

Modular Learning and Maternal Adaptation: Insights from the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract:

This study explores the experiences of four mothers in supporting their children's education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through narrative-survey questionnaire data analysis, the study delves into the diverse approaches, challenges, and sacrifices encountered by these mothers as they navigate the shift to remote learning modalities. Findings reveal the multifaceted roles assumed by mothers, including juggling household responsibilities, work commitments, and facilitating their children's learning amidst financial strains and limited knowledge in certain subjects. Despite facing uncertainties and anxieties, the mothers demonstrate resilience and adaptability by employing various strategies such as creating conducive study environments at home, seeking assistance from teachers, and utilizing online resources like Google. Moreover, the study underscores the significant sacrifices made by mothers to prioritize their children's education, highlighting their unwavering commitment to ensuring educational continuity amidst the disruptions posed by the pandemic. These findings contribute to the broader discourse on parental involvement in education, emphasizing the critical role of mothers in supporting children's learning during times of crisis.

Keywords: parental involvement, remote learning, COVID-19 pandemic, motherhood, educational continuity

Introduction:

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about unprecedented disruptions to various aspects of daily life, including the education sector. With the closure of schools and the shift to remote learning modalities, parents have found themselves thrust into unfamiliar roles as primary facilitators of their children's education. This study delves into the experiences of mothers in supporting their children's education during the pandemic, exploring the diverse approaches, challenges, and sacrifices they encounter in navigating this new educational landscape.

Parental involvement in education has long been recognized as a key determinant of children's academic success (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017). However, the global health crisis has intensified the importance of parental engagement, particularly in facilitating remote learning and mitigating the adverse effects of school closures on children's learning outcomes (Sakaue, et al., 2023). Against this backdrop, understanding the experiences of mothers, who often shoulder the bulk of caregiving and educational responsibilities within households, becomes paramount.

This study draws on narrative-survey questionnaire data collected from four mothers, each providing unique insights into their roles and experiences in supporting their children's education during the pandemic. Through qualitative analysis of their narratives, we aim to uncover the strategies employed by mothers to navigate the challenges of remote learning, the anxieties and uncertainties they face, and the sacrifices made in prioritizing their children's educational needs.

By highlighting the resilience, adaptability, and unwavering commitment of mothers to their children's education, this research seeks to inform policymakers, educators, and community stakeholders about the critical role of parental engagement in ensuring educational continuity and mitigating the impact of crises on children's learning outcomes.

Literature Review:

Impact of Lockdowns on the Educational System

The global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to unprecedented disruptions in various aspects of life, with significant impacts on education systems worldwide. As reported by UNESCO (2020), approximately 1,576,021,818 students across 188 countries have been affected by school closures due to lockdowns. This situation has presented governments with immense challenges in ensuring the continuity of learning during these uncertain times (Chang & Yano, 2020).

To address the educational challenges posed by lockdowns, governments around the world have implemented diverse strategies. Countries such as Egypt, France, Italy, the United States, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have turned to distance education modalities, utilizing online platforms and internet-based learning to facilitate ongoing education (Chang & Yano, 2020). Similarly, nations like China, Korea, Mexico, Rwanda, Iran, Peru, and Thailand have adopted Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)-styled teachings, supplemented by the use of apps, television, or other media to deliver educational content (Chang & Yano, 2020). Furthermore, efforts have been made to provide teachers with training through various channels to adapt to these new modes of instruction.

A coordinated approach involving telecommunications companies, school networks, and education ministries is crucial to ensuring the continuity of children's learning (UNESCO, 2020). Additionally, awareness campaigns on distance learning have been launched to educate parents, teachers, administrators, and students about the new educational paradigms (Chang & Yano, 2020). Measures to promote equality and inclusion in education have also been implemented in several countries, with governments providing devices and printed materials to students lacking access to technology, as well as accommodating meal arrangements for vulnerable students (Abrenilla, et al., 2023).

Parental Involvement in Education During Lockdowns

One significant aspect of navigating the challenges of lockdown-induced disruptions in education is the role of parental involvement. Research suggests that when parents actively engage in their children's learning activities, it not only strengthens the parent-child bond but also provides emotional support to children during times of uncertainty (Uy, et al., 2023). Moreover, parental involvement can enhance the effectiveness of online schooling systems and contribute to the overall improvement of educational outcomes.

