Exploring the Experiences in Modular Learning from the Lens of Parents with Elementary Grade Children

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Abstract:- The closure of schools during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic prompted educational institutions to shift to remote learning. In the Philippines, different learning modalities were rolled out to ensure the continuity of learning. Out of all the modalities, modular distance learning emerged as the most preferred among parents because of its accessibility. Most public-school children are now learning through printed self-learning modules. However, the role of parents as key learning agents was exacerbated in this modality. Parents, particularly those who have children in the elementary grade levels, are faced with the new challenge of taking over the role of a teacher in their homes. Given the aforementioned context, this qualitative study was conducted to explore the experiences of parents with elementary-grade children in modular distance learning. This study utilized a phenomenological research design and selected six (6) parents from Region VIII in the Philippines through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using a semi-structured interview and analyzed using Colaizzi's method of data analysis. The findings in this study revealed that: (1) parents employ different ways to help their children in modular distance learning; (2) the most common challenges that parents face are the lack of parent content knowledge; insufficient learning materials; lack of learner motivation; and financial instability; (3) but despite these challenges, parents strive to overcome the challenges with various coping strategies such as seeking social support, relying on the internet, giving reinforcements, adapting, and having a positive mindset. Finally, this research study provides valuable recommendations to teachers and policymakers which can be the basis for the further improvement of this learning modality.

Keywords:- modular learning; parents; experiences; challenges; coping strategies; phenomenological study.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Parents are known to be a child's first teachers from the moment they are born until they reach adulthood. Traditionally, it is their job to raise and nurture their children to become strong members of their communities. Once children start formal schooling, most parents let the school take over a significant portion of their children's formal education. Parents are more of a provider in this aspect. Unless parents have taken full responsibility for homeschooling their children, they limit their responsibility to ensuring that they have the necessary provision and assistance to access education and learning (Benjamin, 1993; Ceka & Murati, 2016; Emerson et al., 2012).

However, following the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries experienced a shutdown of their economies, affecting various sectors and industries on a worldwide scale, and the education system was no exception (Azubuike & Aina, 2020). The worldwide closure of schools and other learning spaces obliged educational institutions to adopt new learning modalities as an alternative to traditional face-to-face learning (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). In order to prevent a learning slide and to support the continuation of learning, interventions and solutions were rolled out, giving birth to remote teaching and learning. Parents are now faced with the new challenge of being both parents and teachers at the same time.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) has adopted several learning delivery modalities such as online distance learning, modular distance learning, and blended learning. Out of all these modalities, modular distance learning emerged as the most preferred learning modality among parents because of its accessibility. Most public-school children in the country are now being taught through printed self-learning modules. Although preferred by most parents for its accessibility, this made it more challenging on their part as this modality underscores the role of parents as key learning agents for their children. It became clear that parents would have to take on the full-time duty of educating their children and supporting their learning through these printed self-learning modules.

According to Brossard et al. (2020), the involvement of parents plays an important role in learning, especially during these times when it is taking place within the corners of the home. Even before the pandemic started, parents struggled to teach their children since some were unable to attend school and could not even comprehend simple instructions. The parents' knowledge, educational background, and socioeconomic status all play a role in whether or not they can help their children learn remotely and to what extent they can adapt to the new learning modalities (Azubuike & Aina, 2020). Additionally, because of the abrupt changes in learning, it became more difficult for parents to assist their children in understanding the lessons provided through these modules (Bhamani et al., 2020). This posed a huge strain for parents, particularly those who have children in the elementary grade levels, who do not know how to play the dual role of being a teacher and a parent during these difficult times.

Many researchers have previously conducted studies about the experiences in distance learning. But these studies were focusing on the experiences of teachers and students (Alea et al., 2020; Cahapay, 2020; Kim, 2020; Marek et al., 2021; Rasmitadila et al., 2020; Reich et al., 2020; Suhail et

al., 2020). There are also studies discussing how parents educate their children at home (Garbe et al., 2020; Parczewska, 2020) however, they do not tackle the lived experiences of parents. Other researchers also conducted studies on the lived experiences of parents with regard to distance learning (Bhamani, 2020; Garbe, 2020; Hamaidi, 2021) but these studies focused on online distance learning as a modality.

