PARENTS AND TEACHERS COLLABORATION IN HOME EDUCATION: CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND INSIGHTS

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to analyze how parents and children dealt with home education as well as its effectiveness. On the so-called new normal, many impediments and disruptions came to the lives of stakeholders. Thousands of schools were forced to shut down due to financial constraints and/or issues. Parents had thought of finding an alternative way to continue with the schooling of their children. In the Philippines, a modular approach was introduced, representing the home education/schooling type of instruction. This was the purpose of the research. Five parents served as the participants of the research in which ethnography was used as its qualitative approach. It is found that homeschooling and education are proved to be responsive and relevant to many people due to tangible benefits and perks enjoyed by the learners and parents. On the other hand, parents and children also see and experience some challenges in doing the modules' requirements. It is advised that parents, children (learners), and teachers need to work in collaboration for the successful outcomes of homeschooling. Another issue is how parents should perform an assessment with their children as learners. However, teachers should not only be there for online consultation. This method of teaching and learning is still in the process of adjustment, but soon people involved in this paradigm will realize its value and role in today's global education and situation.

Keywords: homeschooling, home education, modular approach, flexible learning, parents teachers collaboration

INTRODUCTION

Parents are involved in their children as evidenced by the current situation in which children have no choice but to stay home, study, and answer learning modules. This mode of learning requires the partnership between subject teachers and parents. At first, hardship and some issues occur in the local setting, but gradually, both parents and children have started adjusting and adopting the process. When all families want their children to learn safely, homeschooling is one of the methods. In the Philippines, this method faces many challenges for parents, teachers, and children because it is something new for them. The transition from the traditional classroom with teachers to home education with family is not an easy adjustment.

The research examines how parents and children carry out homeschooling as an alternative method during uncertain times. It describes and discusses how parents and children process and carry out the modules under the homeschooling program. To give justice to the research, the researcher intentionally cites scholarly papers for serving as support. Many teachers of various specialism are perplexed on how they can effectively and adequately address issues on assessment. They often exclaim that the situation is challenging due to connectivity issues. However, teachers and educators still need to find ways and means to gauge or measure the learning experiences and performances of the students either onsite or online. For more than a decade, educators have grasped the distinctions between evaluation and assessment. Assessment may be given immediately after the lesson and is flexible; that is, many tasks and activities are helpful for this activity.

The result of comprehension assessment in

Southeast Asia indicates that the Philippines lags among its counterparts and neighbors in the region. After the airing of this issue, an ocean of reactions bombards social media platforms. Netizens are blaming the education department and public-school teachers for the shocking outcome of that assessment. The researcher ponders the situation, as citizens of the Philippines do not have to blame public school teachers but instead help them achieve professional development in many ways.

From multiple perspectives, the research conducted in other countries can help people analyze the situation. It has started from the very core of the problem by identifying the needs and problems of the setting. Educators have their strengths and weaknesses. From this view, somehow, it can be identified the point which needs to enhance or correct.

If public teachers are provided with robust quality assurance and relevant training, they can be prepared for any circumstances and challenges that will confront the academic setting. However, this suggestion is up to now not working and remains a 'plan'. What the government needs to do is do systemic change in terms of educational leadership and launch effective programs to upgrade and uplift the lives of teachers. If teachers are already prepared with all the tasks and challenges of teaching, they can practice and design lessons and activities that will help learners improve and achieve better results. On several readings, it is understood that assessment tools are only a component of curriculum design. If the curriculum is holistic and flexible, it can cater to the diversity and needs of the target learners; most likely, there is a chance to dramatically and drastically assist and guide learners toward better performance.

Done in many kinds of methods, experts and other members of the academe should evaluate resources and materials based on the learning styles and multiple intelligences. This evaluation form should emanate from the learning theories, and models are explored and tested through the years. More importantly, listed as one of the main concerns in the evaluation phase is applying and analyzing the tools, technology, and emerging practices that may be useful and functional in creating learning opportunities for the learners.

Another construct that needs attention is homeschooling and/or home education. Since the pandemic hit the learning environment last year, parents chose to educate or homeschool their children. Although, this is classified as modular (referring to DepEd's modality). In select readings, it is discovered how homeschooling and education among other countries require much preparation by those involved in the tedious process. If it has its drawbacks, tangible benefits are also seen from the modality itself, the reason why many celebrities and wealthy families have chosen this type of learning and teaching approach.