In Pakistan, where the educational crisis exacerbated by the pandemic has received limited national-level attention, parental involvement remains crucial. With millions of students enrolled in various levels of education, there is a pressing need for initiatives that promote parental engagement in supporting children's learning at home (UNESCO, 2020). Establishing a national education system that incorporates parental guidance and COVID-19 related knowledge could help address the challenges faced by the education sector in Pakistan and ensure continued learning achievement for students.

The importance of parental involvement in children's education has been extensively studied, with numerous findings highlighting its positive impact on academic achievement. Fan and Chen (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of empirical studies, revealing a moderate correlation between parental participation behaviors and student achievement. Notably, parental aspirations and expectations for their children's educational attainment emerged as strong predictors of academic success.

Moreover, research has explored the underlying mechanisms of parental involvement, with studies emphasizing the significance of parental self-efficacy and role construction in shaping engagement behaviors (Boonk, et al., 2018). Parents are more likely to become involved in their children's education when they believe in their ability to make a positive impact and perceive opportunities for meaningful participation offered by schools and teachers.

Challenges and Opportunities for Parental Involvement

Despite the proven benefits of parental involvement, challenges persist, particularly in low-income and marginalized communities. In the Philippines, for instance, issues such as poverty and limited access to education hinder parents' ability to actively engage in their children's learning (Monteflor et al., 2018). However, initiatives such as Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and community-based programs like Brigada Eskwela demonstrate efforts to promote parental participation and collaboration with schools (Department of Education, 2020).

Efforts to enhance parental involvement should consider the diverse socio-economic contexts and cultural factors influencing parental engagement practices. By fostering effective home-school partnerships and providing support mechanisms for parents, education systems can maximize the potential of parental involvement to improve educational outcomes for all students.

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of parental involvement in supporting children's education during times of crisis. As governments and education stakeholders continue to navigate the challenges posed by lockdowns and school closures, promoting meaningful parental engagement remains essential. By recognizing the pivotal role of parents in their children's learning journey and implementing policies and programs that facilitate parental involvement, education systems can mitigate the adverse effects of disruptions and foster resilient learning environments for future generations.

Methodology:

Design

This study utilized the narrative inquiry. It was a term that subsumes a group of approaches that in turn rely on the written or spoken words or visual representation of individuals. These approaches typically focused on the lives of individuals as told through their own stories. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) define it as a way of understanding and inquiring into experience through collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with millieus (Clandinin & Connelly 2000).

A narrative study examines "the ways humans see the world" Clandinin & Connelly (2000) provides researchers with new information about the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). "For educators looking for personal experiences in actual school settings, narrative research offers practical, specific insights," according to (Creswell 2012). Narrative research can focus on one or more individuals' experiences. This study seeks to explain the experiences and role of parents in the conduct of Modular Learning Modality.

This method attempts to set aside biases and preconceived assumptions about human experiences, feelings, and responses to a particular situation. These include interviews, visiting places, and observation. The main tools in data gathering were interview/unstructured questionnaires. Constructed response questionnaire with open-ended questions used to probe the respondents' experience in the modular learning modality.

Environment

The study was conducted in a public elementary school in the province of Cebu. Parents were the external stakeholders of the school. Considering the personal connection with the people in this place, the researcher chooses this research site. It has a population of 320 learners, around 11 teachers including the researcher, One guidance counsellor, One non-teaching personnel and One school head. The place was located at the northern part of Cebu. Considering the comfort of the researcher. The researcher choses this school for ease and comfort.

Participants

The respondents of the study were four mothers only. The mothers will be selected using the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling, because the researcher relied on her own judgement when choosing members of the population participated in the surveys. The number of participants for qualitative studies was generally much smaller than that of quantitative studies because the purpose of qualitative research was not to generalize the results. This section provides the profile of the identified parents of a local elementary school, in the province of Cebu as to age and gender, grade level of children, educational status, and employment status.

Table 1
Profile of Participants

Code Names	Age	Grade Level of child/children	Educational Status	Employment Status
Jovelyn	40	Grade 2 ,3, 7,10	High school Graduate	housewife
Colleen	29	Grade 2 & Kinder	College level	housewife
Nimfa	37	Grade 5 & 6	College graduate	Regular employee
Gemma	41	Grade 6 & 12	High school graduate	Regular employee

The parents were selected according to their educational status and employment to find how these factors affect their bearing on the role.

