



PANDEMIC ERA: THE ROLE OF PARENTS AT HOME IN THE OCCURRENCE OF MODULAR DISTANCE LEARNING

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Abstract

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, education was interrupted. To continue offering high-quality education led to a dramatic transition away from face-to-face instruction and to blended learning. However, modular distance learning, as one of the adaptable learning modes, was chosen by most parents. Hence, this study seeks to determine the role of parents in the effectiveness of modular distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic era, ascertain whether there is a relationship between the parents' roles and their backgrounds, determine whether there is a relationship between the parents' backgrounds and the children's academic performance and determine whether the child's educational performance was related to the role of the parents. A survey questionnaire was used to acquire information on the parents' profiles and the role they played or did not play. Mean, frequency count, and Spearman correlation were used to analyze the data. Results showed a relationship between parents' profiles and roles in their child's academic achievement. The children's academic performance in modular distance learning is boosted, mainly if the parents work and earn a higher income. Modular distance learning is effective when parents act as friendly teachers and motivators for their children and are employed in either public or private agencies.

Keywords: modular learning, new normal education, pandemic era, parent's role



INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus pandemic 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has resulted in an enormous disruption of educational systems in history, affecting billion of students, and the world's student population has been wedged by the closures of schools and other learning spaces (Butnaru et al., 2021; Tan et al., 2021). The pandemic has unprecedented effects on education, necessitating appropriate responses (Asian Development Bank, 2021). The epidemic has been claimed to have exposed systemic education issues (Zakaria et al., 2022). The so-called "new normal setup" has given parents more involved in their children's education. The Department of Education (DepEd, 2020) developed the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) to ensure the continuation of learning while safeguarding the health, safety, and well-being of all students, instructors, and other DepEd staff as a result of the closure of schools. The BE-LCP outlines three Learning Delivery Methods (LDMs) that schools may use: blended learning, homeschooling, and remote learning. The most popular type of distance learning is Modular Distance Learning (MDL), one of the LDMs.

Data from the Learner Enrolment and Survey Forms (LESF) for the 2020-2021 school year indicate that parents favored modular for their kids in both public and private schools. Parents are ready to mentor their children directly and take on whatever responsibilities are assigned during this pandemic, regardless of the DepEd-provided modalities, to further their education. As face-to-face instruction is suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, parents were thrust into the forefront of education. Parents are stepping up to encourage their children as they adjust to the new school year set up despite how challenging it is for them to fulfill the function of teachers in the classroom. In this case, parents have been caught off guard by this abrupt transition and are now playing various roles. These novel and unanticipated parental responsibilities are crucial for ensuring that their child learns during this modular distance learning program (Agayon et al., 2022). Cook (2020) emphasized that parents should participate in the new normal education and encourage and cultivate their children's independence.

Although the new normal education's modular modalities made it possible to reopen the school (Zakaria et al., 2022), it should be highlighted that this has some limitations. Numerous academic works have discussed this type of learning modality's difficulties in the Philippines (Agayon et al., 2022; Bacomo et al., 2022; Carbonilla et al., 2022; Hamora et al., 2022; Muhat & Bentor, 2022). Nevertheless, parents' role is not profoundly studied in the researchers' locale.

Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem stated, the study determined the role of the parents in the effectiveness of modular distance learning. Specifically, this study was able to decide on:

1. the sociodemographic profile of the parents in terms of sex, age, employment status, monthly income, number of children attending school, household members, number of hours facilitating the learning of the child, highest educational attainment, gadgets available, type of internet connectivity, and strength of internet connection;
2. the children's academic performance;



3. the roles played by the parents;
4. if a significant relationship exists between the parents' background and (b) their child's academic performance; and
5. if there is a significant relationship between parents' background and the child's academic performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parents' Role

Parents now have the crucial duty of ensuring that their kids receive a top-notch education while being safe. Numerous parents are stepping forward to assist their children in adjusting to the new circumstances, although education suffers due to classes being forced to close their doors to eager students (Wang et al., 2020). Every parent and caregiver wants to provide their kids with the best environment possible (Varkey Foundation, 2019). Additionally, working with teachers can enable parents to support the education and well-being of their kids. The greatest success stories were found where a parent was a: good communicator, active caretaker, routine builder, vigilant guardian, and friendly teacher. Parents must play a multifaceted role in reducing the epidemic's impact on their children's academic performance and well-being due to the expectations of the education system in the "new normal" (Carbonilla et al., 2022). The researcher said parents could also serve as role models, motivators, and counselors.

