjust their children's initiative and enthusiasm in learning piano in a variety of ways. Parents can let their children participate in music performance activities, let their children perform on the stage, and let their children harvest the applause and encouragement brought to them by the performance, to love the piano more.

***Equality***

Equality is another important manifestation of being a qualified parent. The "equality" mentioned here means that parents and children have the same right to express themselves in the matter of learning the piano. No matter how old children are, they are independent individuals. They all have their own thinking, understanding, and will. For a music-related topic, their expression may be clumsy and simple, but such a small expression is an important accumulation of music understanding and analysis in the future. Participant 7 commented on her child's recent learning status "I used to teach her, now the child is teaching me, and she reviewed her knowledge again while enjoying being a teacher". If parents respect their children's understanding, carefully listen to their children's ideas and opinions in getting along, and don't force their children to practice the piano for a few hours. In the process of practicing the piano, some question-and-answer exchanges are truly rewarding.

Self-discipline in practicing the piano means being able to have your child take an active role in practicing the piano themselves. According to Huang, training children to practice independently is like training them to walk independently. In the beginning, what is needed is directional guidance, not a substitution, and substitution will eventually only foster inertia, so it is important to avoid help everywhere so that children can learn to be independent and move forward on their own, even when they lose their dependency (2017). If the child can learn piano with an effective and positive mindset, the child will be more efficient in practicing the piano. Because only if the child takes the initiative to practice the piano, he will enjoy the process more and will love it more. participant 7 said "My child is 10 years old and has studied piano for 3 years. He has now formed the good habit of practicing the piano for 30 minutes every night. Once he had a bad cold. I said in my heart that if he told me not to practice today, I would also promise. To his surprise, he practiced for 30 minutes as usual ". Therefore, parents should fully respect their children and let them become the main body of piano practice. Parents should let their children gradually develop the habit of managing their own time and self-management, and make them feel that practicing piano is as important as eating and sleeping every day. Participant 7 continued: "I am very happy that my child has formed the habit of practicing the piano regularly every day because I understand that he will only do so if he is interested in the piano."

***Freedom***

The responsibility of parents should be to create a good musical atmosphere and induce children to love music, to mobilize children's enthusiasm to learn piano. The first thing is to make the children interested and willing to cooperate. It is the best way for children to have their own choice. Music educator Zhou (2010) put forward the saying that "parents do cheerleading". If parents can clearly define their role, do not work as a supervisor, just be a cheerleader, show more love and patience, and see their children's efforts to

play the piano, it will reduce the contradiction between many piano children's parents and Piano children. Participant 7 shared her experience "Since my child is interested in the piano and consciously practices the piano every day, I am much more tolerant of his requirements. He will choose to rest when he feels more homework or uncomfortable, and he will spend more time practicing when he feels that the music is difficult".

Parents are so desperate for their children to become the standard they want them to be that they lose the joy that their children need at their age. Parents' desire for perfection in their children is manifested by the fact that some parents severely reprimand their children when they play a wrong note and often pick on them. The child is not always efficient in learning in this physically and mentally exhausting situation. Parents should moderately provide the education and freedom that the child perceives, a relaxed cognitive environment, and not overly interfere and harshly blame the child, so that the child's own motivation to learn piano can be given full play. Shi thinks that growing up with the expectation of perfection, the child's nature is overly domesticated, and his or her self as an independent self cannot stretch properly, to dissipate too much energy to adapt to the requirements of others (2016). Not seeking perfection is not a form of slackness, but a form of courage. No parent is omnipotent, nor do they have children who are perfect (Yin, 2009). Many parents of piano children want to mold their children into what they want them to be, but do not pay attention to and discover their children's unique talents, nor do they consider how to make our children better versions of themselves. No one is perfect, and in demanding that children must meet certain requirements, parents should also look at whether they are imposing the goals they are pursuing on their children. Children are still young, and if they are constantly growing up under the pressure of a parent's strong yang, they are unlikely to develop a healthy state of learning. The pursuit of perfection with a child is an unreasonable mindset. Parents should establish a positive and healthy learning mindset for their children, rather than overwhelming them. Parents only need to be aware of their educational problems to avoid these mistakes in the process of educating their children, so that they can grow up physically and mentally healthy so that they are independent and happy people.

***Encouragement***

The child must be physically and mentally engaged when practicing the piano, and it is difficult to meet these requirements when a child is deflated. According to Huang, parents should remind and check their children during practice, and be kind, but not lax (2017). When you see every little progress your child makes, you should encourage and praise him or her, and you should communicate with him or her more lovingly.

The child may become frustrated when learning a new piece of music. Parents should tell their children that it is normal for them to learn complicated exercises and that they will overcome them with more practice. There is nothing difficult in this world, only the person who has the will to do it.

When they encounter some practice pieces, the child may find it boring to play with them and lose interest in practicing. Parents can patiently advise and tell their children that practicing is a learning activity that must be repeated. Since you have chosen piano, you should stick to it and persevere until the end, is the victory. Parents can also accompany their children to practice with them so that they will feel that they are not alone in practicing the piano. Huang argues that parents can involve the whole family to a greater extent so that they can create more opportunities for their children to perform, as well as provide more comfort, understanding, and support in words (2017, p20-21). Parents can dance and sing along with their child while he or she practices the piano. Learning together with your child can increase your child's enthusiasm for learning. P11 shared her way to deal with the challenge of children's lack of concentration. "I'm a kindergarten teacher. When I find that my child can't concentrate when practicing the piano, I will compile the songs that need to be practiced into nursery rhymes and sing them to her. When she is interested in these songs, she is also interested in practicing the piano."

The best gift for children is encouragement. When practicing the piano, children need to be praised and appreciated by their parents, not supervised and picky. Even if there are problems in the process of playing

the piano, parents should try their best to control themselves. Participant 1 realized that "my child likes to hear rewards, so when she plays a song and looks at me for evaluation, I usually say it's great or much better than last time, but there's a small problem. It's perfect if you can improve. The child will take the initiative to say, let's do it again. Parents can also set small phased goals for their children, which should not be too high so that their children can achieve through efforts. It can be divided into several small goals according to a week, make progress every day, and strive to make children get a sense of achievement every day. When children overcome a difficulty in piano practice through efforts, parents need to actively affirm it. Pure praise is not the goal. Smart parents will take advantage of the situation and put forward the next slightly challenging goal.