Table 2

Inclusion- Exclusion Criteria of Participants

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
1. A mother who graduated college and working.	1. Mothers who are not willing or too shy to share their stories
2. A mother who graduated basic education and working.	2. Mothers who have comorbidities that could bias the results of the study.
3. A college level mother but not working.	
4. A mother who graduated basic education and working.	

Accordingly, purposeful sampling was used and the number of participants was small to gain insights into the phenomena under investigation. It requires the creation of a researcher made criterial that was best suitable to target the informants who have firsthand experiences.

Instrument

To carry out this study, the researcher considered herself as the primary instrument for the success of this endeavor. The instrument used a semi structured interview guide. The researcher used a semi detailed interview guide as its secondary instrument that contains the following questions composed of preliminary, developmental and wrap-up. There were two prepared questions for preliminary, five for developmental as it contains the main intention of the study and another one question for wrap-up. The researchers prepared open-ended questions as the basic tool in collecting the data during face to face interview. The researcher simply uses recorder (cell phone) for recording of what she heard during the interview, the researcher used reflexive journal for keeping a personal record of the process and transcriptions.

Data Gathering Procedures

There were three phases of the data gathering procedures. The preliminary, actual data collection and data management. The implementation of these three phases serves the researcher as guide on accomplishing this research task.

Preliminary Data Gathering

First, the researcher presented to the Dean the three titles. Then the approved title was given to me and advised to proceed in making research study for chapters I-III. Afterwards, the researcher sent papers to the adviser for corrections and underwent research consultation with the Dean before the design hearing. The researcher also made a letter addressed to the Dean and to the District Supervisor and to School Principal for approval of the study. Then, made a letter for each respondent for them to be prepared and aware of. The purpose of the study was explained. This enhanced smooth and easy contact to all the respondents.

Actual Data Gathering

Then the second phase of data gathering was the implementation phase in which the researcher explained the purpose of the study to enhance smooth and easy contact to all the respondents. Since the researcher was using face to face platform in the data collection, the researcher made sure that the guidelines set forth by the Inter Agency Task Force (IATF) such as social distancing and the necessary health protocols must be observed. The researcher set the scheduled for an interview of the participants depending on their available time. The duration of the interview was ten minutes for each mother.

The researcher administered the open-ended interview. The same open-ended questions were asked to all interviewees. This approach facilitates faster interviews that can be more easily analyzed and compared. The responses were recorded, can be compared, and analyzed easily because of the uniformity of the questions asked and will be reviewed for consolidation, analysis, and interpretation.

Post Data Gathering

After the collection of data, the researcher played the recorded responses as her guide on making a stories of participants. The researcher remains focused on each participant's story. The respondents' responses were organized and analyzed by the researcher. The researcher reports on participants' life experiences as told through their stories. Then reconstructs the individuals' stories and tells them in a chronological order with a beginning, middle, and end. The results would be hopefully be the basis for the enhancement of learning outcomes. All of the information was



stored in a digital format. The researcher's cell phone was used to record the interview, which was then uploaded to a laptop computer. The study's data was kept and will not be destroyed until the thesis is approved in its entirety.

Data Analysis

Qualitative procedures were employed in this narrative inquiry. To determine the experience and role of mother-mentors using modular learning modality in teaching, responses will be consolidated based on the similarity of their thoughts and was merged descriptions and statements synthesizing their ideas. The researcher did the theming, and data synthesizing. Then, those were collated, tabulated, and analyzed based on the statement of the problem. Considering the three dimensions of narrative inquiry: temporality, the personal and social, and the location where the researcher mediates stories while maintaining the spirit of flirtation. The analysis of empirical materials was often conducted using a four-step process. First, an early explanation of the temporal and geographical boundaries. Second, a description of the participants. Third, interpreting remarks and using the participant's verbatim language-gathered. Lastly, to tell the story regarding what this researcher think was happening and why. Thinking narratively during analysis involves negotiating relationships, negotiating purposes, negotiating ways to be useful, and negotiating transitions while keeping in mind theoretical, methodological, and interpretive considerations (Connelly & Clandinin, 2020). Connelly and Clandinin (2000) recommended three analytical tools for narrative inquiry: broadening, burrowing, and storying and restorying. They used these analytical tools to analyze and piece together the narrative material they gathered. They transitioned from interim field texts to research text with the help of these interpretive devices. Individual interviews were the most commonly used data collection method in this research and the foremost method in narrative inquiry in particular, as the researcher understands that the interviewees told stories based on their narrative schema that reflects personal knowledge and experiences. An inductive approach was used to analyze the qualitative data collected from the in-depth interviews. Therefore, broader themes framing each research question along with coinciding conclusions emerged from chunking pieces of related interview data using thematic analysis procedure.