With all the knowledge gaps in these related works, the researchers felt the need to take into account the lived experiences of parents who are explicitly put in charge of the remote learning of their children. The researchers aim to contribute to the literature by exploring the lived experiences in modular learning, from the perspective of parents with elementary-grade children. Given that this is the first time that this learning delivery modality has been implemented, research is relevant so that findings will lead to the improvement in the implementation of this learning modality.

B. Statement of the Problem

This study aims to explore the lived experiences of parents with elementary-grade children enrolled in a public school in Region VIII in the Philippines for the School Year 2021-2022, as they continue to assist their children with modular distance learning modality. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

- How do parents assist their children with the modular learning modality?
- What are the challenges that parents encounter in using the modular distance learning modality?
- How do parents cope with the challenges they encounter?

C. Scope and Delimitation

The general intent of this study is to describe the lived experiences in modular learning modality from the lens of parents with elementary grade children studying in a public school in Region VIII in the Philippines for the School Year 2021-2022. This means that this study will be limited to obtaining data regarding the parents' experience with the modular learning modality, the challenges they faced, and their coping strategies, and will not cover other learning modalities. Results are purely based on the interview responses of the parent-participants with the support of literature describing the main focus of the study.

D. Significance of the Study

The results of this study aim to benefit the following:

- *Teachers.* Through this study, teachers, particularly elementary grade teachers will be aware of the struggles and challenges that parents face in modular distance learning. With this knowledge, they can help develop alternatives or interventions that would ease the parents' struggles, which will be beneficial to the learners, parents, and teachers themselves.
- *Department of Education.* The results of this study may yield useful data and identify trends that may serve as a basis for the development of more inclusive educational policies and appropriate programs or interventions that will respond to the related needs of parents.
- *Future Researchers.* The findings and literature presented in this study will offer guidance which will serve as a reference to provide them the firsthand information from the outcome of this phenomenological study. This is also for future researchers to acquire relevant and timely data which can be a great source of support in producing further research comparable to the objectives of this study.

E. Definition of Terms

- *Modular Learning/Modular Distance Learning.* This pertains to the new distance learning modality, in which students learn independently using learning modules based on the most essential learning competencies (MELCs).
- *Experiences.* This refers to the lived experiences of parents while assisting their children's education, the challenges they faced, and their coping mechanisms.
- *Parents.* These are the participants of the current study. The fathers, mothers, or guardians assume the role of being the teacher of their children in the modular learning modality during this time of the pandemic.
- *Elementary Grade Children.* This refers to the participants' children who are currently enrolled in Region VIII public schools for the School Year 2021-2022 and are pursuing their education through modular learning.
- *Pandemic/COVID-19 Pandemic.* The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus that affected almost all countries resulted in the closure of schools and led to the implementation of modular learning and other learning modalities.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Distance Learning Before and During COVID-19

Distance learning or distance education is a mode of learning delivery in which learning occurs between a teacher and students who are physically separated from one another during teaching instruction, with the use of different technologies (The University of Kansas, 2020). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, only a few educational institutions were implementing this kind of learning, and this was only originally popular among student-employees and those in remote regions. With the emergence of COVID-19 and the closure of schools, distance learning has transformed from an option to a necessity. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (2020), 191 countries in the world shifted to distance learning when the pandemic hit. This shift exacerbated the learning inequality during this pandemic and an estimated 40% of low and lower-middle-income countries failed to support the underprivileged learners during this temporary school closure.

B. Modular Distance Learning in the Philippines

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) developed the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BELCP), a framework that outlines how the government should deliver education during times of crisis while also preserving the health, safety, and welfare of students, teachers, and DepEd workers. Multiple learning deliveries were adopted including modular distance learning (MDL), online distance learning (ODL), TV/Radio-Based Instruction (TV/R), and Blended Learning – a combination of different

distance learning modalities. According to a survey conducted by DepEd, among the available learning modalities, modular learning emerged as the most preferred distance learning method for parents with children enrolled this academic year (Bernardo, 2020). Modular Distance Learning utilizes self-learning modules (SLMs) in either print or digital format, as well as a variety of learning tools such as learner's materials, textbooks, activity sheets, worksheets, study guides, and other study materials. This learning modality is currently used by all public schools in the Philippines. This gave chance to those learners who don't have stable internet connections in their areas.