Parents should not be too hard on their children during the piano learning process but should treat their children with positive and encouraging words and a mindset when they have a bottleneck in the piano. If parents are too harsh with their children, they will lose their motivation to learn piano, which is not conducive to the long-term learning of the piano aspect of the child. Under the demands of a strict parent, the child may become bored with the piano and even resist it in his or her heart. In short, parents should often communicate with their children, understand the problems that arise in the learning process, and help them to correct them in time, so that they feel that learning piano is a happy thing, rather than feeling that only severe criticism can promote the progress of their children's piano learning.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

This study found that most of the parents of Piano Beginners had challenges since the parents are also beginner piano learners. Most parents are troubled by 1) low cooperation, 2) no interest, 3) a poor grasp of staff, and 4) a low rate of progress. However, they also gradually find their educational methods to help their children learn the piano. They realized that providing a good environment with 1) companionship, 2) equity, 3) freedom, and 4) encouragement will encourage their children to work harder to learn piano.

This research is based on small sample size and fixed age; it may have limited generalization. This research-based on the Chinese educational system; may have limited generality only to the Chinese. The results of the study highlight the need for future research to use a more representative sample.

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HUMANITIES

# Lived Experiences of Filipino Married Couples: Secrets for a Long-Lasting Relationship

Princess Marian G. Macasa, Lorein Kate Y. Delgra, Christine Joan P. Laroa, Kayecelyn B. Dumas, Cutie B. Canesares, Rhalf Jayson F. Guanco, Myrtle O. Grijalvo, Buenafe Sadicon-Olita, Sheryll Ann M. Castillo

*Adventist University of the Philippines*
2050979@aup.edu.ph

## Abstract

Marriage and family have been widely studied to discover and understand people's experiences in this field. However, studies made within the Filipino context are limited. This qualitative study utilizing phenomenological design aims to investigate the lived experiences of long-term Filipino married couples and their secrets for a long-lasting relationship. Data were collected through face-to-face and virtual interviews among two husbands and six wives. The criteria were set for selecting the participants: (a) legally married couples; (b) married for at least 20 years; (c) Filipino citizens; and (d) have two or more children. Triangulation was done by gathering evidence of their long-term relationship. The evidence contains old photos of the couple together and love letters dated decades ago. Findings reveal that married Filipino couples define their marital satisfaction by understanding each other's differences through good communication, trust, love, commitment, and respect, by surpassing trials and challenges in their married life. The secrets of their marital satisfaction in their long-term relationship are being engaged in a God-centered relationship, sacrificing and persevering, and valuing and appreciating each other. Finally, the insights that participants imparted to the younger Filipino generation include making wise decisions before entering into marriage in terms of emotional maturity and financial stability; taking responsibilities and limitations; and being there for each other always.

**Keywords:** *marital satisfaction, Filipino married couples, long-lasting relationship*

The institution of marriage is essential to the existence of the human race. It is one of the primary factors that sustain change and development. Considered by sociologists to be culturally universal, marriage exists in different forms in all societies. It is present as a social institution in all cultures and serves important social functions. Crossman (2019) highlighted marriage as a social construct, which in turn, cultural norms and expectations determine what a marriage is and who can marry.

On the other side, the solemnity and chief function of marriage are slowly deteriorating because of marital infidelity (National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, 2009 as cited in Lee (2015). It was found that marital infidelity is one of the major causes of stress among Filipino couples, with about 36 percent of men and 2 percent of women engaging in extramarital affairs. Marital dissatisfaction affects people of all ages, races, and cultural backgrounds and often leads to divorce (Kepler, 2015).

From the latest report of the Philippine Statistical Authority (as cited in Billing, 2018), 6,304 petitions were filed to end marriages in Manila in the first nine months of 2017, which is a 23 percent decrease from the year before, with women filing slightly more than half of the petitions. With this, the significance of marriage and marital satisfaction itself is gradually reaching its bottom line in Filipino society. Thus, it has become a social problem.

Over the years, several studies have been conducted in the field of marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction is one of the common concepts being utilized to assess happiness and stability in a marriage. According to Tavakol et al., (2017), it is a multidimensional concept that is affected by several factors. As described by Bradbury and Karney (2020), marital satisfaction does not decline over time but instead remains relatively stable for long periods.

Personality traits are used to predict an individual's behaviors in different life situations, including the state of marital life. Both one's own and the partner's personality have consistent effects on satisfaction throughout the marital duration (Oshio and Abe, 2018). This is based on the study conducted on Japanese married couples.

A recent study by Sayehmiri et al. (2020) showed that couples who are high in neuroticism experience lower levels of marital satisfaction. On the contrary, those who are high in conscientiousness are more satisfied with their marital life. This is supported by the previous analysis by Boyce, Wood, and Ferguson (2016) which confirmed that conscientious women experience greater life satisfaction in marriage than less conscientious women; and introverted women and extraverted men experience longer-term life satisfaction benefits following marriage.

In other studies, marriage and mental health were found to have a positive relationship (Braithwaite and Holt-Lunstad, 2017). However, the positive effects of marital stability on well-being and health outcomes are conditional upon the quality of marriage. So far, there are few investigations that have tried to explore the relationship between marital satisfaction, well-being, and health among very long-term married individuals. This includes the findings by Margelischa et al. (2016). Marital satisfaction is associated with health and well-being in older couples over time, whereas psychological resilience and marital strain are major predictors explaining the variance of these outcomes.

Everyday moments and ordinary gestures create the texture of long-term couple relationships (Gabb and Fink, 2015). The concept of "we-ness" was seen as a reason for marital satisfaction (Alea, Singer, and Labunko, 2015). This implies the notion that couples move from viewing themselves as two separate "I"s together, and to seeing themselves as a "we" unit.