Parents would therefore be required to engage in the learning process actively. When students participated in remote learning, they would be the ones to guide and assist their children through the modular classes. The modular approach enables Filipino students to learn in the convenience of their own homes. Due to restricted contact with teachers, the learners' parents or guardians will serve as their role models (Lebaste, 2020). Parents are their children's most significant role models and inspirations (Capulso et al., 2021). Children always adopt the values and behavioral patterns of their parents. In addition, a child's academic perspective and motivation are influenced by their upbringing and how much their parents participate in their early education. Parents, for instance, could promote cause by praising effort, tenacity, and subject-matter expertise rather than all-around accomplishment, brilliance, or skill. Additionally, parents can encourage their children to see their academic success as a true reflection of who they are, which will help them feel more driven (Usher & Kober, 2012).

As Li and Qiu (2018) emphasized, children's motivation to learn is less the lower the family's socioeconomic status. Their learning behavior increases engagement as parents become more interested in their child's education. Similar to this, a child's environments have a significant influence on children's well-being. For children to develop, learn, and explore, their home must be secure and healthy. On the other hand, a low-income family environment can harm a child's intellectual, social, and emotional development (Urban Child Institute, 2013). Children's academic success is still greatly influenced by their parental background (Li & Qiu, 2018). These elements include the parents' level of education, their family's income, marital status, and perspectives on their children's education. Fang and Feng (2008) found that the family's social-economic situation significantly impacted children's academic performance using survey data from Nanjing middle school students. Sun et al. (2009) also discovered a significant

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positive relationship between parent education and income levels and their children's academic performance in elementary school. Family members' social and economic standing reflects their socioeconomic position (Chen et al., 2018). The prevailing consensus is that socioeconomic status and children's academic success and cognitive development are strongly and consistently interrelated.

Parental Involvement

Students' academic success is also directly related to parental involvement's effects on children's academic progress and familial circumstances (Li & Qiu, 2018). Even though parental participation in education was associated with student achievement, Kim and Hill (2015) found that although the association was vital for both mothers and fathers, mothers' mean levels of involvement were higher. Moderator analyses across the various types of involvement showed that mothers' participation in school and their children's intellectual development at home were more strongly related to success than fathers'. However, kids with parents who are more involved in their schooling do better academically than kids who are less active. Policymakers have included initiatives (Pentang, 2021c) to improve parental involvement into more general educational policy measures and the effect of parental involvement on academic success. Along with the significance of early academic performance, academic progress for a child after early elementary school is typically consistent (Entwisle & Hayduk, 1988; Pedersen et al., 1978).

Modular Distance Learning

Modular learning is the type of distance education that is most popular. From the DepEd poll, learning through printed and digital modules emerged as the most desired distance learning mode for parents with children enrolled this academic year. Hence all public schools in the Philippines currently employ it (Bernardo, 2020). Online learning is impossible for students who lack internet access and live in far-flung areas (Hamora et al., 2022). Parents and guardians play a variety of responsibilities in modular learning, including those of module, Bundy-clock, and home innovator. They are in charge of collecting printed SLMs and delivering them to barangay halls or schools every week, depending on the agreement reached between the parents and the school. They are required to verify their child's timetable or weekly plan as a Bundy-clock. Because there are so many courses or tasks, they must ensure that everything is done correctly to prevent cramming or submission delays, which could impact the child's performance.