Both parents and teachers are responsible for guiding children and teenagers to build esteem and confidence, handling stress and anxiety well, becoming more resilient, receptive, collaborating and communicating effectively, and listening more closely to each other. Educators have to pay attention to SEL (Social Emotional Learning) and start developing the skills essential to teenagers and children. According to David Spencer in Macmillan Education (2021), 'feeling good' matters so much in the classroom as learners try to process ideas in their minds and socialize with their classmates.

Macmillan Education (2021) has explained that a person has to manage and understand his/her emotions and express his/her feelings and thoughts more effectively. Through this, the student or person can manage and understand other people and their emotions. If they can understand other people's feelings and behavior, they can interact more effectively.

Homeschooling in the Philippines is offered due to the impact of the health crisis, although some well-off families have been with this method for a long. As said earlier, home education has its place when both teachers and parents try to avoid the spread of the virus; as such, the feasible way of educating children is homeschooling, where public schools provide modules to continue learning despite the global pandemic crisis.

Many universities around the globe are offering distance education courses and programs to meet the educational needs of students and stay attuned to technology. The research of Fidalgo et al. (2020) has attempted to navigate the steps some higher learning institutions have to follow and meet to offer such courses and programs. Moreover, the researchers explore the perceptions, attitudes, and willingness of the said institutions to provide guidance and recommendations for expanding the use of distance education formats. Results of the research further state that participant-students are interested in taking distance education courses.

Parents and children need to develop resourcefulness, which is a great skill to have. Resourcefulness is the ability to urgently and creatively face obstacles and find solutions and is a determining factor for success. Home education requires parents and children to be resourceful and search for educational resources in the community and on the web. Home education requires patience and dedication. Technically, zero expenses have to be spent on home education, but providing educational experiences is priceless. In life, there are ups and downs same is true with homeschooling. There will always be problems, just like the thought that life has its imperfections. However, as parents and children deal with varied circumstances, they will be able to cope with the challenges and trials. Homeschooling can also be an effective way of bonding with the family. While parents educate their children, they can share their thoughts, dreams, and other topics for building a social and emotional atmosphere.

About five million children worldwide are homeschooled. This includes an estimated 50.000 to 100.000 in the UK. Experts foresee a rise of 80% annually, implying that more parents are interested

in exercising their right to educate their children themselves. Home education does not mean a single method of teaching the child, but rather, this approach employs a wide range of methods, strategies, and techniques to ensure the transfer of learning. Parents have many choices when it comes to the materials and resources they will use for their children. They can check the community and websites for further information and research, which can help them a lot.

Home education is, also known as homeschooling, is a modality in which learners stay at home and use modules for learning aside from online consultations with their teachers. Parents are given orientation and training by teachers. Many families have long been into this kind of modality because of the wide range of benefits they could get, such as improving examinations, spending quality time with children, monitoring performance, safety, and security. Through homeschooling, parents and children can easily find resources such as books, magazines, newspapers, and modules essential to the learning process. Moreover, many people worldwide have seen a high quality of learning, so they have decided to switch to this type of learning modality and approach.

According to Futureschool (2021), homeschooling has been tested by time for effectiveness and relevance. Parents have the option to select a properly wide range of courses fitted to the needs and interests of their children. This kind of instruction also offers flexibility in consultation, conversation, and feedback. When it comes to evaluation, experts have noticed that children have improved in performance in examinations. Parents also claim that their children have shown understanding and mastery of concepts and skills, as indicated by tests and interpersonal interaction results.

The website also proves how homeschooling could be very effective in honing the emotional and social domains of the child. Teachers and parents notice how children develop values, confidence, and comprehension, as shown by children when they deal with parents and their neighbors. From the foregoing discussion and claims, it can be inferred that a home education program is one of the best options during times of disruption and uncertainty, just like what the world is experiencing at the very moment.

It is advised that quality home education programs should possess an organized curriculum, syllabus, and modules. The content should be friendly and readable for children and students. In addition, supplementary materials must be offered by the school in anticipation of possible questions and confusion that both children and parents might experience. It is also clever if the subject teachers and mentors have clear and accessible communication lines on the time homeschooling has commenced already. Through this, all imperative and thoughtful questions can be channeled to the teachers smoothly and conveniently.

Family engagement matters to the success of schools and students. Family engagement is linked to better educational outcomes, as revealed by researchers dealing with educators, students, and families about promising practices in the field. Mapp (2021) has explained how family engagement does at home and in the community to support the learning and development of children. It likewise encompasses the importance of a shared partnership between home and school for successful outcomes. Such engagement is pivotal to school improvement. It also contributes to the improvement of instructional materials and proficiency of teachers because there are reflection and feedback.