According to the study conducted by Castroverde et al. (2021), modular learning is more effective than traditional teaching because it obliges the students to study in their own phase. Through this, students have their own curiosity that leads them to study and search for their own. It is good practice for them to stand on their own and practice self-learning. However, the implementation of this learning modality underscores the important role of parents in their child's learning (Pimentel-Tibon, 2020). It advises parents that children from early grade levels should be closely supervised in their learning. Since education is no longer confined to the classroom, parents have become the teachers' co-educators. They play a critical role as home facilitators. In modular learning, their primary role is to build a connection with their child and guide them in their learning (FlipScience, 2020). This caused apprehensions as to whether parents are ready to take on this role.

C. Challenges of Parents with Distance Learning

When the whole education system around the globe shifted to distant learning, parents became crucial learning agents, assisting kids in understanding how to continue learning, how to use digital solutions, and how to support students in this process. The parents of the students, who had to become homeschoolers in a matter of days without any prior training, had a significant part in this situation. Parents were now the ones who helped kids develop digital skills, helped them learn, and helped them understand how to combine the learning process of children with other daily duties, whereas parental engagement had previously been examined as vital but sometimes insufficient. (Daniela et. al, 2021).

Despite the efforts of parents to take on their new roles in their child's learning, challenges were still present. Lee et al. (2020), in their study about the parents' perceptions of sudden transition of learning during the acute phase of the COVID-19 crisis, the results showed that most American parents were overwhelmed by the responsibilities of educating their children at home. It was also a challenge that a few of the parents felt that they lack the necessary resources to educate their children. It was also revealed that many parents were experiencing very high levels of depression, anxiety, and stress during Coronavirus.

In a study conducted by Garbe et al. (2020) about the experiences of parents with remote education, the findings revealed that parents were having difficulties with balancing their responsibilities, the learner motivation, accessibility,

and learning outcomes. While, in the study of Dong et al. (2020), he noted that the implementation of distance learning during the pandemic was problematic and challenging for Chinese parents. The parents generally favored traditional learning over distance learning because of their unfavorable beliefs about the values and benefits of distance learning. They resisted, if not outright rejected, distance learning for three reasons: the inadequacies of distance learning, the lack of self-regulation in young children, and their lack of time and professional experience in assisting children's distance learning. They are also suffering as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, they were neither trained nor ready to embrace distance learning making them more resistive to learning at home.

Moreover, Spinelli et al. (2020) discovered that lockdown is a stressful experience for parents who must handle their personal lives, jobs, and children's growth without the help of others. They conducted interviews with parents of children aged 2 to 14. More worried parents were shown to be less involved in their children's activities, limiting their children's capacity to successfully regulate their emotions. They suggest that if parents and children are adequately supported by healthcare experts and other social ties, including the school environment, they will be able to overcome this key phase of hardship and prevent serious long-term effects. In this approach, even less resilient and stressed-out parents may be aided in better understanding and supporting their children (Belsky, 1984).

D. Coping Strategies of Parents with Distance Learning

Parents, as the primary assistant of learners, face new obstacles as a result of the shift in learning mode. The study by Bujard (2020) discovered that parents struggle to care for and aid their kids in the present mode of learning that the pandemic has induced. Additionally, parents are impacted by the growing care responsibilities that they must fulfill (Allmendinger, 2020). Thus, parents and families must provide dynamic support for their children (Colombo, 2006). According to Zalaznick (2020), while the pandemic continues, school leaders and teachers should try to strengthen ties with parents. It is because it is critical for parents to discuss their concerns and to interact with their children's schools when they need more assistance. Educators might perform continuous check-ins to assess families' ability to cope and to evaluate if more academic or social-emotional services are required. Additionally, it has become essential to address parents' emotional needs for the student's success (DA, 2020). Therefore, regardless of the mode of learning, parents play the most critical part in their child's education (Siv & Kim, 2019).