Certain positive behaviors that are repeated by both couples can bring a big impact on the success of continued married life (Samadi et al., 2016). It was recognized that a strong foundation for living together, mutual commitment to protecting marital cohesion, and striving to improve sexual relations can help sustain long-term marriage and marital relationships.

There is only very limited evidence verifying the lived experiences of long-term married couples within the Filipino context. In research as well as in everyday life, a long-term and enduring marriage is often considered a major life goal and a key indicator for marital success. However, what remains unknown is whether the discovered and aforementioned factors are also describing the marriage viewpoints of long-term Filipino couples.

At present, there is still no study conducted on the said area. Thus, the main purpose of this phenomenological study is to investigate and analyze the lived experiences of long-term Filipino married couples and their secrets for long-lasting relationships. It aims to answer the following questions:

1. How do married couples define marital satisfaction?
2. What are the reasons for their marital satisfaction in their long-term relationship?
3. What insights can married couples impart to the younger Filipino generation?

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological study design to investigate and analyze the lived experiences of long-term Filipino married couples and their secrets for a healthy and long-lasting relationship. In this research, the phenomenon of long-term lived experiences is affirmed by married couples. Thus, phenomenology study was used in this study as its main purpose is to analyze the marital satisfaction and healthy well-being of married couples (Maxwell, 2013). In addition, the aim of this study is to describe the efficacy of a well and long-lasting relationship between married couples.

### Participants of the Study

The study used purposive sampling specifically the maximum variation sampling technique as suggested by Patton (2015). The criteria were set in selecting the participants: a) legally married couple; b) married for at least 20 years; c) Filipino citizens; d) have two or more children. There were (5) married couples for more than 20 years, (2) married couples for more than 30 years, and (1) married couples for more than 40 years who participated in the study. Furthermore, more than half of the respondents are from Luzon and the rest come from the Visayan Region.

### Data Collection Techniques and Procedures

The following are the step-by-step data collection procedures:

1. Brainstorming and preparation of interview questions;
2. Purposively finding prospective participant(s) through referrals;
3. Giving e-informed consent to the participants via Google Forms;
4. Conducted one-on-one online interviews. All were audio-recorded;
5. Transcription of the interviews;
6. Translated the transcribed interviews into the English language; and
7. Analysed the data.

### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The thematic analysis methodology by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used to analyze the data collected. First, the researchers familiarized themselves with the data by playing the recorded interview video repeatedly, transcribing the interviews they conducted, and reading the transcribed and translated interviews. They also familiarize themselves with the data sources, particularly the pictures that depict the proof of their happy and long-term relationship.

Next, the transcribed and translated interviews were then coded line-by-line to get the descriptions and details of the said data that will help in getting the key themes the study will generate. Then, potential themes were then generated from the initial coded data. The coded data were categorized according to their major similarities and patterns and potential themes were generated from those categorized codes.

The generated themes were then reviewed and compared to the original data in order to organize the different codes according to the themes generated. The codes were reviewed according to how they are associated with the potential themes.

Analysis was further done to refine the themes generated and established. The themes are now defined and labeled according to their specificity to make the themes clearer and more defined. The defined themes

were analyzed and refined according to how they answered the research questions. The redefined themes were then reflected if it answers the research questions of the study and if they are adequate. The description, discussion, and explanation of the redefined themes were involved in reporting of the data.

**Ensuring Rigor and Trustworthiness**

To ensure the validity, credibility, and trustworthiness of the study, the researchers followed two of the ways Mays and Pope (2000) suggested in ensuring validity. One of them is the triangulation of data sources like gathering the subjects' pictures that depict the proof of their long-term relationship. The other one is member checking, where the researchers checked and compared the researcher's account to that of the subject by having the subjects check the data or account of the researchers and make sure that the data of the researchers' corresponds with the subjects' analysis.

**Ethical Consideration: Confidentiality and Informed Consent**

Ethical consideration was involved in the process of the study. The participants were informed of the purpose and the goal of the study, their role in the study, and how their contribution will be used in the study. Soft copies of the informed consent were given to the subject prior to the interview to get the participants' consent. Subjects' identities are protected, and dignity is valued by the researchers. No harm physically and emotionally was done in the process of the study. The researchers gave the participants the choice and respected the ways in which the subjects wanted the interview to be done, either through video calls, face-to-face, or by written interviews. For those participants who had the video calls and face-to-face interviews and had their videos taken, the videos are well protected by the researchers and were only used for the purpose of transcribing and translating the interviews. The data collected for triangulation were also protected and were only used for the validation of data.

## Results and Discussion

**Married Couples' Marital Satisfaction**

**Understanding each other's differences.** The first theme that emerged from the data is how married couples understand individual differences. Marital satisfaction is about understanding one's flaws partnered with patience and endurance in intimacy.

***Good communication.*** Communication is the only theme that was present in six among eight respondents. Participants reported that good communication builds up satisfaction in marriage. When problems within the marriage arise, discussion and agreement is the best solution they have practiced. From the beginning of their relationship, they have decided not to keep any secrets from each other.

> *Fix your problems before you go to bed.* –Naldo, Male, 50

Other respondents discussed communication in these ways,

> *Every day is a discovery day in marriage. Even if you've been with your boyfriend for how many years already, communication is still the key to mending a broken relationship.* –Ina, Female, 60

> *If my husband and I have disagreements, we would make a solution by talking and communicating with each other until we both have agreed. Do not go to bed if both of you are not okay with each other, that's our secret. Relationship is the connection of both couples. It requires constant care and communication, and certain traits have been shown to be especially important for fostering healthy relationships.* –Karina, Female, 49

> *If you have differences inside your relationship, one should possess humility and accept each other's imperfections. You should not feed the fire by flaming it with gasoline.* –Leny, Female, 55

*If there are problems, talk them through. Don't retreat, you should face them together.* –Dalmi, Female, 50

*If I see the weakness of my husband, I will try to discuss it with him, find a good time for him to discuss it and then make him realize and then I will also have to understand.* –Gina, Female, 64

The quality of communication between spouses is widely assumed to affect their subsequent judgments of relationship satisfaction. The verbatim responses of the participants is supported by the study of Lavner, Karney, and Bradbury (2016) whose findings raised important doubts about theories and interventions that prioritize couple communication skills as the key predictor of relationship satisfaction.