In the new normal, there is a need for parents and teachers to be reflective, patient, creative, and passionate in teaching students. Teachers, as partners, can design the most attractive and eye-catching instructional materials for learners. They can also employ various learning assessment tools in gauging the learners. They have to be responsive and reflexive in doing these tasks. As regards possible difficulties and blunders, a well-prepared lesson plan and well-equipped language teacher can always endure the tests of time by being ready and spontaneous as he faces all the academic challenges around him.

Homeschooling can be an instrument for parents and teachers to engage in more profound reflections about the lessons they have taught and the strategies to make the children and students easily understand the modules and lessons. The principle of clarity of focus explains that all assessments must be linked closely to the long-term outcomes that learners should achieve and the short-term enabling outcomes that have been taken/connected from these long-term outcomes. It must be identified which outcomes each assessment item is testing. This is another way of elucidating/emphasizing one of the fundamental principles of assessment – all assessment items should be valid. That is, they must measure what they intend to measure so that outcomes are valid, reliable, and credible. Results must be consistent and fair by linking learning outcomes and assessment items.

Bubb and Jones (2020) have attempted to identify key areas and issues experienced by pupils in engaging in homeschooling. They point out important issues such as digital learning, creativity, class participation, progress and development, group tasks, parent and teacher relationship, and parents' ability to respond to their children. The research also identifies the struggles of teachers in preparing their lesson plans.

Liberto and English (2016) have investigated practices employed by teachers in homeschooling. Some elements being considered are the syllabus, timetable, and books. It is also discovered that eclectic home educators try to look into several educational options to help students and parents. Some teachers fear that home education might compromise the quality learning process.

Cook (2020) has analyzed how home-based learning can promote self-directed learning. She explores the challenges that parents, teachers, and learners face in home-based learning. She also underlines the needed support of teachers and

parents for home education to become meaningful and successful. Many children are not yet ready for independent learning, and several teachers lack support and resources to facilitate home-based learning properly.

Bartolome, Mamat, and Masnan (2017) have underlined the important role of parents' involvement in the schooling and education of children. Their literature review has found out that it is imperative that schools have to consider the cultural and social diversity of parents when it comes to school involvement. Moreover, in this research, the researchers clearly distinguish and define differences between engagement and involvement of parents in school activities and tasks.

Wen, Gwendoline, and Lau (2021) have discussed how ICT (Information and Communication Technology) can help in the readiness and preparation of teachers and schools to offer home-based learning. They investigate the important role of the integration of technology in distance learning. They also consider the pedagogical design and learning effectiveness.

Miller and Lin (2019) have explored how families extend their support to children in their early years through various ways. In their research, families use the digital camera to capture home-based tasks and activities necessary to support and guide children in their growing years and learning phases. This research describes socio-economic differences of families using digital cameras and documents gathered from the families.

The research attempts to describe and analyze how teachers and parents experience homeschooling/education as a modality during uncertain times. Furthermore, it narrates the struggles and challenges encountered by teachers and parents in implementing this modality. Educators are often influenced by perspectives and philosophies about instructional practices and strategies offered by leaders, presenters, and books. Students and pupils should be the most active members of the classroom setting. Some teachers claim that their first year of teaching was unsuccessful because they were still crawling on the system and facing a stage of adjustment. Students have to be the most active in the classroom since the core of the learning process is the learners. Learners tend to gain more and recall ideas effectively when engaging in hands-on and collaborative learning activities. As seen around the globe, organizations today seek applicants who are problem solvers, leaders, communicators, and policymakers who can work well in teams. Those skills are better honed and upgraded in an active classroom (Rollins, 2017).

In a student-centered classroom, structure and predictability are required to achieve formulated goals. It has been proved that effective learning structures in place are even more important in the active classroom setting than in the teacher-centered delivery because learners are moving and collaborating. The lesson framework is likewise essential because it balances student autonomy and classroom setting. In some instances, rethinking lesson frameworks can ensure that each lesson component has a purposeful and distinct mission. In the lesson framework, variety encourages thinking and curiosity. Teacher delivery is important for parts of the content. Teachers provide directions and make decisions to achieve a higher quality of work.

Offering students choices about how they process and complete tasks enable them higher autonomy and increases engagement. It also provides them with varied routes into comprehension, maximizing the opportunity for successful learning. The inclusion of multiple approaches to learning is possible through the application of multimodality in classrooms. Multimodality is the application of multiple communication channels such as sound, gesture, image, writing, and video within one medium, allowing students to gain meaning in various ways. By encouraging imagination and creativity, students are able to form and express their views to better understand the world around them. Inclusive classrooms should promote critical thinking, communication, and collaboration (Macmillan Education, 2021).