Parental challenges and coping techniques were also considered in this study. According to Maniquiz, et al. (2021), the parents agreed to deal with the current scenario of distance learning by taking action to strive to change their children's learning situations and doing things that deal with the dilemma their family and children are in. Wang et al. proposed that parents be taught methods for providing emotional support to children during times of uncertainty. In addition, the study of Mazzella-Ebstein et al. (2019) suggests that coping with life's obstacles, planning, taking a particular

action, finding help (instrumental and emotional), positive evaluation of the situation, or acceptance can enhance feelings, outlook, and attitude toward the situation and circumstances. Parents should express their appreciation for their child's abilities and features.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study is qualitative research that employed a phenomenological research design. According to Lichtman (2013), a phenomenological study aims to describe and understand the essence of the lived experiences of the people who have experienced a particular phenomenon. Leedy and Omrod (2001) further stated that the primary objective of this type of study is to understand an experience from the participant's point of view. The focus is on the participant's perceptions of the event or situation and the study tries to answer the question of the experience. This is in parallel with the aim of the present study, to describe the lived experiences of parents with regard to modular learning. A phenomenological study is appropriate as it allows the researchers to explore the phenomenon from the parents' personal experiences in varying situations and circumstances. This research design is administered so that relevant responses could be sought to get insights into the parents' experiences with modular distance learning.

Specifically, this present study utilized a transcendental phenomenology approach to provide a clear description of the experiences of the parents. Transcendental phenomenology is useful for describing a phenomenon using the participant's experiences, perceptions, and voices (Creswell, 2013). This is aligned with the intention of the study, to provide a rich description of the participants' experiences as it is and not the interpretation from the researchers. Thus, the preconceived notions or biases of the researchers are set aside.

B. Research Locale

The researchers conducted this study in their respective hometowns in Region VIII, Eastern Visayas. Particularly, in the Provinces of Northern Samar (San Isidro), Samar (Marabut & Basey), and Leyte (Tacloban City). This study focused on the parents of children who are enrolled in a public elementary school in the said region who are currently using a modular learning modality.

C. Participants of the Study

The participants in this study are parents of elementary-grade children who are currently enrolled in a public school in Region VII in the Philippines and are using modular learning. Six (6) parent-participants were selected with the use of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is widely used in qualitative research, it involves identifying and selecting individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In this study, purposive sampling was employed according to the following inclusion criteria: (1) Parent or guardian of an elementary grade child who is enrolled in a public school in Region VIII for the school year 2021-2022; (2) The child uses modular learning modality for the specified school year; (3) The parent or guardian is not directly or indirectly related with the researchers; and (4) Voluntary participates in the study.

D. Data Collection Method

The experiences of the parent-participants were gathered through a face-to-face semi-structured interview, as prescribed in transcendental phenomenology. According to Adams (2015), a semi-structured interview merges a predetermined set of open-ended questions with the privilege for the researchers to ask unplanned follow-up questions. The researchers believe that this is a suitable method that is aligned with the aim of the present study. A semi-structured interview enabled the researchers to explore and delve into the parent-respondents experiences with modular learning. This enabled the participants to fully disclose information about their experiences without being led to a specific answer.

In the process of gathering data, the researchers first wrote a letter to the parent-respondents who were selected through purposive sampling, asking for their approval to participate in the study. They were given ample time to review their participation in the study. An informed consent form was also voluntarily signed by the participants. Given that we are in the middle of a pandemic, the face-to-face interview was conducted at the participants' most convenient time while observing minimum health protocols.

E. Ethical Consideration

Throughout the study, ethical considerations were observed. Participation in the study was completely voluntary and the participants were given a chance to withdraw anytime without any consequences. All participants were informed about the details of the study, their extent of participation, the possible risks and conveniences, and their rights. To earn the trust of the participants, the researchers assured them of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses. However, the participants can access their own data if desired to do so. The researchers ensured the confidentiality of the data and never forced a participant to answer questions that they think must be kept private. No data were asked that will exhibit the participants' direct identity, such as their name, cellphone numbers, or address. Consent forms were also sent to the respondents, days prior to the conduct of the interview.

F. Research Reflexivity

The aim of this study is to explore the lived experiences of parents with elementary-grade children as they assist their children with blended learning in this time of the pandemic. Through this study, the parents were to voice and share their experiences in aiding their children's education. Since this is a qualitative study, the researchers also served as the research instruments. With that said, there is a possibility that the previous experiences of the researchers will affect the research process. To avoid being partial and to eliminate bias, the researchers wrote bracketing notes throughout the data analysis process. The interview responses of the participants were transcribed verbatim and the results were sent back to the participants for verification. The data collected in this study were interpreted from the participants' point of view

and the researchers' previous experiences have no bearing on the treatment of the data.