*Trust, love, and commitment.* Married couples value trust and commitment inside marriage. According to the participants, a long-term relationship will not work without these two elements.

*Your trust and commitment should always be there. It is really a necessity to your relationship if you want a successful marriage.* –Leny, Female, 53

*Of course, love, love, love. That's only a spice, you know. Making a spouse happy and for the marriage to last long, is you learn how to be truthful together.* –Gina, Female, 64

*On the brighter side I would say there are a lot of changes because until this day, after 22 years of marriage, we are still learning about each other. We have learned to trust and commit to each other.* –Jun, Male, 48

*It is a bond of trust and commitment to your partner. You can feel a special feeling but can't really explain it.* –Naldo, Male, 50

*Trusting and showing affection to each other really maintained our strong relationship.* –Emmy, Female, 55

The verbatim responses in the present study are similar to the study conducted by Karimi, Bakhtiyari, and Arani (2019). Some aspects of relationships, such as commitment, act to preserve the pillars of marriage in critical situations. Moreover, love and intimacy help to construct marital identity and satisfaction.

***Respect.*** Respect is considered an important part that made up the married couples' marital satisfaction.

*Respect each other, especially in decision-making.* –Emmy, Female, 55

*Respect for one another is very important.* –Gina, Female, 64

Researchers who study romantic relationships have mentioned respect as a factor contributing to relationship success (Frei and Shaver, 2002). The subjects in this study discussed how important it is for married individuals to continuously strive to treat their partners with respect in order to keep their relationships running smoothly (Vanover, 2016).

**Surpassing trials and challenges inside the married life.** The second theme that emerged from the data on the definition of marital satisfaction is the way married couples surpassed trials and challenges inside married life. These findings are connected to the study of Goodall (2013) in which he stated that every marriage goes through challenges and difficulties.

*Married life has a lot of challenges because it is the phase that a couple would learn more about their partner under the same roof. But for us, we have now marital satisfaction because we were able to overcome those obstacles that have come along our way.* –Jun, Male, 48

*There are some things that we have gone through, although not on a huge scale that will be considered a unique case, but we always think that we will just pass through this.* –Dalmi, Female, 50

*Even in little arguments, we tend to make it a big issue. But it doesn't change the fact that we are in love with each other. It doesn't affect our relationship, it actually helps us have a stronger relationship.* –Emmy, Female, 55

**Reasons for Marital Satisfaction in the Long-Term Relationship**

**A God-centered relationship.** For married couples, being engaged in a God-centered relationship has guided their marriage letting them enjoy their love and togetherness for more than 20 years already.

*We made God the center of our family like we always come and pray to Him to ask for guidance and such, that is why maybe we have healthy relationships and also blessings.* –Dalmi, Female, 50

*We really need to have a God-centered relationship because when problems pile up, we sometimes become lost in our real selves.* –Ina, Female, 60

*It is important to let the children become aware, while they are still growing up to go to church every Sunday and attend masses.* –Karina, Female, 49

*We put our relationship in God, He is the center of our life or our marriage.* –Emmy, Female, 55

*It is necessary that God should be the one to call on at all times, in sickness and in health.* –Leny, Female, 5

To triangulate the data, one of the respondents, Ina, showed their family pictures in this study. She narrated the event related to the picture.

*It was Dec.25, 2019, at Sto. Nino Basilica in Cebu City. Since then, it has become our family custom to attend the Holy Mass and at the same time thank God for the gift of life for my eldest son because it is his Birthday. One big reason to cultivate values in marriage is to value love and instill the importance of one another in the family. The one with red shirts was during our New Year celebration with my 2 children and my grandchild in Cebu. We celebrated Christmas until New Year with them since they won't be able to come home at that time.* –Ina, Female, 60

Leny, who is in the 24th year of their marriage, also shared a family portrait. The photo was taken during their annual family Christmas gathering on my mother's side.

*The family that prays together stays together. My own family is with my loving mother who is the foundation of our faithful relationship here on earth. Above all, I strongly believe that our heavenly Father solemnized the institution of marriage in the Garden of Eden.* –Leny, Female, 53

In the vast majority of studies, it has been revealed that religiosity and spirituality brought a positive impact on marital satisfaction (Zaheri et al., 2016). In the study by Kasapoglu, and Yabanigul (2018), spirituality played a partial mediating role in the relationship between marital satisfaction and life satisfaction.

**Sacrifice and perseverance.** The second theme that emerged from the data on the reasons for marital satisfaction in the long-term relationship is sacrifice and perseverance. The result is supported by other previous studies as well.

*To save your marriage, you have to sacrifice. We are working hard for our children and we want to persevere to give them a better future.* –Ina, Female, 60

*Sacrificing means giving up your anger and hatred, forgiving your partner for the pain he had caused you, and loving him once more.* –Leny, Female, 53

**Value and appreciation.** Married couples believe that appreciating and valuing each other is one of the ingredients of their long-term relationship. Notice the following responses:

*We find ways how to appreciate and value each other because we are thinking, especially I am always thinking I don't know what is tomorrow, "what if I lose you tomorrow?-- Like, so now I should show everything that, how I value you, how I love you and so that makes me like, the tiredness just goes away.* –Emmy, Female, 55

*It comes to the thought of giving value to each other. It is very important.* –Gina, Female, 64

*Even though we're already getting old, he would always surprise me even without an occasion.* –Karina, Female, 49

*My husband never failed to appreciate me even until I celebrated my 60th birthday with him.* – Ina, Female, 60

**Insights of Married Couples to the Younger Filipino Generation**

The married couples' who participated in the study have reflection on their long-term relationships. They heartily offered the following pieces of advice to the younger Filipino generation.