Last but not least, to help their kids focus more on learning, parents who innovate at home must give their kids a conducive learning atmosphere. It must be a quiet, distraction-free home area that is adequately ventilated and lit. The usage of modules stimulates autonomous learning. Improving students' self-study or learning skills is one advantage of employing modules for instruction (Pentang, 2021a). The students actively learn the principles covered in the curriculum. They grow in responsibility as they complete the tasks outlined in the module. The students advance on their own with little to no help from others. They are becoming empowered and learning how to learn (Nardo, 2017). Additional benefits of modular instruction include better



adaptability of instructional materials, increased diversity and flexibility for teachers and staff, and increased choice and self-pacing for students.

The researchers generally relate this literature to their study's perspective as they look past the additional challenges the COVID-19 outbreak has placed on parents and teachers alike, as there is an excellent opportunity to improve collaboration between homes and schools, acknowledging the value of the home/school partnership, the role of parents, and embracing its potential for the quality of education of children amidst pandemic.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive and correlational design following Magulod et al. (2021). This paper used a descriptive design to determine the respondents' demographics, their children's academic success, and their involvement in encouraging their child's learning. Meanwhile, the correlational design was used to ascertain whether there is a relationship between the parent's roles and the child's academic achievement and whether there is a relationship between the parent's background and the child's educational performance.

Participants

The participants of this study were the parents of learners enrolled in this school year 2021-2022 in a selected primary school in Palawan. The researcher randomly chose 50 parents of children enrolled in Grades 1-6 using simple random sampling. Each parent's chance of being selected is equal in this sampling method. Through a survey questionnaire, the respondents will answer if they played or did not play the roles. However, the sample or group does not necessarily imply that it represents the population as a whole.

Data Gathering Procedure

A letter of approval to carry out the research was requested from the office of the school head or principal. Following approval, the researchers personally contacted the parents to distribute the modules and review the questionnaire's content. Additionally, the researchers requested the parents' permission and license before participating in the study.

A questionnaire created by the researchers was used in this study. Under the supervision of the school principal and a master teacher, the study questionnaire's content validation and pilot testing were carried out. The questionnaire asked about sociodemographic data and several scenarios representing common and unusual roles. Its goal was to ascertain the parents' respective positions.

In consideration of the research ethics, the researchers made sure that it was observed and maintained before the research was conducted until it was finished. The parents were also informed about the study's goal and objectives. Then gave the parents surveys during module

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delivery and retrieval and sometimes at home. Protocols have also been followed, including the respondents' confidentiality and voluntary involvement.

Data Treatment

Descriptive statistics were employed to describe the data gathered on the respondents' demographic profile and their children's academic performance, including weighted mean, frequency, and percentage. As for the relationship between the parent's roles and the child's academic achievement and the relationship between the parent's backgrounds and the child's academic performance, the researchers used Spearman rho (r_s). The analysis was conducted using jamovi software adhering to Pentang (2021d).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Parent's Demographic Profile

There are more female (92%) than male participants (Table 1). This could imply that the representation is unequal and that using this variable to inform decisions would not yield any meaningful information. However, this study could be explained by the fact that females are the ones who are more engaged in the implementation of the MDL. The most represented age group is 40 or below, which comprises 70% of the total respondents, followed by the 40 and above age group, which is 30% of the participants. It could be said that most of the participants are Millennials. Most parents (88%) work as self-employed, demonstrating that having a job in this field does not hinder a child's capacity to study.

Additionally, 12% of respondents work in public or private agencies. It demonstrates that 94% of the respondent's family's monthly income is below ₱10,957. Moreover, most respondents live below the standard poverty level the Philippine Statistics Authority set for the first quarter of 2021. This information is crucial to families with low incomes because it affects how students can access services and products like smartphones, laptops, and internet connectivity, which are essential for the new normal of instruction. Most respondents (66%) fall between one to four children enrolled in school. Almost half of the respondents (48%) spent 2-3 hours teaching their child, while 16% spent 6-8 hours. It indicates that the length of time parents has to help their children reduces as the number of children enrolled increases. More respondents (44%) are high school graduates, followed by college graduates (14%). The ability of the parents to instruct their children may be affected by this information, which makes it essential.