Findings and Discussion:

Varied Approaches to Parenting and Education Support:

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted traditional modes of education delivery, necessitating innovative approaches to support children's learning at home. The findings of this study shed light on the diverse strategies employed by mothers to navigate these challenges and ensure their children's educational continuity amidst the crisis.

Gemma, identified as "The Independent Woman" in the study, exemplifies resilience and adaptability in her approach to parenting and education support. As a single parent, Gemma faces the daunting task of balancing her job responsibilities with the demands of assisting her children with their education. Despite these challenges, Gemma maintains a positive outlook and actively engages in creating a conducive learning environment for her children. Her ability to juggle multiple roles reflects findings from previous studies highlighting the importance of parental involvement and positive attitudes towards education in fostering children's academic success (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Similarly, Nimfa, characterized as "The Determined Mother and a Public School Teacher," underscores the significance of preparation and multitasking in facilitating her children's education. As a working mother and educator, Nimfa recognizes the importance of establishing a structured routine and providing adequate support to her children as they navigate remote learning. Her proactive approach aligns with research suggesting that parental involvement and organization positively impact children's academic performance and well-being (Desimone, 1999).

Jovelyn, identified as "The Supportive Mother," demonstrates resilience in the face of financial adversity caused by her husband's job loss. Despite these challenges, Jovelyn utilizes available resources, such as the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, to support her children's education. Her resourcefulness reflects findings indicating that socioeconomic factors influence parental involvement and access to educational resources, ultimately affecting children's learning outcomes (Domina et al., 2009).

Lastly, Colleen, characterized as "The Collegiate Mother," emphasizes the importance of adaptation and emotional support in facilitating her children's learning. Balancing motherhood with pursuing her own education, Colleen recognizes the need for flexibility and understanding in navigating the complexities of remote learning. Her approach underscores the interconnectedness of parental involvement, emotional support, and children's academic achievement (Hill & Craft, 2003).

The findings of this study highlight the varied approaches employed by mothers in supporting their children's education during the pandemic. From resilience and adaptability to preparation and emotional support, these strategies underscore the critical role of parental involvement in ensuring children's educational continuity amidst crisis situations.

Challenges and Concerns Amidst the Pandemic:



The transition to modular learning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic has brought forth a myriad of challenges and uncertainties for mothers, as highlighted in the study. Anxieties surrounding the management of household responsibilities, work commitments, and ensuring the academic progress of their children loom large in their narratives. Each mother grapples with apprehensions regarding their capacity to provide effective support for their children's education amidst the unprecedented circumstances.

Financial instability emerges as a prominent concern among the mothers, exacerbating the already daunting task of navigating remote learning. Jovelyn's experience, for instance, reflects the strain caused by her husband's job loss, leading her to seek alternative resources like the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program to mitigate the impact on her children's education. This aligns with previous research highlighting the link between socioeconomic factors and parental involvement in education (Domina et al., 2009).

Furthermore, the mothers express apprehensions regarding their proficiency in certain subjects, particularly those that pose challenges for their children. Jovelyn, for instance, acknowledges her limitations in understanding topics like Math, English, and Science, prompting her to rely on resources such as answer keys provided in the modules. This resonates with studies emphasizing the importance of parental knowledge and engagement in supporting children's academic development (Desimone, 1999).

Moreover, the disruption of daily routines due to pandemic-related restrictions adds another layer of complexity to the mothers' experiences. Balancing household chores, work responsibilities, and children's education within the confines of home presents a formidable challenge for each participant. Colleen's narrative, for instance, underscores the need for adaptability and emotional support in navigating the uncertainties of remote learning while pursuing her own educational aspirations.

The study illuminates the multifaceted challenges and concerns faced by mothers as they endeavor to support their children's education amidst the upheaval caused by the pandemic. From financial instability to academic proficiency and the disruption of daily routines, these challenges underscore the critical importance of holistic support systems and community resources in ensuring educational continuity during crisis situations.

Adaptation and Resilience:

Amidst the myriad challenges posed by the pandemic, the mothers in the study exhibit remarkable resilience and adaptability in navigating the new landscape of education delivery. Drawing on a repertoire of strategies, they adeptly respond to the demands of remote learning while prioritizing their children's educational needs.