**Make a wise decision before entering marriage.** The first theme that emerged from the data on insights that married couples can impart to the younger Filipino generation is to make a wise decision when entering marriage. Thinking about how overwhelmingly important it is to pick the right life partner is like thinking about how huge the universe really is or how terrifying death really is. Choosing a life partner is fully in the individual's choice and control. Thus, it is crucial to be entirely clear on how big a deal the decision really is and to thoroughly analyze the most important factors in making it (Urban, 2015).

***Emotional maturity.*** A study reviewing the factors associated with marital satisfaction found that a couple's emotional intelligence, including the way they handle their emotions is deemed to have considerable influence on marital satisfaction (Tavakol et al., 2017).

*I married at an early age, maybe for now enjoy life, enjoy first because marrying at an early age requires acceptance and responsibility.* –Dalmi, Female, 50

*I would like to advise them to take their time in choosing their partner because you are about to spend the rest of your life with him/her so it's okay to take it slow. Build your maturity first.* –Jun, Male, 48

*It is hard to enter into a relationship without really knowing what it is because marriage is the heaviest responsibility. That's why you need to be emotionally mature first.* –Karina, Female, 49

*Love is a process. Be patient, and will wait until both of you are ready, do not rush things to settle down.* –Emmy, Female, 55

*Young people nowadays have to really understand that relationships are not a joke. It's important that you will get to know that person first.* –Gina. Female, 64

*When you enter marriage, you should be mentally and emotionally stable so that you are ready to face whatever trials that will come in your relationship.* –Leny, Female, 53

***Financial stability.*** Married couples agree that financial stability plays a crucial role in marriage. Consider the following responses given by the participants:

*One thing that you should consider in your marriage is your finances because you cannot achieve marital satisfaction if both of you are arguing about money.* –Ina, Female, 60

*Budget your income and money. Be wise as you spend every cent because it's really hard to earn it. Prioritize your needs and minimize your wants.* –Leny, Female, 53

Behaviors that financial practitioners would label "sound financial management" are positively associated with marital quality and stability. Moreover, Individuals with higher levels of concern about financial management expressed less warmth and more hostility towards their partner (Ross, O'Neal, and Arnold, 2017).

**Take responsibilities and set boundaries.** Another theme that emerged from the data is taking responsibility and setting boundaries.

*In marriage, the very first thing you need to keep in mind always is your responsibility and maturity, and always remember why you have started that relationship.* –Karina, Female, 49

*Be in love if you are ready and you know your responsibility and limitations already.* –Emmy, Female, 55

*Having a relationship is a responsibility, not a game to be played.* –Jun, Male, 48

**Be there for each other always.** The participants perceive the support system as an important component in order to survive in the wife-and-husband relationship. The Catholic Marriage Care Service (2020) has backed up this study by releasing the statement that being close to each other will help couples get to know and understand one another more deeply and have empathy for each other. It involves being open with each other about feelings, thoughts, beliefs, values, hopes, worries, fears, dreams, and ambitions.

Ina, being married for 34 years already, emphasizes the significance of a support system in the family. To triangulate, she sent an old picture in remembrance of their wedding ceremony, together with their most recent picture with her husband wearing formal attire.

*This is our wedding picture dated June 18, 1988. The second one was during our attendance at my husband's nephew's wedding. We were one of the principal couple sponsors last January 18, 2020, at Pateros. I am always there for my husband and I support him at all costs because of our love for each other.* – Ina, Female, 60

*To really hold and support each other is the key to a happy and successful marriage, that's the principle.* –Gina, Female, 64

*Support your husband in all his endeavors because no matter what happens, you are a family.* –Ina, Female, 60

*Whatever you're going through, stick to your promises and the sacred vow that you made before God when you got married.* –Leny, Female, 53

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the data gathered it was concluded that participants of the study agreed that marital satisfaction is indicated through understanding each other's difference by having good communication, showing trust, love, commitment, and respect. Marital satisfaction is also revealed by surpassing trials and challenges throughout their marriage life.

Married couples agreed that a God-centered relationship together with sacrifice and perseverance and showing value and appreciation for each other are contributors to long-term relationships. Because of their experiences, they advise the young Filipino generation to make a wise decision before entering marriage. Couples who are planning to get married should consider emotional maturity and financial stability as well. Furthermore, they also advised couples to take responsibilities while setting boundaries. Lastly, they should ensure that they are always supporting each other.

Researchers of the same field are recommended to perform an inquiry that aims to determine the sociological definitions of marriage and family within the Filipino context; and the underlying factors of infidelity that causes broken relationships in the family.

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HUMANITIES

# No Hiring: A Phenomenological Study on Unemployed Filipino Workers During COVID-19 Crisis

Gelle Andrea A. Peras, Mylene S. Gumarao

*Adventist University of the Philippines*
2050994@aup.edu.ph

## Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed everyone's life on pause. Many have been ordered by the government to stay at home. Many Filipino workers were unemployed. This phenomenological study tries to investigate the experiences, well-being, and coping mechanisms of unemployed Filipino workers in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic,. Six unemployed workers were interviewed in a semi-structured manner to acquire information during the pandemic. The four participants were from Bulacan. The other two participants were from Cebu Province. Findings revealed that being unemployed during the COVID-19 crisis did limit the resources they need. They experienced having limited food, being unable to provide for family necessities, and cutting unimportant necessities. Unemployment during the COVID-19 crisis has affected their well-being. They felt dissatisfied. They were unhappy with the situation, and it also resulted in negative emotions and feelings. They also felt troubled, low-spirited, and isolated. Their coping mechanism was to depend on their support systems like their family, friends, and the people around them. They never lose their faith in God. They were always praying. They have also empowered themselves. It involves making conscious decisions to make positive choices, acting in advance, and being confident with their ability. This study proves that as Filipinos, we may experience different circumstances in life like being unemployed during the pandemic. We may have felt dissatisfied, but still, we continued to fight and find that light that will give us hope. We found strength from our family and friends who are our support system, we never lose our faith, and we did not forget to affirm ourselves that this will come to an end.