G. Data Analysis

The collected data in this phenomenological study were analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) method of data analysis. Colaizzi's method allows the researchers to describe the meaning of an experience through emergent themes (Reiners, 2012). This method of data analysis is rigorous and robust and ensures the credibility and reliability of its results (Wirihana et al., 2018). The researchers employed this specific method in order to explore the fundamental structure of the parents' experiences.

The researchers employed Colaizzi's seven-step process in analyzing and interpreting data. The seven steps are as follows: (1) Familiarization. The verbatim transcripts of the responses from the participants were read and reread by the researchers to achieve a deep understanding of the description and make sense of it. (2) Identifying significant statements. Significant statements or phrases that are of direct relevance to the phenomenon under investigation were extracted from the transcripts. (3) Formulating meanings. The researchers formulated meanings from the significant statements. In this step, the researchers bracketed their biases in order to stick closely to the phenomenon as experienced by the participants. (4) Clustering themes. The researchers clustered the identified meanings into themes that are common across all the responses. (5) Developing an exhaustive description. The researchers incorporated all the themes into a rich and exhaustive description of the experiences. (6) Producing the fundamental structure. The researchers wrote a comprehensive description of the results. (7) Seeking verification of the fundamental structure. The researchers returned to the participants to verify the results or the essential structure.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the analysis of the narratives of the participants, fourteen (14) clusters of themes emerged out of the formulated meanings and significant statements. These theme clusters are further grouped into three (3) major themes which illuminate the experiences of parents with elementary-grade children as they continue to assist them with modular distance learning.

Theme	Sub-theme	Illustrative Quotation
Parental Ways of Assisting Children in Modular Distance Learning	Facilitation	The parent assumes the role of being the teacher of their child at home.
		The parent initiates to teach if he/she knows and understands the material.
	Intervention	The parent helps the child when he/she is having a difficult time learning.
		The parent helps the child by searching for answers on the internet.
	Provision	The parent identifies herself as a provider of her children's needs in school.
Challenges of Parents in Modular Distance Learning	Lack of Parent Content Knowledge	The parents are having difficulty recalling some lessons in the module.
		There are subjects that are hard to teach.
	Inadequate Learning Materials	The lack of reading materials makes it hard for the parent to teach or assist the child.
	Lack of Learner Motivation	The lazy attitude of the child is a challenge for the parent.
		The child is distracted and preoccupied with other things.
	Financial Struggles	The parent struggles financially because even if they are only using modules, the tasks still require materials that need to be bought.
		Delayed salary becomes a challenge.
	Work/Life Balance	The parent is struggling in managing his/her time because of work and other responsibilities.
Coping Strategies of Parents in Modular Distance Learning	Seeking Social Support	The parent contacts the teacher to ask for an explanation of the content of the lesson.
		The parent asks for help from people who are more knowledgeable.
	Reliance on Internet	The internet becomes a one-stop solution if the parents don't know the answers or understand the modules.
		Educational videos become a supplemental tool for the parents in their child's learning.
	Avoidance	Lack of reading materials pushes parents just let the child leave the module unanswered.

Providing Reinforcement	Parents give tangible rewards to motivate their children to answer their modules.
	Not forcing the child to study when they don't want to and let them relax and/or play to recharge.
Adaptation	Being resourceful and only using available resources to complete the project.
	Good time management enables the parents to balance and handle their roles and responsibilities.
	The parent finds good budgeting as a way to cope with their financial struggles.
Positivity	The parent does not consider giving up an option.
	The parent perseveres and makes the impossible, possible.
	The parent believes that only he/she can help his/her child so he/she finds ways to solve the problem.

Table 1: Themes and sub-themes generated from the data analysis

A. Theme 1. Parental Ways of Assisting Children in Modular Distance Learning

The first theme covers the ways in which parents assist their children with modular distance learning. The gathered data shows that some parents felt that they have become teachers to their own children. They are the ones who teach the lessons inside their modules and they assist their children with their activities and projects.

"I assist my kids by teaching their topics and modules especially when they have their activities like projects." (P3)

"Maging usa nga nanay ngan maging usa nga maestra haira… na mag-turutdo gihap ha balay hit ak mga anak, ako an ira naging kabulig ha ira pag eskwela." (P4)

"Pero kun kaya ko, kun nakaka-intindi ako, sige ako nat magkukuan haira na sugara hiton." (P4)

However, some parents do not fully assume the role of being a teacher and only help their children when they are having a difficult time. They let their children study independently and only aid them whenever they feel that their assistance is needed.