It can be said that since everyone had school experience, they may all be able to read primary literature. However, it is still unclear whether this fundamental literacy will be sufficient for the parents to assist the children. The most gadget available to respondents are cellphone (94%) and followed by laptops (6%), given how difficult it is for people to communicate during the COVID-19 pandemic. This result will help to improve information delivery and communication. 86 % of the respondent has internet connectivity through mobile data. This

internet connectivity became an essential tool for pupils during the academic year. It is crucial to education before the pandemic as a tool for word processing, research, and communication. Dangle and Sumaoang (2020) identified that some parents do not have sufficient gadgets for their children. Most (96%) of the respondents have no or poor internet, resulting in the pupils struggling to utilize the resources available on the internet because of poor connectivity.

Table 1. Demographic Profile as the Role of the Parents in the Learning Process of their Children.

Demographic Profile		Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Female	46	92%
	Male	4	8%
Age	below 40	35	70%
	40 and above	15	30%
Employment Status	Self Employed	44	88%
	Employed	6	12%
Monthly Income (₱)	Below 10,957	47	94%
	10,957 to 21,914	3	6%
Number of Children attending School	1-4	33	66%
	5-8	17	34%
Household Member	1-4	18	36%
	5-8	32	64%
Number of Hours Facilitating the Learning of Child (a day)	2-3	24	48%
	4-5	18	36%
	6-8	8	16%
Highest Educational Attainment	Elementary Level	2	4%
	Secondary Level	26	52%
	College Level	22	44%
Gadgets Available	Cellphone	47	94%
	Laptop	3	6%
Type of Internet Connectivity	Mobile Data	43	86%
	Wifi	2	4%
	Mobile Hotspot	5	10%
Strength of Internet Connection	No	2	4%
	Poor	48	96%
	Strong	0	0%

Academic Performance of the Children

Table 2 reveals that the respondents' children's academic achievement is satisfactory, with a total mean of 86.84. It also shows that 15 (30%) have very satisfactory academic performance, 23 (46%) have satisfactory performance, and 12 (24%) have outstanding academic

performance. It is considered that all the respondents' children have achieved higher than the passing grade of 75 percent given by the DepEd. Parents' involvement in their children's academic pursuits significantly impacts their ability to succeed academically, which is essential for higher academic achievement (Barnard, 2004). This result opposes Muhat and Bentor (2022), where learners in the same locale have high achievement levels even with the pandemic.

Table 2. Academic Performance of the Children of the Respondents.

	Frequency	Percent	Descriptions
80-84	15	30	Very Satisfactory
85-89	23	46	Satisfactory
90-95	12	24	Outstanding

Role Played by the Parents

Table 3 shows respondents' assessments of their behavior in the roles of counselor/advisor, motivator/encourager, good communicator, and friendly teachers were supported by the highest average frequency. Being a facilitator/guide role model, the routine builder came in second with an ($f=46$). The lowest average is a vigilant guardian acting as a watchful monitor ($f=37$). Concerning distance learning, parents' roles are as teachers at home, which is accomplished by managing the child's schedule and method of education, reminding kids to study regularly, and establishing a comfortable learning environment for kids to complete the teacher's assignments (Bacomo et al., 2022). Also, parents serve as a motivator by being enthusiastic about and supportive of their kids' learning activities so that the kids will be motivated to study and achieve success. Parents play a crucial role as facilitators since they provide children with all the resources required to develop their competence, abilities, and potential (Bonilla et al., 2022). The information in the table below suggests that parents play a role that leans toward inspiring their children to complete their educational tasks. It can be assumed that the parent feels it is vital to foster a supportive learning environment for their children.

Table 3. Parents' Self-Rating Scores of the Efforts they made to their Children's Learning.