**Keywords:** *unemployed, well-being, coping mechanism*

COVID-19 has brought despair, death, and destruction to every one of us. No one is exempted, all of us are affected. It is a battle that confronts all of us, regardless of who we are and where we came from.

A current example of a public health issue is COVID-19, which has had an impact on practically every industry both locally and internationally. The markets have seen ongoing volatility in oil prices because of the decline in demand for industrial inputs and energy sources, which has further inflated countries' economic performance (Zhang et al., 2020). Furthermore, lockdowns and business closures make it for businesses to pay their employees, which raises estimates of poverty in various countries (Kartseva & Kuznetsova, 2020).

Unemployment is a crucial indicator of the state of the economy. Unemployment rate is the ratio of jobless persons to the total labor force of the population.

According to Birt et al., (2021), the Philippines was going through its longest-ever economic and job expansion prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. With an annual average growth rate of 4.6%, the country experienced extraordinary growth from 2015 to 2019 in terms of salary pay and employment. The Philippines' overall informal employment shrank for the first time because of the fast growth in contemporary employment, which attracted workers away from it in such large numbers.

Unfortunately, some of these advances were undone by the pandemic. It eliminated 1.7 million wage and salary jobs in the year leading up to January 2021. There are many Filipinos who have been greatly affected by this pandemic. Some are losing their loved ones; some are having a problem with their mental health, and some are unemployed. Even after the economy has recovered from this temporary large shock, the employment rate may remain lower than it was before.

In the modern workplace, there are three ways that the pandemic is transmitted. First, there will be more job seekers. These include those who have lost their jobs, those who stopped attending school, and fresh graduates who intend to join the labor market. Further, the unemployed citizens and new labor market entrants remain jobless. Thus, the more likely it is that they will become outdated and less employable in the future.

Second, a large reallocation for jobs across industries have been brought on by the pandemic. On top of the job losses that have affected numerous industries, those that rely on interpersonal relationships industries like lodging, food services, transportation, and leisure have also been severely hurt. On the other hand, industries that tend to absorb smaller proportions of workers, like communications and technology as well as a few higher-skilled service industries, show swift recovery and positive job creation. We anticipate that this change in the employment composition will last in the medium to long term, even though some of these positions will return when the company recovers. Due to the disparities in the knowledge and experience that different industries require; workers do not move between them easily. As a result, the labor market will see an increase in skill mismatches.

Third, as company models change to rely more on technology, necessary skills needed for the workforce were also updated. Jobs, workplaces, workflows, and skill requirements will all change due to digital transformation and remote working, including the skills needed for higher value-added services. These will create a greater gap between the demands and the available labor market.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reports that in April 2020, just weeks after going into lockdown on March 16, 2020, the Philippine labor market reached its lowest point. According to the data, 41.1 million Filipinos were participating in the labor force at a rate of 55.7%, or the Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR). According to these statistics, three out of every five people ages 15 and older are either employed or unemployed. There are 7.2 million unemployed people, or a 17.6% unemployment rate. This high-rate record reflects the impact of the economic downturn on the labor market in the Philippines following the COVID-19 pandemic. The age group of 25 to 34 years old had the highest rate of unemployment, at 28.2%, and many of them (81.1%) said that the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown, or ECQ was to blame for their inability to obtain job or keep it (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2020).

Few comparative studies have provided a comprehensive grasp of how Filipinos, particularly unemployed Filipino workers, are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Reviews have been very limited

on what workers experienced and how unemployed Filipino workers coped with their job loss. This limit of information is regrettable because individuals are not aware of its impact on well-being and society.

The study's goal is to investigate how being unemployed affects people's well-being and the experiences of unemployed Filipino employees. This study also tries to comprehend how workers adjust to losing their jobs because of the pandemic and cope with it. Studying this phenomenon can also improve the systems in place to support workers who lose their jobs.

**Research Questions**

- What are the experiences of unemployed Filipino workers?
- How does unemployment during the Covid-19 crisis affect one's well-being?
- How do unemployed Filipino workers cope?

## Methodology

**Research Design**

For this study, a qualitative research design was used. Using a qualitative research design, the researcher hopes to develop a comprehensive, in-depth understanding of a specific topic, problem, or meaning based on personal experience (Maxwell, 2013). The researcher utilized a semi-structured interview because they intended to record the data thoroughly and precisely. By conducting the follow-up inquiries, it enables the researcher to gather information to examine participants' ideas, feelings, and views about the subject (DeJonkheere and Vaughn, 2019).

**Population and Sampling**

Purposive sampling was utilized in the study to find and choose examples with lots of relevant information on pertinent occurrences (Palinkas et. al., 2015). The sample was identified as 6 individuals, who fit the criteria set by the researcher in selecting the participants. The criteria are male or female within the age bracket of 20-50 years old, given that they had lost their job during Covid-19 and indicated that they are Filipino citizens.

**Data Gathering and Procedures**

Data collection procedures were followed in the conduct of this study. First, the researcher prepared an interview guide to be asked of the participants. Second, she purposively searched for prospective participants following the criteria for selecting participants. Third, the researcher gave informed consent to the participants and conducted one-on-one interviews, which were audio recorded. Lastly, the researcher transcribed the interviews and analyzed the data.

**Analysis of Data**

To answer the research questions, the researcher used analytical stages suggested by Creswell and Poth (2018), which included preparing files and units, ensuring ongoing secure storage of files, and selecting the mode of analysis. While reading, the researcher also writes memos on emergent ideas, sketches reflective thinking, and summarizes field notes. Working with words identifying codes, applying codes, and reducing codes to themes are some of the themes described and classified by the researcher. They also ensure that interpretations involving relating categories/themes/families to an analytic framework in literature were developed and assessed. Finally, the researcher ensures that the data is represented and visualized when developing a point of view, displaying, and reporting the data.