In a positive learning environment, learners are engaged, safe, connected, and supported. In this aspect, the role of collaboration plays a significant role. By incorporating collaborative and learner-centered strategies, teachers can make a difference in students' lives, hence, preparing them for the real world and the workplace. When teachers use multimodality and progressive tasks in classrooms, they provide alternative routes for the learners and create opportunities for them to pick up gold along the way. As expedition leaders, teachers can observe which paths their adventurers (learners) choose and encourage them to reflect on useful ones. The activities, strategies, approaches that students identify as useful can be compared with gold nuggets picked up on their way. These gold nuggets help students for future learning and help teachers differentiate and cater to students' attitudes, skills, and performances.

Another approach is to provide progressive tasks that slowly increase difficulty, allowing learners to work at their own pace and empowering them to work independently. Some students work quickly through tasks. What matters most is students' progress from their beginning points, not that they all work the same (Tomlinson, 2017). Some students need extra challenges, while others need extra assistance.

Shearer in Armstrong (2018) has developed Multiple Intelligences Diagnostic Assessment scales, which is regarded as the single best tool for assessing students' multiple intelligences and is related to simple observation, which is readily available to all. Price-Mitchell in Armstrong (2018) holds that research in cognitive psychology applied to education supports the belief that children benefit from instructional approaches that help them ponder their learning processes.

In connection with multiple intelligences, Archer in Armstrong (2018) has illustrated a student

diagnosed with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) who has a penchant and performs well in a highly stimulating environment matched in a job as a firefighter or an emergency room worker. Meanwhile, a student diagnosed with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) who has a number/logic smart knack for computers and coding may find jobs related to the Information technology field.

Polya in Armstrong (2018) has introduced heuristics as a loose collection of strategies, rules of thumb, guidelines, and suggestions for logical problem-solving. Examples of heuristic strategies include finding analogies to problems people want to solve, breaking down various parts of the problem, and proposing possible solutions to the problem. Polya has further added that heuristics provides students with informal logical maps to help them find their way around the unfamiliar academic field.

METHODS

The research centers on how parents and children view homeschooling based on their experiences. It also looks into the success of homeschooling through collaboration among teachers, parents, and children. To process textual data, the research employs ethnography, which is a form of qualitative method. Ten participants in the research are compromised of parents and teachers. The researcher considers working parents and language teachers who have been in the field of teaching for more than a decade. Further, this research seeks data using interview and messenger group chat as an alternative to focus-group discussion. All collected responses are converted into textual data, which are further examined using content analysis. It is also the endpoint or product of the research to provide a holistic conclusion about home education in the Philippine educational setting.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Participants express their views regarding homeschooling by sharing their experience on implementing the learning modules and how they are delivered and taught. The first participant has said that he is having difficulty discussing the module because he is unaware of the discipline. The second participant claims that the module contains many exercises and questions to be answered by the child. The third participant opines that each module is comprehensible and straightforward based on the child's response. Another participant observes that teaching the child is a bit challenging because closeness between family and the child gives the child a form of resistance to listening. Still, another participant believes that the module is complete, although the difficulty is how parents will get training on how they can properly guide their children on the use of modules. The parents say that they get tired of getting an explanation

on something unfamiliar. The easier way to know is by looking for it on the internet. The child gets more time to read and understand concepts when guided by parents.

It is observed through social media chatting and/ or messaging that most participants are now enjoying the modular approach of home education, although there are challenges and predicaments, such as the first session being toxic, tiring, and weary. The parents have to get some clear directions on how the module must be taught among their children. Connectivity is poor and unstable. As the months' pass, parents and children start to get used to and exposed to the tasks. Parents also request online coaching from subject teachers for topics beyond their understanding and knowledge. Through this, questions from their children will be properly addressed even online.

Another question is how parents and children prepare for the assessment tools or questions without manipulating answers or avoiding coaching, which is biased. Based on the textual data, most participants describe homeschooling/education as a timely alternative approach to educating children amidst an ongoing global crisis. From their views, there are advantages of being homeschooled, such as closer family ties, flexible schedule, the safety of children, and pace of instruction. However, there are also marked downsides such as lack of idea for instruction, too many tasks and questions to answer, and access to connectivity when desired to consult teachers for clarifications.