One notable strategy employed by the mothers is the creation of conducive study environments within their homes. Gemma, for instance, ensures her children have a comfortable space for studying, reflecting the importance of a supportive learning environment in academic success (Bempechat et al., 2011). This aligns with research emphasizing the significance of home environments in shaping children's educational outcomes (Sirin, 2005).

Additionally, the mothers actively seek assistance from teachers and leverage online resources like Google to supplement their children's learning. Nimfa's reliance on teacher guidance and online search tools demonstrates proactive engagement in facilitating her children's education despite personal and professional obligations. Such collaborative efforts between parents and educators have been associated with improved academic performance and student engagement (Kraft & Dougherty, 2013).

Furthermore, the mothers exhibit a commitment to prioritizing time for their children's learning amidst busy schedules. Jovelyn's dedication to guiding her children through their modules, despite household responsibilities and financial constraints, exemplifies the resilience and determination prevalent among the participants. This resonates with studies highlighting the pivotal role of parental involvement in fostering academic achievement and resilience in children (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

The mothers' demonstration of adaptation and resilience underscores their unwavering commitment to ensuring their children's continued education amidst the challenges posed by the pandemic. By fostering supportive home environments, seeking collaborative partnerships with educators, and prioritizing their children's learning, they embody the resilience necessary to navigate crisis situations and promote educational continuity.

Parental Sacrifice and Prioritization of Education:

The narratives within the study illuminate the profound sacrifices made by mothers to prioritize the education of their children. Despite grappling with personal and financial adversities, these mothers exhibit unwavering dedication to facilitating their children's learning, often at great personal cost. Their narratives reveal a poignant narrative of resilience and selflessness, wherein they prioritize their children's educational needs above their own comfort and well-being.

For instance, Gemma's commitment to waking up early and managing her responsibilities as a single parent and employee underscores the lengths to which mothers go to ensure their children's access to education. Such sacrifices align with research highlighting the pivotal role of parental involvement in shaping children's academic outcomes and overall well-being (Fan & Chen, 2001).

Similarly, Nimfa's ability to juggle multiple roles as a working mother and teacher exemplifies the sacrifices mothers make to support their children's education. Despite the challenges of balancing work commitments with parenting responsibilities, Nimfa's unwavering determination to provide her children with educational opportunities reflects the profound impact of parental prioritization on children's academic success (Hill & Taylor, 2004).

Furthermore, Jovelyn's resilience in navigating financial strain while actively participating in educational programs like the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program underscores the profound sacrifices mothers make to ensure their children's educational continuity. Her dedication to leveraging available resources to support her children's learning reflects the resilience and resourcefulness prevalent among mothers facing adversity (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002).

The narratives of parental sacrifice and prioritization of education within the study underscore the profound impact of maternal dedication on children's educational outcomes. Through their unwavering commitment and selflessness, these mothers exemplify the transformative power of parental involvement in shaping children's academic success and resilience in the face of adversity.

Conclusion:

This study sheds light on the multifaceted experiences of mothers in supporting their children's education during the pandemic. Through in-depth narratives, we have witnessed the diverse approaches, challenges, and sacrifices made by these mothers as they navigate the uncharted territory of remote learning. Despite facing unprecedented challenges, the mothers in this study have demonstrated remarkable resilience, adaptability, and unwavering commitment to ensuring their children's educational continuity.

The findings underscore the pivotal role of parental involvement and support in shaping children's academic outcomes, especially in times of crisis. The narratives reveal the significant impact of maternal sacrifice and prioritization of education on children's learning experiences and overall well-being. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of leveraging available resources, seeking assistance from educators, and fostering conducive learning environments at home to mitigate the challenges posed by the pandemic.

As we reflect on these narratives, it becomes evident that the pandemic has not only exposed existing inequalities in education but has also amplified the indispensable role of parental engagement in mitigating its adverse effects. Moving forward, policymakers, educators, and community stakeholders must recognize and address the unique needs and challenges faced by families, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds, to ensure equitable access to quality education for all children.

This study underscores the resilience, determination, and profound love that mothers embody as they navigate the complexities of parenting and education in the face of adversity. Their stories serve as a powerful reminder of the transformative power of parental involvement in shaping children's futures and building more resilient communities in the wake of crisis.

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