**Ensuring Rigor and Trustworthiness**

To ensure trustworthiness and rigor, the researcher used investigator triangulation and member checking. Investigator triangulation is the use of multiple independent investigators or researchers in studying a single phenomenon. Investigator triangulation is especially important for reducing bias when collecting, reporting,

and/or analyzing study data. (Hales, 2010). In this case, the different researchers were asked to analyze the same data sets and to make their independent research analyses for further comparison.

Member checking was used by the researchers to acquire the credibility of the data results. To search for consistency and resonance with their experiences, the data are returned to the participants for clarification (Birt et. al., 2016). In this study, member checking was done through a virtual meeting using either a messenger room or Zoom meeting, because of the pandemic and quarantine protocols. For others who live nearby, intentional visits were done.

**Ethical Consideration**

Ethical considerations were relevant during the process of data gathering and reporting of findings. The participants were protected from any harm or loss, and their psychological well-being and dignity were greatly valued and preserved. Before collecting the data, the participants were informed of the research procedure, their role, their contribution, and their consent to participate. A letter of consent was requested to address this aim. Deception of the participants was avoided. The participants were given the freedom to withdraw from the study anytime they choose to. After the data collection, participants were informed of the goal of the study. Pseudonyms were used and any information about them was maintained in complete confidentiality.

## Results and Discussion

**Experiences of Unemployed Filipino Workers**

There is one emerging theme on the experiences of unemployed Filipino workers. The theme was shared by most of the respondents.

**Changed Consumption Pattern.** The theme that emerged from the data indicated that the following experiences of unemployed Filipino workers affected their consumption patterns. It is the result of the pressure of the situation that leads to the decline of resources and security.

***Limited Food.*** The respondents stated that there is limited food when they are unemployed. Notice the following responses:

*"...back then, when you had work you could buy anything you wanted, but now we have a limited supply of food because I don't have work".* –Respondent #1

*" ...there's no source of income, it's a good thing that my children are still helping us because if not, we don't have food to eat".* –Respondent #6

***Unable to Provide for Family Necessities.*** The respondents also stated that when they were unemployed, they were unable to provide for their family necessities. Notice the following responses:

*"...when your family is asking for financial support and you can't give anything because you're jobless".* –Respondent #1

*"The feeling that you want to help with the expenses in the house but you don't have anything to give".* –Respondent #3

*"...when I came back here in the Philippines, of course, it was really hard, especially the finances and I didn't have any choice but to keep going and to survive this pandemic".* –Respondent #4

*"I was sad because I lost my job and because of that I can't give financial support to my parents".* –Respondent #5

*"It was hard because I'm the only one who's working in the family and my wife and my granddaughter are depending on me. It was hard because we don't have money".* –Respondent #6

***Cutting Unimportant Necessities***. The respondent stated that they cut some unimportant necessities when they were unemployed. Notice the following response:

*"I experienced looking for a sideline so that I can earn money and lessen the debts and expenses of our family".* –Respondent #2

Previous research suggests that unemployment may have different associations with health, and studies from different have also shown that this effect varies between groups. Artazcoz et al. (2017), discovered, for example, that the effects of unemployment on mental health are unequally distributed across groups with different social classes, family roles, and gender. Kira et al. (2017) discovered that job loss disrupts continuity and control of self-hood in a literature review of job loss and job search experiences for mature-aged workers. Financial difficulties, lack of social contact, feelings of guilt, loss of confidence, diminishing motivation, and depression treatment were all mentioned by respondents.

**Unemployment During COVID-19 Affects One's Well-Being**

There is one emerging theme on how unemployment affects one's well-being. The theme was shared by most of the respondents with several codes.

**Dissatisfied.** The theme that emerged from the data indicates that the state of being unhappy with the situation gives the feeling of dissatisfaction that resulted in negative emotion and feelings.

***Troubled.*** The respondents stated that they felt upset or distressed in a challenging situation when they were unemployed. Notice the following responses:

*"I was stressed and depressed, come to think of it, how can I help my family if I'm jobless".* -Respondent #2

*"I was stressed during the pandemic. In the family, I was the only one who has work. I'm always thinking about where I can get money to pay for our expenses like electricity, water, and food to eat every day".* –Respondent #5

***Low Spirited.*** The respondents stated that they felt gloomy and quiet, which is usually because of disappointment when they were unemployed. Notice the following responses:

*"I was feeling down when I lost my job and it's inevitable because it was really hard to look for a job during that time, there are many papers that need to be accomplished."* –Respondents #1

*"I was a bit shy to my parents because I can't give them money to pay for our expenses at home."* –-Respondents #3

*"My mental health was affected, sometimes I'll find myself daydreaming and looking at spaces. In just a snap everything was stopped. My work, my normal life, everything."* – Respondents #6

***Isolated.*** The respondents stated that they felt separated from other people physically or socially when they were unemployed. Notice the following responses:

*"Of course, it was hard for me to go out, to communicate with other people and I don't have any choice but to stay at home and think of something that will ease my boredom".* –Respondent #4

*"I can't go out, the things that I can do are very limited. I can't talk to other people aside from my family, but that's okay".* –Respondent #6

Thomson, Katikireddi, et al. (2021) investigated the impact of job loss, income change, and various economic and welfare policies on mental health. The impact of the predicted increase in unemployment by the coming winter can be estimated using preliminary estimates.

**Unemployed Filipino Workers' Coping Mechanism**

There are three emerging themes on unemployed Filipino workers' coping mechanisms. The themes were shared by most of the respondents.

**Support System.** The first theme that emerged from the data indicates a network of people who provide individual, practical, and emotional support to continue life. This support system is usually represented by family and friends.

*"I gained strength in my family. I'll just think of it as a challenge. My father said you can't force it because it's a challenge in life and it will never go away easily. You just must be strong and make your family an inspiration".* – Respondent #1

*"Through the support of my family and friends I was able to get through it".* –Respondent #2

*"Through the support of my family and friends".* –Respondent #3

*"I ask for help from my children, that's it".* –Respondent #6

**Faith in God.** The second theme that emerged from the data involves an intellectual trust in the truth that God governs life and can be relied on.