Parent's Role	Played		Not Played	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Counselor/Advisor	48	96%	2	4%
Motivator/Encourager	48	96%	2	4%
Facilitator/Guide role model	46	92%	4	8%
Role Model	45	90%	5	10%
Good Communicator	48	96%	2	4%
Active Caretaker	45	90%	5	10%
Routine Builder	46	92%	4	8%
Vigilant Guardian	37	37%	13	26%
Friendly Teacher	48	96%	2	4%

Correlation between the Parent’s Demographic Profile and their Role in Modular Learning

The study determined the correlation between the parent’s demographic profile and their role in implementing modular distance learning (Table 4). Results showed a significant correlation between the parent’s employment status with their role ($r_s = .355, p = .011$). facilitators for their children during the pandemic’s peak. The parents employed in public or private agencies were more engaged in implementing modular distant learning than self-employed ones. It is increasingly challenging to manage caregiving duties despite being a working parent. Also, they have faced professional difficulties while balancing work and responsibility. Employed parents ensure their children are safe and educated, even if they are fortunate enough to work remotely. This agrees with Bonilla et al. (2022) that parents play an important role in advancing their children’s interests and carrying out their desires. However, some parents are dismissed from work due to conflict between their work and parental roles (Waller, 2020).

Conversely, no statistical correlation was found between the parent’s demographic characteristics in terms of their sex, age, monthly income, number of children attending school, household members, number of hours facilitating the learning of the child, highest educational attainment, gadgets available, type of internet connectivity, and strength of internet connection with their role ($p > .05$). This shows that the parents can play their part or not regardless of these demographic characteristics. It explains that the parents are responsible for molding their children’s personalities irrespective of their demographic characteristics except for their employment status. Both father and mother could serve as educators based on Rohita and Krisnawati (2021). Liu and Xie (2015) utilized information from the China Family Panel Study’s baseline survey from 2010, showing that parenting and other non-financial family resources were more important and constant for children’s cognitive development than financial resources. Additionally, they discovered a minimal connection between parenting beliefs and behaviors and family wealth or income. Both parents’ cooperation is required for the child’s development and growth to occur optimally, even though each plays a unique role. Likewise, Azubuike and Aina (2022) said that from the moment a child is born, parents are known to be a child’s first teacher. As they grow into adults, the traditional role of parents involves teaching, guiding, and raising children to become strong standing members of their communities.

Table 4. Correlation between the Respondents’ Sociodemographic Profile and Level of Engagement.

Profile Variables	Spearman’s rho (r_s)	p -value	Interpretation
Sex	-.026	.859	Not Significant
Age	.252	.078	Not Significant
Employment Status	.355	.011	Significant
Monthly Income	.194	.177	Not Significant
Number of Children attending School	.078	.590	Not Significant
Household Member	-.105	.469	Not Significant
Number of Hours Facilitating the Learning of Child (a day)	-.015	.920	Not Significant

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Highest Educational Attainment	.097	.505	Not Significant
Gadgets Available	-.070	.628	Not Significant
Type of Internet Connectivity	.094	.515	Not Significant
Strength of Internet Connection	-.310	.082	Not Significant

Correlation between the Parent’s Demographic Profile and the Academic Performance of their Children

The study ascertained the correlation between the parent’s demographic profile and their children’s academic performance during modular distance learning (Table 5). The findings revealed a significant correlation between the parent’s employment status ($r_s = .282, p = .047$) and monthly income ($r_s = .358, p = .011$) with their children’s performance. This suggests that parents who worked and earned a higher income contributed to their children’s academic achievement while implementing modular learning. Similar to this, wealthy and educated parents are more likely to be interested in their children’s education, which is crucial to their academic performance (Cheadle & Amato, 2011). Aside from other variables, socioeconomic status is one of the topics of most inquiry and discussion among education experts that affect students’ academic achievement (Cabrera et al., 2018). The most common defense is that students’ socioeconomic circumstances impact how well they succeed academically. Most experts contend that pupils with low socioeconomic levels perform poorly academically because their basic needs are not met, which harms their learning ability (Adams et al., 1996).

The ability of parents to help their children in modular distance learning is affected by family income. Since providing for one’s fundamental necessities is a natural priority for every family, the lack of financial means may result in parents having less opportunity to assist their children. As most low-income families do not have regular occupations and instead engage in livelihood activities or paid work, helping children may result in lower revenue for those households.