"…Tutduan ngan buligan hiya hit iya module kun kinukurian hiya." (P1)

"Na-assist la ako ha ira, ginkukuan ko haira it example tapos hira hira na it nag-aano (lulugaring) pag answer, pag once dire hira nakakaintindi amo ito utro na liwat ak pag-explain." (P6)

"Ginbubuligan ko nala through hit kuan mayda na man gud yana internet… ada nala nakita kun ano pagbuhat, pag answer." (P6)

The parents also believe that it is their responsibility to provide for the needs of their children in their studies.

"Bilang ginikanan, ihatag nako sa ila ang ilahang mga kinahanglan sa ilang pag eskwela." (P5)

B. Theme 2: Challenges of Parents in Modular Distance Learning

The second theme revolves around some of the challenges that parents encounter when they are assisting their children in modular distance learning. First is the lack of parent content knowledge. Some of the parents mentioned that they are having a hard time teaching their children because they don't know and/or they can't remember the lessons in the modules. There are also subjects, such as Mathematics, that are hard to teach for the parents due to lack of expertise.

"Mayda mga lessons, lab'i na ha akon kaso na madugay ko na ito gin katara, dire ko na gud hiya nahihinumdoman kun about ano ito tas kun paunan'o ito pag answer." (P1)

"Danay dire ak maaram it ginleleksyon haira dida it module…kay syempre iba man gud adto an amon panutduan kontra yana… baga hagi ano ba ini nga akon igtututdo…" (P6)

"Naa mga subject na nalisdan ko mag tudlo labi na ang math kay dili ko kamao sa solving." (P5)

Second is the inadequate learning materials. The parents stated that sometimes only activity sheets are provided, and no learning materials that would help them explain the content of the modules.

"… It iba (nga module) dire gud ak nakaka-explain haira hin maupay kay danay sugad la ini (answer sheet), waray module mga activity sheets la waray ka baga kinukuanan nga kuan kun ano it karuyag signgon." (P2)

"Ako mismo nga parent kinukurian ako pag-explain haira kay tungod waray man didto nira guide nga mag-eexplain nga sugaron." (P4)

The third challenge for the parents is the lack of learner motivation. They revealed that the learners are sometimes lazy when it comes to answering their modules and they get easily distracted by other things.

"Danay man pinanhuhubya… pagsisiring na pagmodule mag-iinaringit." (P2)

"The attitude of my kids especially when they are answering their modules kay may ada time na ginhuhubya talaga (hira)…" (P3)

"...Danay nanhihimalangq, labis didi kun adi la nagkikinita it tv." (P6)

The fourth and the last one is that parents are struggling with their finances and in balancing their time and responsibilities. According to the parents, even though they are only utilizing printed modules, some tasks and projects still require materials that need to be bought. On top of that, they revealed that sometimes their salary is delayed. It is also hard for some parents to balance their time because they have other responsibilities, such as work and house chores.

"...Parti pinansyal hit nga amon pagmodule ky bisan la iton module kamatuoran la nagamit gehap hin papel, nagamit kami hin water color, damo man gihap takay as in labi na gud han time han pandemic kay pawaray-waray gud." (P4)

"...Financial kasi minsan, minsan lang naman late yung sweldo namin…" (P3)

"...Time management, like what I have said I am a working mom…" (P3)

"...Malisdan ko sa pag bahin bahin sa oras." (P5)

C. Theme 3. Coping Strategies of Parents in Modular Distance Learning

The third theme covers how parents cope with the challenges they encounter in modular distance learning. Based on the results, whenever the parents are having a hard time understanding and explaining the lessons in the printed modules, they seek social support by contacting the teachers of their children or asking for help from other people who are more knowledgeable.