*"Of course, through the help of God."* –Respondent #3

*"As for me, I'm always praying. I pray to God where I can get money to sustain our needs every day."* –Respondent #4

*"I just let it happen because I can't change the situation. No matter what I do, it will never change the situation. I just prayed because He is the only one that can help us. He is the only one who knows everything when this will end, and He is the source of everything."* –Respondent #5

**Self-empowerment.** The third theme that emerged from the data involves making conscious decisions to make positive choices, taking action to advance, and being confident with their ability.

*"I affirmed myself that I will get through this".* –Respondent #1

*"I'll just entertain myself so that I will not be depressed".* –Respondent #2

*"I find ways to survive this pandemic, where can I get money to sustain our needs. I find ways".* –Respondent #4

*"I look for another job, I do food delivery, online selling, and we were able to build a small sari-sari store".* –Respondent #5

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) threw the world into disarray. People all over the world were forced to adapt the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, scholars conducted research and published data on how the COVID-19 pandemic affected people's mental health (e.g., anxiety and depression symptoms reported by Olaseni et al. 2020), as well as peoples' coping strategies (Ogueji et al. 2021). Furthermore, information was provided on how the negative economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic may affect mental health (Agberotimi et al., 2020). Ten unemployed participants reported that they lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the following are their coping strategies: engaging in activities, connecting with others, religious coping, and relaxation (Ogueji et. al, 2021).

## Conclusions and Recommendations

This study found out that unemployed Filipino workers experienced changes in consumption patterns such as having limited food, unable to provide for family necessities, and cutting unimportant expenses. The respondents stated that being unemployed during the COVID-19 crisis did limit the resources they need. In addition, the study also showed the effects of being unemployed on well-being as the respondents expressed how becoming dissatisfied with life makes them feel troubled, low-spirited, and isolated. Yet despite being in the middle of a crisis, the study showed that an individual cannot live by themselves alone. They do need to have people who will be supporting them through thick and thin. This study also proves that as Filipino, we are manifesting a faith that holds on to God that gives hope. And lastly, this also showed that one can be creative and productive by doing self-empowerment. The researchers recommend that unemployed Filipino workers in this COVID-19 crisis accumulate new healthy coping strategies and other activities that could give them structure and meaning. Also, it is recommended to seek help from their social support such as family, and friends. Furthermore, it is recommended for future researchers to increase the number of respondents and utilize a mixed method using the quantitative–qualitative paradigm for a more precise outcome. The study also suggests mainly focusing on and explore on the impact of being unemployed on their mental health.

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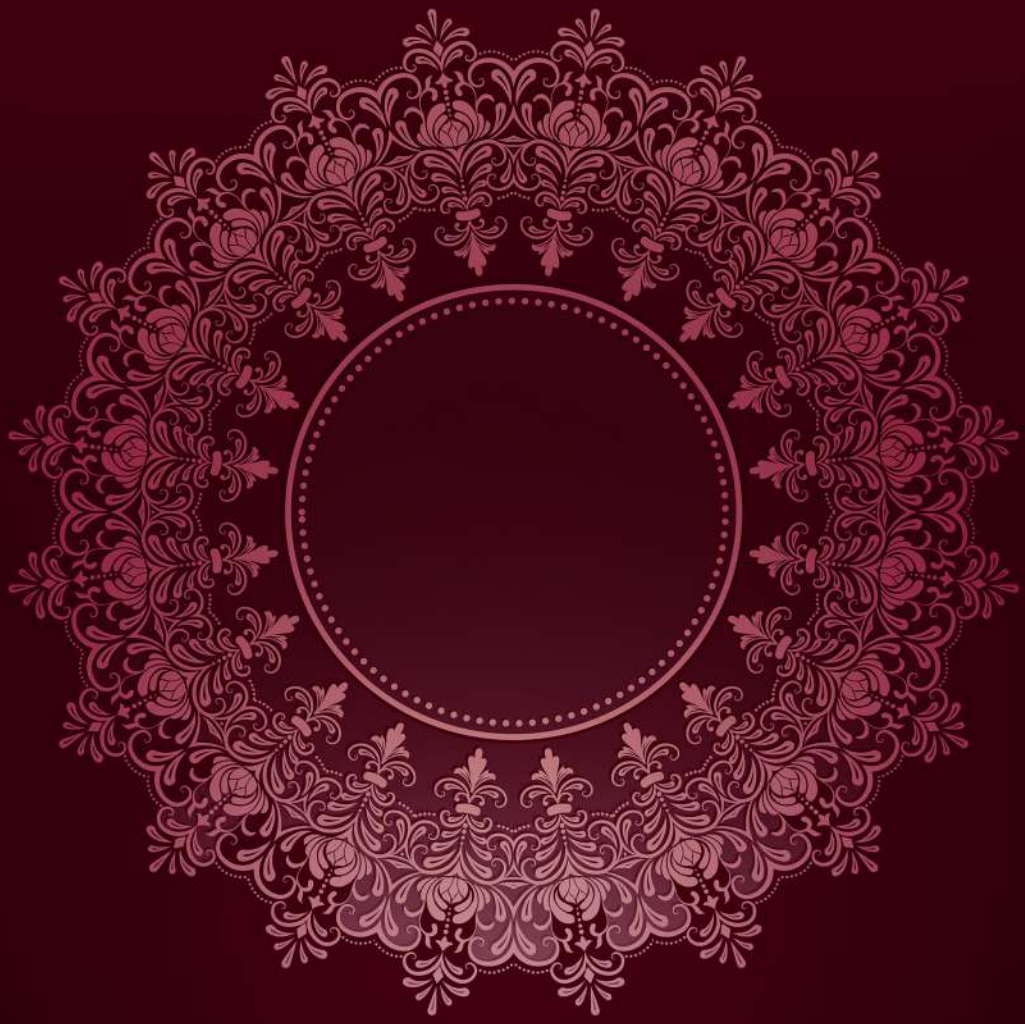

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