In contrast, no significant relationship was found between the parent’s demographic characteristics in terms of their sex, age, number of children attending school, household members, number of hours facilitating the learning of their child, highest educational attainment, gadgets available, type of internet connectivity, and strength of internet connection with their children’s academic performance ($p > .05$). This indicates that these parent characteristics have no association with the learner’s performance amid the pandemic. However, highly educated parents spend more time with their kids and actively work to help them develop their talents and skills (Guryan et al., 2008); in contrast, less educated parents spend less time with their kids and typically let their kids develop their talents and skills with little to no guidance or stimulus (Lareau, 2002). In addition, Baticulon et al. (2021) and Pentang (2021b) noted that technological equipment proficiency and access to a supportive learning environment are barriers. Domestic issues may also be a factor in the new normal education system.

Table 5. Correlation between the respondents’ sociodemographic profile and their children’s performance.

Profile Variables	Spearman’s rho (r_s)	p-value	Interpretation
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Sex	-.121	.402	Not Significant
Age	-.070	.629	Not Significant
Employment Status	.282	.047	Significant
Monthly Income	.358	.011	Significant
Number of Children attending School	.052	.720	Not Significant
Household Member	-.075	.606	Not Significant
Number of Hours Facilitating the Learning of Child	.199	.165	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	.112	.438	Not Significant
Gadgets Available	-.070	.629	Not Significant
Type of Internet Connectivity	-.007	.962	Not Significant
Strength of Internet Connection	-.289	.401	Not Significant

Correlation between the Parent’s Role and the Performance of their Children

The study analyzed the relationship between the parent’s role and their children’s performance during the pandemic (Table 6). The analysis found no ($p > .05$). This means that the parent’s role with regards to counselor/advisor, motivator/encourager, facilitator/guide role model, good communicator, active caretaker, routine builder, vigilant guardian, and friendly teacher has nothing to do with their children’s performance during the pandemic. This may be due to the modular learning modalities. The children’s academic performance depends only on how they answer or respond to their modules, assessment, and performance task. However, parents help children learn at home by taking on the role of teachers (Kurniati et al., 2020). In addition to that, parents must be aware of effective teaching and playing techniques. They need to comprehend how their kids learn, as everyone knows differently. Parents must be able to guide their kids toward activities that are enjoyable, safe, and informative. In other words, parents have created play-based learning activities by leveraging the available resources.

Meanwhile, the nature of student assessment in the new normal could be an essential thing to be considered because there is a likely possibility that the teacher is becoming lenient in giving grades because of humanitarian considerations. As part of distant learning for pupils during the epidemic, the DepEd investigated the rumored “sagot-for-sale” scheme, in which parents allegedly pay someone else to answer their children’s learning module (Philstar, 2021). This has severe implications for the failure of this study to provide reliable data. Future researchers could consider conceptualizing a better measure of academic performance.

Table 6. Correlation between the Respondents’ Role and their Children’s Performance.

Profile Variables	Spearman’s rho (r_s)	p -value	Interpretation
Role of Parents	.164	.254	Not significant

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Female parents were more involved in their children’s learning, were mature enough to guide their children as young and middle-aged adults, spent the majority of their time doing household chores as housekeepers, belonged to poor households, and had limited knowledge as



they had only completed secondary level education, had large families, and spent very little time facilitating their children's learning. Parents frequently acted as friendly teachers and motivators to their children during the implementation of modular learning, and students were performing well in school, as evidenced by averages far above the requirement to move on to the next quarter, parents frequently served as motivators and friendly teachers to their children, and lastly, the demographic profile of the parents had no bearing on the performance of the learners.

School administrators should develop initiatives to successfully improve instructors' capacity to implement modular remote learning. To make parents aware of their responsibilities as homeschooling facilitators, they should also hold orientations for parents. Additionally, teachers should contact parents frequently to continuously assess the students' learning and address issues that parents and students may have with the school. At the same time, parents should work with the instructors to get advice on how they may support their kids' at-home learning using their modules.

Since education is lifelong learning, pupils should work harder to learn independently using the resources offered by their teachers because self-discovery and learning by doing are the main ways people know for the rest of their lives. Thus, additional researchers should study the other elements that meaningfully impact students' academic achievement in modular remote learning.

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