The researcher and participants have a focus-group discussion online using google meet. The points and reflections raised by participants are anchored on the question, "What problems have you encountered in language teaching in relation to homeschooling?" Their honesty and sincerity are evident during the online discussion and conversation. From their responses, key ideas are formed and coded. The actual textual data that the researcher transcribed is carefully and promptly described and analyzed to form meaningful and relevant conclusions. The researcher ensures the trustworthiness of the data by checking and reviewing the problems and responses of participants before finalizing the synthesis. The participants are also consulted regarding the result of the analysis to build credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. The life experiences of the language teachers' participants contribute a lot to the development of this research. These are some conversation between participants, the researcher, and teachers.

"I think only 20% of parents support their children because they too have business or work to perform. Their priority is earning a living for survival."
"Communication with parents is badly needed in this home education program."
"Parents have to cooperate with us teachers for the success of this modules."
"Supportive parents have important role in motivating their children to participate in activities."

"Learners are not able to complete their modules on time."
"In the online class, students are not attending."
"There is connectivity problem always."
"Some parents answer the modules instead of their children."

Based on the conversation and discussion with teachers and parents, one of the concerns they have been encountering is the inability of the children to answer the modules because they are confused, unaware of the lessons, and lack support and motivation from their parents. On the other hand, parents do not have the time to monitor the modules of their children for homeschooling due to their busy schedule for work and other circumstances and tasks. Some learners are not attending their online support/classes due to unstable or poor connectivity, which is a big factor when it comes to online learning and teaching. Students are not able to complete and comply with the module requirements because they lack support and motivation from their parents. In some cases, the parents are answering the modules, and that case is not controlled by the teachers. From the discussion and conversation, this research proves that the success of homeschooling is based on collaboration, communication, and support between parents and teachers.

CONCLUSIONS

The new normal has proven the resiliency of Filipino teachers. Despite difficulties in communication and connectivity, they (teachers) try their best to educate students in different modalities that can connect their ideas and lessons. One of these modalities is homeschooling which is similar to the modular approach. Each week, teachers prepare, submit, and evaluate the learners' course modules (taught and guided by parents). On its first pilot testing, which covered the academic year 2020-2021, people criticized how the teachers designed modules. There were lapses and blunders on grammar and directions. This event should not stop teachers from their objective of providing quality instruction to students. If the modality and mode of learning are evaluated, experts can create insights and suggestions that will improve the materials and motivate stakeholders to educate the Filipino students regardless of the new set all of the people are in. Learning assessments can be revised and improved based on human needs, diversity, and learning theories. Assessment of learning at home received attention and controversy in the Philippine setting because there are rumors and claims that it is the parents who are answering the course modules and children spend little time reading the materials. Hence, the learning process is somehow obstructed, and homeschooling goals are evidently ruined.

The research examines how parents and children carry out homeschooling as an alternative method during uncertain times. It describes and discusses how parents and children process and carry out the modules under the homeschooling program. Based on the responses and observation of the researcher, it is found that parents and children are able to adjust to the process and requirements under homeschooling. They spend quality time with children through teaching and consultation. Moreover, they can check the child's progress every time they take new lessons from the modules. On the other hand, some disadvantages of home education are also seen in the study. Children sometimes get bored when loads of information are given to them. Some parents do not have an idea of the lesson found in the module. For some modules, errors are seen by parents and children. On the whole, parents and children view homeschooling as good alternative schooling because of affordability (it is free) and the quality time they spend with their children. Not only do children learn from the experience, but they also absorb the values and skills shown by parents.

The research results recommend that schools double-check the contents of the module for home education and schooling. They can form a pool of experts who will do the rigorous process of proofreading and revising course modules before distributing them to homes. Teachers also need holistic training for the preparation and development of materials and modules, while teachers should train parents on how modules are to be taught with their children in a homeschooling way.

Anchored on the research findings, recommendations are being offered to readers. Homeschooling requires a thorough study of the needs and context of a particular place or location. Parents who will be active participants of the method should be trained and oriented with home education rules, approaches, and practices. They should be acquainted with the contents and competencies indicated in the specific learning modules. The function of having stable connectivity is a must in home education primarily because if there are qualms and doubts about the lessons, the parents and children can instantly search on the internet the possible answer to their questions. Meanwhile, in the assessment phase, the modules already contain self-testing activities and summative tests that will measure how far the learners have gained ideas and knowledge. Students show the macro-skills when they answer questions, talk or converse with family, and listen to directions read and given by their parents. Finally, critical and reflective thinking skills must be present as well on top of all other skills when they are able to make sound decisions; that is a form of reflective thinking skill. Teachers, parents, and children have to collaborate for the success of this homeschooling/education. In the absence of the teacher for many sessions, connectivity plays an imperative role where both parents and children can browse the internet for clarity and search for meaning and information.

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