"...Danay liwat gincocontact ko it teacher." (P1)

"Pag dire ko talaga kaya i-explain ha ak anak nakadto ak haira maestra. An mathematics nasingadto talaga ak hiton han maestro nira ha grade 6, nagpa explain ako kun aanhon ko kay nganak dire ko talaga iton kaya." (P4)

"Pero danay di nacocontact it maestra ha tanan na oras asya namamakiana ak hin (iba) na mag-aram." (P1)

"... Danay ngani napakiana ak it haiya (magurang na anak) kun ano ba ini (module), natutdo gad hiya takay busy man gihap." (P6)

The parents also rely on the internet, they mentioned that they just sometimes resort to searching the answers on Google. Also, to supplement their children's learning, some parents let them watch educational videos, which they believe are very helpful because the children are able to apply what they have learned from the video.

"Danay ginsesearch ko nala ha google…" (P1)

"Danay na-google… bagan gin sesearch nala para la intalon makuan ha ira." (P2)

"...Mag-search me para makakuha tama na impormasyon." (P5)

"...Pinapanuod ko sila ng mga educational videos then after that tinatanong ko kung anu yung mga naintindihan nila and there are some problems for example in Math, nga ig answer na nila, ig apply na nila yung natutunan nila." (P3)

However, according to some parents, if they can't find the answers on the internet, they just tell their children to stop answering their modules.

"...Danay di ngan ak nakakakita liwat (hin answer ha internet) kun na-guguol ak pagkinuan it selpon, ginyayaknan ko ito tak anak na ayaw nala ito pag-inansweri, kay waray man diri kita nakaka-explain hin baga tuhay." (P2)

Some parents also revealed that whenever their children are demotivated and lazy, they give them tangible rewards like snacks or money in order to motivate them to answer their modules. However, there are also instances when the children are not really in the mood, so they just let them rest and play and not force them to study.

"Danay nagpa-promise ak haiya, like tatagan hiya hin reward para la hiya magtrabaho." (P1)

"Danay susuholan ko para mag module… katatapos pag module gintatagan ko hin singko, nagiging agresibo dayon pag module." (P2)

"Mahuman ta ngane ini yana tatagan ko kamo hin snack… tatagan ta kamo hin singko or ano dida para mahuman la." (P4)

"Pag nakikita ko na bagan ginhuhubya na hira, gintatagan ko hira hin time para maglaro o libangin muna nila yung sarili nila and after that, pag nakita ko na okay na, mabalik na hira pag-module." (P3)

"Ginkukuan ko la danay na "sige relax la anay, kay dire kita matutuhay kun waray kamo ha kuan (pokus) (mood)," makuri piriton it nadire kay nabubusaan lugod, nalalamba, kay nakikig-ungutay man." (P6)

Another way of coping for the parents is by adapting to whatever situation they are in. For instance, they are struggling financially and they don't have the capacity to buy the needed materials for their children's activities or projects. According to some parents, they try to be resourceful and just use whatever available materials there are to accomplish the task. Moreover, having good time management helps the parents to effectively balance their roles and responsibilities.

"...May ngani project bis water color it nakabutang didto krayola (nala), kay asya la nak kaya paliton… basta importante nakaghimo, nabuhat nam an project…" (P4)

"I need to budget, kailangan maupay an akon pag budget…" (P3)

"...Time management gud la since natrabaho man gihap ako… so pag-uuli ko amo liwat ito it oras nak pagbubulig ngan pagtututdo haiya hit iya module." (P1)

"Gin-babalanse ko la tak oras hin maupay, ha aga namumuriga anay, tas pagka-udto hira liwat it ak gin-aatenderan." (P2

Lastly, having a positive mindset is also a way for parents to cope with the challenges they encounter. Some parents stated that no matter how tired they are, they still try to help their children because it is for their future. The parents persevere and look for ways to solve their problems because they believe that they are the only ones who can help their children.

"...Bisag ge kapoy nako mo tabang lang gihapon… mo tudlo lang gihapon para sa ilang kaugmaon." (P5)

"Gintatalinguha bahala kun anut dida basta ky nasiring tak huna-huna sige bisan dire kaya, kaya ta iton kay pag aada na nahihimo naman la bisan ano iton kamakuri, papaningkamutan ta." (P4)

"Baadaw kay nagbibiling gad ak paagi na masolbar ito, kay di man it mababaro it kabataan kun dire ko ito kukuanon kay waray man iba na mabulig kundi ako la gihap." (P6)

This themes illustrated above reflect the lived experiences of parents who continue to play the role of home facilitators of their elementary-grade children in modular distance learning.

The first theme expresses how the parents assist their children with the said learning modality. Modular distance learning situates students to learn within the comfort of their homes. With this, parents are placed at the front line of their children's learning. The findings of this study indicated that some parents act as active facilitators, taking over the duties of being a teacher in their homes. These parents devote more time to assisting and helping their children. On the other hand, other parents assist their children to a lesser extent. These parents only provide intervention and assistance whenever needed and they emphasize independence in their children's learning. This affirms Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's Parental Involvement Process Model (1995, 1997, 2005), that the parent's perception of invitation of involvement from the child is a factor that affects how parents get involved in their children's learning. If the parents feel that their children are struggling and need help, that is the time they offer assistance. It is also noteworthy to mention that these parents are from varying situations and circumstances. Some are working and some stays at home. Life context variables such as the parent's time and responsibilities are also factors that affect parental involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997, 2005).

The second theme illustrates the variety of challenges that parents face in connection with the new responsibilities brought by the implementation of modular distance learning. Due to the lack of content knowledge, parents find it difficult to help their children with their modules. The parents stated that they couldn't grasp or recall certain lessons. Additionally, parents struggle to adequately explain some of the lessons because there aren't enough learning resources and materials that are provided and available. This is consistent with the findings of the study by Garbe et al. (2020) and Dong et al. (2020), that as parents provide on-the-fly learning support to their children to fill the absence of teachers, the parent's lack of expertise and the insufficient learning resources creates a learning barrier.

Other parents revealed that they too struggle a lot with the learner's lack of motivation, as sometimes their children can be lazy and distracted with other things while doing their modules. This lack of learner motivation stems from the idea that these primary grade children consider home learning as a vacation from school, thus their routines revolve around playing, watching television, and doing nothing at all (Bhamani et al., 2020). The home as a learning environment is not conducive which contributes to the child's lack of learning motivation (Cahyani et al., 2020; Daugherty, 2020).

The other challenges that were drawn out from this study are financial instability and balancing time and other responsibilities. Financial instability relates to the lack of resources. The insufficient income of parents to cover the expenses of modular learning results in financial challenges (Abuhammad, 2020). On the one hand, parents also find it difficult to balance their time and responsibilities. Garbe et al. (2020) claim that this concern may stem from the readiness of the parents. The shift to remote learning was sudden, hence the parents were not given ample time to prepare themselves. As they take on the responsibility of being home facilitators, the load of all their other responsibilities overwhelms them.

However, despite the many challenges faced by parents, they still strive to overcome them through various coping strategies which constitutes the third theme. The parents who are struggling to grasp the contents of the module seek support from teachers and people who are more knowledgeable. According to the Zalaznick (2020), while the pandemic continues, school leaders and teachers should try to strengthen ties with parents. It is because it is critical for parents to discuss their concerns and to interact with their children's schools when they need more assistance.

On the contrary, other parents rely on the internet when it is difficult for them to understand the lessons in the module. The parents also let their children watch educational videos to supplement their learning. However, when they are unable to access it online, their final resort is to let their children leave the answer sheet blank. For some parents, giving tangible rewards or letting their children rest and play when not in the mood has become one of their coping strategies. Another coping strategy for parents is being resourceful and being able to manage their time properly helps them to balance their responsibilities well. Finally, is

having a positive mindset wherein they persevere to solve their problems as they are the only ones who can help their children.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings derived from this study, it can be inferred that the responsibility of educating children does not only lie on educational institutions but also on parents as key learning agents. As parents take over the role of being home facilitators in modular distance learning, they face multifaceted challenges that hamper them from effectively assisting their children. But despite these challenges, parents strive to overcome them with various coping strategies.

This research would benefit people especially parents as stakeholders in education and these are the recommendations to all those who are concerned:

To the teachers, they should assess the needs and challenges of parents in order to effectively respond to their concerns or provide support. They also have to be prepared with alternative plans to help parents and constantly communicate with them.

To the Department of Education, they should consider the problems that parents encounter and develop policies and interventions that would respond to the needs of parents. They should also allocate more funds for modules and learning materials. These learning materials should also be validated to assure their quality.

To the researchers, this research is only limited and believed to be lacking from other sustainable related studies, which is why it is highly recommended to expand the study by providing other relevant and further exploration to give supplementary enlightenment in the purpose of educating people about the goal of this research.

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